



Local Government Academy

2014
Municipal Intern Program
Guidelines and Application

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Promoting Excellence in Local Government

Local Government Academy
2014 Municipal Intern Program
GUIDELINES

*The Local Government Academy is pleased to announce the **2014 Municipal Intern Program**.*

Program Description

The purpose of the Municipal Intern Program is to provide a service to communities by placing local graduate and undergraduate students in municipalities to complete summer internships. The students work full-time for a twelve week period during the summer focused on a particular project that could concentrate on financial management, human resources, personnel, geographic information systems, preparing for comprehensive planning, economic development, capital improvement planning, intergovernmental cooperation, planning and zoning, code enforcement, etc. - virtually any project you need assistance with. *A list of projects completed during the 2013 Municipal Intern Program is attached.*

Through an Intern Fair, the Academy will facilitate a quality match between the placement site and a student competent to fulfill the requirements of the project. However, the placement site interviews students, giving the placement site the ability to choose who will be offered their internship. Eligible placement sites include municipalities, Councils of Governments and municipal authorities in Allegheny, Butler and Washington Counties and all Act 47 Distressed Municipalities.

This program is made possible through the leadership of: Allegheny County, the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Washington, the Butler County Council of Governments and the Department of Community and Economic Development/Governor's Center for Local Government Services.

What You Can Expect to Gain from the Intern Experience:

- Valuable work product from a young professional with new ideas, energy, and enthusiasm.
- Successfully completed projects and reports.
- An employee with access to and knowledge of advanced technologies and multiple computer applications.
- An opportunity to test a potential employee for a full-time position. Many interns have been invited to continue with their placement site after completing the Municipal Intern Program and several have been hired permanently.
- You will be making a contribution to the local government profession. Many students indicate that their interest in future service in local government has grown as a result of working with you!
- The personal satisfactions of teaching, mentoring and helping another person develop career goals and important skills.

How It Works

Application Process:

- Eligible placement sites include:
 - Municipalities, councils of governments, and municipal authorities in Allegheny, Butler and Washington Counties and all Act 47 Distressed Municipalities in the region.
 - 9 placements in Allegheny County
 - 2 Placements in Butler County
 - 2 Placements in Washington County
 - 4 to 6 Act 47 or Early Intervention communities (regardless of county) in western Pennsylvania.
- **Potential placement sites must submit a detailed project description by February 21, 2014.** Each Municipality/Organization may submit up to two different project applications. Accepted projects will be notified by March 7, 2014.
- Project applications will be reviewed anonymously by a committee of previous municipal intern supervisors (*who are not applying for an intern this year*), past interns and university representatives.
- Attendance at the Municipal Intern Fair **is required** by a representative from each chosen placement site. **The Municipal Intern Fair will be held March 21, 2014 between 12:30 PM and 2 PM at Carnegie Mellon University.**

Suggestions for Competitive Project Applications:

- Be detailed in your description of the overall benefit of the completed project. Your application will be competing among applications from many other potential placement sites. Try to make the reasons your application should be selected stand out.
- Demonstrate impact. Describe how the project will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government; contribute positively to community development and quality of life socially, economically or environmentally; promote intergovernmental cooperation; etc.
- Show how students will learn. (Exposure to municipal operations; opportunities to test classroom theories and knowledge; opportunities to participate in municipal government through meeting attendance, citizen interaction, service delivery, etc.)
- Review the attached 2013 and 2012 Intern project document for ideas. If a past project is similar to one that you would like completed, feel free to contact the Manager or Secretary of that municipality to see how the program worked for them.
- Because of the amount of work accomplished by the students who have participated in the program in the past, it could be helpful to list a secondary project which would be assigned to the student should he/she complete the main project.
- Interns enjoy opportunities to attend council and/or staff meetings and exposure to other professional development experiences. To that end, the municipality benefits from completion of the project while providing the student with a valuable learning experience. Highlight the professional development opportunities you could provide the intern in your application.

Do not hesitate to contact Local Government Academy with questions.

