

Fairfax County Youth Leadership Alumni News

Youth Leadership Program Alumni Internships: Focus on Summer 2007



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Fairfax County Government continues to support the Youth Leadership Program Alumni internships. The alumni portion of the YLP program is in its second year and provides clear evidence of the long term impact and importance of YLP. The viability and sustainability of the YLP program is apparent in the work accomplished by our college interns.

There were an impressive number of applications for the college level county internships for summer, 2007. Internships were awarded to Jennifer Garrott (YLP class of 2005) in the Department of Human Resources, Saba Shahid (YLP class of 2003) in the Department of Systems Management for Human

Services, Emily Hueber (YLP class of 2003) in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, Stephanie Shin (YLP class of 2005) in the Department of Recreation and Community Services, Stephanie Sourdillat (YLP class of 2004), Elizabeth Cole (YLP class of 2004) in the Department of Transportation, Laura Spurlock (YLP class of 2004), and Lauren Spratt (YLP class of 2004) in the Health Department and Agatha Kang (YLP class of 2005) in Community Services Board (CSB).

All of the alumni interns are currently college students and some of their internships related directly to their career aspirations. The alumni serving in summer internships provided valuable services to

the county. *Their accounts of their internships appear elsewhere in this newsletter.*

These college interns met with the high school YLP interns during the July meeting in which participants discussed their experiences and began to create their middle school programs. A lively discussion between past and present YLP students revolved around college life and expectations and around shared internship experiences in Fairfax County. Informal connections and some laughs were shared over lunch.

The Youth Leadership Program hopes to continue to encourage an active role in local government for all its participants, past and present.

The goal of the alumni portion of YLP is to provide a forum in which to exchange opportunities, connections, goals and aspirations. To that end, we encourage you to share your news and ideas with us in the near future. Please contact Cynthia Szwajkowski with your updates at Cynthia.Szwajkowski@fcps.edu

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A Glowing Evaluation for High School Intern Jay Hurst

We received exciting feedback from the supervisors of current YLP students about their interns. For example, Jorge R. Arias, Ph.D., Disease Carrying Insects Program Supervisor wrote a glowing recommendation of Jay Hurst's work:

"Jay Hurst worked under my supervision through the Fairfax County Youth Leadership Intern Program this summer of 2007 in the Disease Carrying Insects Program, Fairfax County Health Department. From the onset I included him as a full member in my team, which is composed mostly of college graduates, and gave him the same responsibilities as the others. He

immediately fell into pace with the everybody else and at times outdid them. Throughout this period I was able to observe his working habits and skills. I consider him to be a very assiduous worker with very high ethics. He has been able to demonstrate his role as a leader (fulfilling very well the name of the program), as well as his ability to interact in a very diverse atmosphere. The job that he performed here at the Health Department required physical endurance and problem solving; all of which he clearly possesses. Jay is a very observant young man and has a thirst for knowledge. Through the program he has gained a good bit of understanding in

mosquito borne disease surveillance. At the end of his internship I offered him an opportunity to remain with us throughout the summer, however he had prior commitments with the football squad."

Dr. Arias went on to discuss his appreciation of YLP interns and their apparent enjoyment of the internship over the past several years:

"It is a pleasure to have the kids here in the program every year. Usually I have two or three. All the kids (that like field work) enjoy this program very much. I have had the same type of comments from the kids year after year. I love to give them the opportunity, and I treat them the same as I do

my college graduates, and they love it. Up to now they have all been an exceptional group. Thank you for having this program and I look forward to having more kids in the years to come."



Jay Hurst (Class of 2007), South County High School

College Level Internships: Great Fun, Wonderful Learning Experiences

JENNIFER GARROTT

(YLP Class of 2005) Lake Braddock

Internship: Department of Human Resources

I spent my internship in the summer 2007 with the Department of Human Resources. Since graduating from Lake Braddock Secondary School and the YLP program in 2006, I have spent a year at the University of Mary Washington. I had two good semesters where I made the Dean's List, competed on the track and field team, broke the school's pole vault record and made a lot of friends. But I have decided that the College of William and Mary is a better fit for me so I am transferring there for this upcoming fall semester. At WM, I will also compete on the track and field team, as a pole vaulter, and I plan to major in history and minor in film studies.

