



Internships: Creating a “Bulldogs” Student Intern Program

Introducing students to new employment markets and opportunities – In large cities and within many large companies, there are well developed internship programs offering opportunities to students. In mid-size cities or for smaller companies, local alumni-driven internship programs can provide the crucial connection to students and the university. Alumni within a community can identify internships and communicate about them with the university – or be the conduit for offering interns to employers that realize the availability of qualified interns.

Common characteristics of large sustainable alumni-driven programs. See next chart of local Bulldogs programs.

- Location is far from the university. Local alumni introduce the employers, students, employment agencies, and university career services to each other. (In a city near the university, employers and the university easily find each other – and communicate directly.)
- Located in a large city (but not too large) where alumni are business leaders who feel that the city by itself is not attracting sufficient talent, or diverse enough talent. Most successful Bulldog programs are in cities with populations of 300,000 to 800,000 and metro populations of 1 million to 3.5 million supporting 20 – 50 internships each summer. To entice students to accept an internship for the summer, these programs offer free housing, strong community programming, mentoring, and group activities.
- Active, mid-sized regional alumni association. All currently successful Bulldog Across America programs have been supported by Clubs in an area with about 500 to 1500 alumni within a relatively compact area providing enough volunteers and donors to run the program. In contrast, in larger cities, alumni may have informal networks that communicate internships, or the city is sufficiently attractive to students that there is not a need for these extra incentives to attract applicants for internships.
- Houses the interns together and for free. Providing housing may mean participating employers incur an additional cost or the organizers have to secure donations from other alumni (especially for NGO internships). Most Bulldog programs arrange housing for interns economically at a local university though some provide homestays. The residential component creates a community for the students who might be concerned that they would not have enjoyable leisure time experiences, or meet interesting people.
- Alumni mentor the students, and sometimes engage alumni families to share leisure activities with the students. For more on the value of mentoring to students and alumni see last page in this section.
- Alumni arrange for special group activities for the students.

Brand your internship program. Your university name recognition and identity will make it easier to publicize to students, easier to recruit employers, easier to generate internships, easier to start up a similar program in a new city, and easier to recruit alumni support. Use a similar name for many of your student-internship programs. Pick a name that will rally alumni and that even non-alumni will identify with the school, such as a school mascot or color.

Yale “Bulldogs”. Two of the largest internship programs at Yale use the name “bulldogs”, which is the name of the Yale mascot. Internship applications are facilitated by Yale’s Undergraduate Career Services (UCS), though some of the actual internship programs are administered by local alumni through AYA Regional Associations (e.g. [Community Service Fellowships](#) and [Bulldogs Across America](#)).

- Bulldogs Across America is really seven similar, independent programs run by local alumni in seven different cities across the United States: <http://ocs.yale.edu/content/domestic-internships-program-alumni-sponsored-housing-mentoring-and-events>.
- International Bulldogs is a broad program administered through UCS, as part of Yale’s globalization initiatives.

Partner with other universities. Sometimes it is necessary for several universities to combine resources for a sustainable summer student internship program which may require re-branding. Bulldogs in the Rockies (Denver, CO) has evolved to serve six universities and is now co-branded as Bulldogs in the Rockies/CLIMB or just C.L.I.M.B. (<http://www.climbtherockies.org>). Bulldogs on the Cuyahoga (Cleveland, OH) includes eight universities under the new name of Summer on the Cuyahoga (<http://www.summeronthecuyahoga.com>). UCS no longer does intake for this program, but the local Yale Club is still deeply involved.