Requirements of Placement Sites (if selected)

- The placement site is responsible for selecting and hiring an intern that best matches the skills necessary to complete the project. While the Academy will assist in facilitating a match through the Municipal Intern Fair, the Academy is not responsible for making final selections. **Students must be currently enrolled and returning to school for the fall semester. Recent graduates, who are not returning to or starting new classes in the fall, are not eligible.**
- A specific work plan to direct the tasks of the intern throughout the project.
- Supervision and regular interaction with the intern, including adjustments in the work plan as needed.
- Provide appropriate workspace and environment so that the intern can complete the project successfully.
- Interns are excused from your work site to attend a full-day intern development session hosted by LGA (Summer Date TBA).
- Interns are excused to attend LGA educational programs during the time of the placement and must provide a report on the program to you.
- Interns are to complete the on-line Sustainable Community Essentials Municipal Certification (hosted by Sustainable Pittsburgh) for their placement site so that they may learn about evaluating sustainability in municipal operations in preparation for the Intern Development Session. Supervisor will provide information and assistance to the intern in completing the application. Communities that have previously completed the on-line sustainability assessment will provide a summary of their results for intern to review.
- In order to ensure that the internship experience is as valuable as possible, interns will be evaluated much like an actual employee in a similar position. Using forms provided by the Academy, mid-point and final evaluations of the intern's work are required.
- The placement site may choose to perform their own evaluation in addition to the Academy's standard form. The placement site will also be asked to provide information about their overall satisfaction with their participation in the internship program.
- A detailed time sheet must be kept and submitted along with a final payroll report showing the hours for which the intern was paid.
- Final reports and other work projects should be submitted to the Academy.
- **Intern and Supervisor should plan to attend the Recognition Luncheon to be held August 14, 2014 at the Engineers Society of Western PA in Pittsburgh.** This important event highlights the intern and community accomplishment. Additional representatives from your municipality are welcome to attend. A formal invitation will be mailed mid-summer.

Financial Obligation:

- The internship is 12 weeks in length starting in mid to late May and ending in August. The Academy is willing to be flexible with a start date agreeable to both the intern and the placement site as long as the 480 hours are fulfilled by August 31. **This year, graduate students will be paid an hourly wage of \$10.00, undergraduate students will be paid \$9.00 per hour, and ACT 47 municipal interns will be paid \$11.00 per hour.**

For Example: 12 weeks x 40 hours/week = 480 hours

480 hours x \$10.00/hour = \$4,800.00 total compensation for Graduate interns

480 hours x \$9.00/hour = \$4,320.00 total compensation for Undergraduate interns

- **Placement sites will put the intern on their payroll for the summer.** A grant administered by the Academy will cover 50% of the intern's wages for up to a maximum of 480 hours of work and 60% reimbursement to Act 47 municipalities. **The Academy will distribute a grant of half the total wages due to each placement site made in two payments at the mid-point (July) and after all time sheets and evaluations have been turned in at the end of the project (September).**

- **The placement site will receive a valuable, high quality employee for the summer at an hourly rate of just \$4.50 to \$5.00!**
- **The placement site is responsible for payroll taxes and workers compensation coverage.** Upon placing the intern on the Placement sites' payroll, the Placement site must have the intern complete a W-4 form, 1099 form, or similar. Interns are not eligible for benefits.
- Many municipalities have decided to retain their interns beyond the program's twelve-week period. While the Academy encourages municipalities to take advantage of the valuable service available from interns, the municipality must assume full responsibility for any extension of the internship experience.

Projects Not Chosen for Inclusion in the Program:

LGA anticipates another significant response to the Municipal Intern Program. Therefore, there are most certainly going to be quality projects not selected to receive an intern through this program. There may also be students interested in an internship that will not be placed.

The Academy will furnish participating academic institutions with a list of unassigned projects and a contact at the municipality. Municipalities will have the opportunity to negotiate a separate arrangement with students who would like to secure an internship.

Comments from Past Intern Supervisors

"Steve is a very motivated person...He is fully committed to producing a quality report that will help to shape future policies and programs in the City of New Castle."

Christy Santangelo, Financial Officer,
Department of Community Development, City of New Castle

"Jeremy has been instrumental with our new records management system and is working hard to understand the system. He continues to find solutions to system problems so that our staff will be able to work with the system in an efficient manner."

Christina Walker, Administrator/Secretary-Treasurer, Washington Township

"John has met, and in most cases, exceeded our expectations. He has taken a keen interest in every aspect of local government. John has been a great asset to our city this summer and we have no doubt that he will succeed in the public sector."

Scott Andrejchak, Former Finance Director, City of Clairton

"Our intern has been able to take our project and 'run with it' to a level that far exceeds our expectations for an undergraduate student. Work is at the graduate school level . . . Lindsay is well organized and works to a high degree of output with a minimal amount of supervision . . . Extremely motivated."