As a high school student in the YLP, I interned at the Sully Historic site in Chantilly and actually ended up working there on the weekends during my senior year at Lake Braddock. As a college level intern, I worked with the Human Resources Department at the Fairfax County Government Center. I was assigned to the Compensation section where I started off learning about the pay scales and job descriptions for county employees. I filled out multiple surveys sent to Fairfax County from other counties or third parties, requesting information on specific job descriptions or pay levels. I also set up and attended meetings with the HR contacts for each of the public safety divisions to discuss the Public Safety Survey that Fairfax County will be sending out to other counties in fall 2007.

I was able to learn about more than just the Compensation section of HR by sitting in on meetings that covered topics such as: Implementation Team for Pay for Performance Study, Economic Development Agency, and a request for proposal hearing. I was able to see the direct customer and employee service side of Human Resources by sitting at the Human Resources Central front desk. Through interviewing and writing articles about the Payroll division and the Organizational Development and Training section, I was also able to learn about their duties and responsibilities within Human Resources.

Two of the task forces with which I became involved were Succession Planning and Health and Wellness. For Succession Planning I was put in charge of designing a logo, which after about a month of effort and 50 some versions,

the official logo (see below) was unveiled at the Human Resources Department meeting during my last week of the internship. Look for it on the Fairfax



County web site in the upcoming months.

ELIZABETH COLE

(YLP Class of 2004)

West Springfield

Internship: Department of Transportation—Bicycle Coordination

I collaborated with Charlie Strunk to craft a school-age bicycle safety demonstration, conducted on-site observations such as measuring roads and collecting data. I also attended meetings to witness firsthand the consideration given to all transportation projects in the county including:

- Chipotle parking lot at Seven Corners meeting at VDOT
- Woodrow Wilson Bridge bicycle route meeting in Alexandria
- Vienna neighborhoods
- Washington and Old Dominion Trail



- Mountain biking in Wakefield Park

I was introduced to GIS imaging technology, data organization involving charting trail connections and interpreting maps.

In the internship, I learned to be adaptable. In an office where projects run the gamut, it was necessary to balance numerous ongoing projects while

beginning new ones. The Department of Transportation manages one of Fairfax County's most demanding services—accommodating the millions of citizens who use transportation everyday. I learned how DOT employees field a variety of questions and concerns from citizens and how the department as a whole is necessarily collaborative. For example, Capital Projects' jurisdiction overlaps with that of Transportation Demand Management and both of these divisions work in conjunction with VDOT. As an intern and as a witness of the ever-adjusting and ever-in-demand services of DOT, I learned adaptability.

The toughest issue during my internship was hypothesizing safety risks of a pilot bike program and interpreting maps. One of my assignments was to predict and account for potential hazards of a fleet of loaner bikes. Correspondence with Risk Management posed questions and even a few snags in the idea, and I researched and emailed already-established loaner bike programs to garner input. Foreseeing and forestalling a problem before it happens proved challenging. Interpreting maps was tough because isolating specific information from detailed maps demanded that I hone my knowledge of topography. At least I'll be a little less clueless the next time I consult a roadmap!

If asked to give advice to next year's College level interns, I would advise them to be open-minded, flexible and eager to learn. In a busy office, interns can be neglected. Do voice your willingness to learn and to be availing, and hopefully people will take heed and give you assignments. Do not assume that because you are less-qualified than the other employees that you are precluded from helping—not true! If anything, your department probably seeks your fresh outlook from an outside perspective.

College Level Internships: Great Fun, Great Learning Experiences

EMILY HUEBER

(YLP Class of 2003) West Potomac

Internship: Courts

The most valuable lesson I learned in my internship was the importance of patience. Working in the Court allowed me to witness various problems from people who all want their word to be heard first as an emergency. Meeting new people with varying problems brought me back down to earth. There were parents, grandparents, and children all in need of services offered through the county. With each case, employees need to treat people with respect and remain calm and quickly accommodate their issues. I developed patience quickly to be able listen, analyze the problem, and offer solutions. The county is vast in its resources and knowledge and patience are essential to answer the multitude of questions.

I utilized my Spanish and computer skills on the job, and learned more about the inter-workings of the court. The toughest issue I faced during my internship was the difficult situations I observed dealing with children. Everything was escalated and highly sensitive when young kids were involved. Often I worked with a family in the Domestic Relations Office and then a few weeks later I went to their court hearing to listen and follow through on what the judge would decide. On one occasion, I observed a case about physical abuse of a child. It was heartbreaking but I was reassured by the end of the day when I witnessed the judge's verdict and explanations.