Jeanne Creese, Former Township Manager, Collier Township

"John has been a great asset to North Franklin Township. He is self-motivated and pro-active. He is not afraid to offer suggestions and/or interject his view on Township matters. I think his experience here at North Franklin Township will benefit his future in local government. He has been a tremendous help this summer."

Jackie M. Kotchman, Secretary/Treasurer, North Franklin Township

"It has been an honor and a privilege to work with Julie during her tenure as intern with County Council. She is a strongly self-motivated, creative and enthusiastic person with unlimited energy. Julie's steady dedication to the completion of her projects has truly benefited the development of our office. Her strong work ethic, along with her keen sense of humor and pleasant personality, has earned her the respect and friendship of both Council and members of staff."

Joe Catanese, Director of Constituent Services, Allegheny County

"Ethan has conducted himself in a very professional manner. Ethan has adapted well to working within the parameters of the local government sector. He is enthusiastic towards the project assignments and asks pertinent questions. He has been well-received by our municipal managers."

Wayne Roller, Executive Director, North Hills Council of Governments

"Alison was an excellent worker. She is very cooperative and friendly and developed the beginnings of a very good work product in the short time she was here. Her efforts will be of great benefit to the City of Pittsburgh for years to come. We were very sorry to see her go."

Donna DuBois, Assistant Director, Worker's Compensation Program Manager, City of Pittsburgh

"Chris did a fine job with minimal assistance and supervision. This updated comprehensive plan, of vital importance to the future of the township, would not have been possible without Chris' effort and the support of the Local Government Academy."

Tom Headley, Vice Chairman of Supervisors, Forward Township

"Nathan has been a big help to the City. His efforts played a major role in securing a loan from PennVest for the replacement of waterlines in the City. Without his support, we would have struggled to find the staff time to compile the necessary data."

Frank Piccolino, City Manager, City of Duquesne

"Rashad's genuine concern for the citizens and their needs bodes well for a career in public service."

Thomas Stoner, City Administrator, City of Aliquippa

Supervisor Comments (continued)

"Lia was more helpful than anyone could have imagined. The Personnel Policy that we had been working on for the last ten years is now completed. It was written in such a way that making revisions to keep it current will be easy."

Joseph Rost, Superintendent, Municipal Authority of the City of McKeesport

"Jaime has been a great help getting our Main Street program going. This intern program was very worthwhile to our community and we were very happy to be a part of it. Good people are hard to find and we feel that Jaime was a very good employee."

Virginia Heller, Borough Manager, Millvale Borough

"Josh has shown me that there are still young people out there with great character, an outstanding work ethic and knowledge of their field. This young man will excel at whatever challenge he takes on."

Norbert Micklos, Chief of Police, Ohio Township

"It has been a real pleasure working with Jonathan. He has taken his own initiative on this project and done very well. His professional demeanor and excellent work has been a tremendous benefit to the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan."

Jason Dailey, Former Manager, Township of West Deer

"Jen continually seeks ways to improve on or add to the tasks she undertakes and to meet her objectives. She looks for and finds opportunities to partner with other groups and individuals to add value to her own efforts."

Mame Bradley, Commercial District Manager, Municipality of Mt. Lebanon

"I am grateful to the Local Government Academy for providing the Township this low cost alternative for completing necessary projects. This program allowed the Township to enhance the annual budget presentation at minimal cost. In addition, the Township is now able to review actual personnel costs, with all aspects of hidden payroll, in one concise document."

Judy Kording, Finance Officer, Shaler Township

"Ms. Compton is well-motivated, interested and bright. She has grasped the intention of the project, done research and come up with good suggestions. She has shown initiative by helping out when Borough counter and phone are overwhelming. She is very eager to know how government really works."

Mary Louise Bittner, Former Borough Administrator, Sharpsburg Borough

"Alison was the project manager for the development of the first Capital Improvement Plan for the Borough. Because of limited revenue available to fund capital improvements, it was necessary to develop a comprehensive document that would be a guide to Borough staff and elected officials. I cannot stress how important these types of internship programs are for students and communities alike. The student receives practical experience while the community receives the services of a dedicated, enthusiastic, and skilled student."

John Shepherd, Former Manager, Tarentum Borough

"I possess a very high level of confidence in Leah's abilities and administrative skills. Her productivity has been excellent, and has afforded me the opportunity to involve Leah in additional activities and special projects."

W. Christopher Lochner, Manager, Hampton Township

Comments from Past Interns

"This project has provided me with a great opportunity to learn about property laws, the foreclosure process, blight mediation and municipal ordinances. I have truly enjoyed this experience and believe that my knowledge will help me in my career field."

Sarah Stroney, Carnegie Mellon University Heinz College
East McKeesport Borough, 2011

"I have learned that efficiency is invaluable in local government, especially considering staffing and other limitations. I am grateful for having the opportunity to help the City of Washington establish a successful, beneficial ordinance."

Sarah Wheeler, Waynesburg University
City of Washing, 2011 & 2010

"To gain a real appreciation of how a local government works, nothing beats actual experience and exposure to the people, communities and processes that make it up."

Larry Chan, Carnegie Mellon University Heinz College
Castle Shannon Borough, 2011

"I am grateful to have been able to spend time gaining a perspective of the public side of land development, commercial properties, and planning. The information provided by meeting with the various stakeholders in the project was truly enriching."

Kyle Ross, California University of Pennsylvania / West Chester University of Pennsylvania
Turtle Creek Valley Council of Governments, 2010

"The project allowed me to see the policies that are necessary in order for a Borough to function efficiently... Overall, the internship was a great experience and exposed me to not only personnel policies, but also to the general functioning of a local government office, which allowed me to gain a clearer picture of what a career in local government would look like... I am considering a career in local government."

Rebecca Van Regenmorter, University of Pittsburgh, Brentwood Borough, 2010

"The township has provided me with a great learning experience beyond [my project]. The time is being taken to make sure I am involved in many different aspects and tasks outside of the [project], so that I am gaining as much knowledge and experience as possible."

Elizabeth Link, California University of Pennsylvania, Somerset Township, 2008

"This summer internship has been an incredible learning opportunity. I have had the good fortune of working on a truly intriguing project and I have been able to dabble in many aspects of local government. I have learned a great deal this summer."

Alexis Nadin, American University, McDonald Borough, 2007

"This has been a wonderful learning experience of the workings of a local municipal government. I know that I will value this experience in the long term as I move forward with my career. I am very appreciative to have had such an experience."

Nathan Offutt, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Tarentum Borough, 2007

"The Municipal Intern Program is one that is both an enjoyable and valuable experience. It is a pleasure to work in the City of Duquesne alongside passionate government officials and all around great staff, and the rest of the community leadership. There is a lot to be gained in seeing the inner workings of local government."

Ryan James, Allegheny College, City of Duquesne, 2006

"Through this internship, I have extended my knowledge of how local government works. Moon Township has provided me with a comfortable space in which to explore my professional aspirations."

Tammy Blackburn, Heinz School, Carnegie Mellon University, Township of Moon, 2006

"The internship has provided me with important insight to local government that I would not get anywhere else. I am quickly learning the importance of intergovernmental cooperation and its many benefits in local government. Wayne has been a great mentor and has provided me with the guidance to help me learn as much as possible. I have been welcomed into the office and have been provided with a fun and professional working environment."

Ethan Brinkman-Hansen, Carnegie Mellon University, North Hills Council of Governments, 2005

Past Interns Comments (continued)

"Many may think that the LGA internships only prepare one for a position in government. Yet my experiences with LGA have gone far and beyond that. Working in the finance department has given me the opportunity to learn about homes, real estate, taxes and social connections. Additionally, it has enabled me to acquire skills in analysis, budgeting, accounting, and management that any business employer would find of value."

Kesha Caldwell, Colgate University, City of Clairton, 2004

"The opportunity to work in a local municipality provided to me by LGA has increased my awareness as to the importance of effective and efficient administration by all departments within a government entity. Through this internship I have recognized the necessity of effective management of staff and resources to successfully serve the public."

Matthew Malinowski, University of Pittsburgh, GSPIA, Borough of Wilkinsburg, 2003

"This program has challenged me more than any class ever could. For the first time my work meant more than just a grade. It counted for something real that would have real impact on the citizens of Allegheny County. I am so glad that I was able to participate in this valuable learning experience."

Julie Reddig, University of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County Council, 2001

"The most valuable aspect of this internship was being included in various meetings that were representative of the daily operations and projects of a local government. Students would not have the skills necessary for some of the duties in local government, as they are unique from the private sector. Interns develop the much needed skills for a career in public service as well as the private sector through the Municipal Intern Program."

Diane Nowocien, GSPIA, University of Pittsburgh, Dormont Borough, 2000

"I am very glad to have been able to participate in this program. It has provided lessons difficult to find in any classroom setting. Coming from a background of having no knowledge of how our government operated, I now have a fairly clear picture of the daily operations inside a municipal building."

Heidi Watt, Carnegie Mellon University, Franklin Park Borough, 1999