I had the opportunity to sit in with caseworkers, domestic violence counselors, probation officers, in court hearings, and working with the clerks. From all of these experiences, I learned so much and it has helped me make further graduate school and job decisions. Another piece for future college level interns is to enjoy the people you work with and try to get to know them. My coworkers were amazing and never talked down to me or treated me as anything less than their equal. These were people with families and I'm a college student, but despite the age difference, I became close and comfortable with everyone in my office. I loved my experience and time spent at Domestic Relations. Each day was a learning experience and I benefited from dealing with new people and new cases each day.

LAURA SPURLOCK

(YLP Class of 2004) Hayfield

Internship: Health Department

Hello fellow YLPers! I hope everything has been going well with you in the last few years since we last got together! Things have been going great for me! I attend the University of Virginia where I am in Delta Zeta as well as Cheerleader for the Varsity team. I love being on the field for football games and the court for basketball—it's so exhilarating. I am pre-med, working for an RN to Bachelor's of Science (BSN) in nursing through the UVA's nursing program. From there I plan to work for a few years before returning to medical school, though I'm not quite sure which medical schools I want to apply to just yet.

This summer, I interned at the Fairfax County Health Department, working specifically with the Tuberculosis Program Coordinator. It has been a great experience, allowing me to help out all while learning an incredible amount of information about TB: statistics, treatment, MDR/XDR, all the paperwork that goes along with it, and the intricacies of the county system that keeps them all straight. Working within a medical administrative building has showed me a lot about what I might see in the future—and now I'm sure I'll appreciate the relevance and importance of the paperwork whereas I might not have so done before! All in all, it was a great experience, and I am again grateful to the YLP program for providing me with yet another amazing experience! Best of luck to everyone with their futures, and hope you had just as fantastic a summer as mine!



STEPHANIE SOURDILLAT

(YLP Class of 2004) Herndon

Internship: Department of Transportation- Dulles Rail Project

One of the most important lessons I learned during this internship is how to communicate and interact in a professional environment. Most of the interaction I do on a regular basis is in school with my schoolmates. I am usually very informal

and not well organized with my time. This internship helped me learn how to be more responsible with my time, as well as being prepared. In school, I can write a report and never be questioned about it. In a professional environment, I felt as if when I write a report, it has to be very well researched and reliable, and I felt as if I had to know more about what I wrote about. I also read so many different reports dealing with different subjects that it improved the way I present reports, especially with research that involved statistics.

I would advise future interns to take full advantage of the opportunity. Think of this internship as a "mock-career", as if this was your first professional job. Even if this internship is not in your field of study, this is a great opportunity to learn how to act in a professional environment. It can definitely give you an edge over other college students who haven't had an opportunity to intern. Also, keep in mind that even if your choice of study doesn't relate to your internship, there might always be someone related to your field. For example, I am a Finance major, and my internship was at the Department of Transportation; the department was very big, and some aspects of it had to deal with their budget, so I could relate to that part of the department. I would also recommend giving a great impression to your supervisor, because this is a good opportunity to ask for a professional reference; getting a reference becomes more important as you approach graduation time, getting references that are impressed by you is good to give your future employers. Take this time to reflect on your future plans; if this internship relates to what you are studying, learn from the employees around you, and ask questions. I feel as if supervisors think of this as a learning experience for the intern, so they understand that this internship would benefit the intern more than themselves.

I am really grateful to have this opportunity; I got a lot out of it. Interchange between high school and college interns was a good idea. I would recommend having sessions like that, where high school and college interns can meet, and maybe talk longer and share experiences with each other. Personally, I think the best advice about college comes from a college student. If a high school student from FCYLP has any questions

College Level Internships

about college, they can contact me.

Editor's Note: We think Stephanie's idea is a good one and we would like to create more opportunities for exchanges between high school YLP students and YLP alumni. We invite you to attend part of the summer day session on July 24. Please email Ms. Noonan or Dr. Szwajkowski if you would like to attend.

AGATHA KANG

(YLP Class of 2005) Robinson

Internship: Community Services Board (CSB)

I am a rising sophomore at the College of William and Mary and I did my high school internship at the Springfield Franconia Family Resource Center.

This summer I had the opportunity to intern for the Victim Assistance Network at the South County Government Center in Alexandria. I was given interesting tasks that helped me understand what the Victim Assistance Network was all about. For example, I was given the task to make posters for Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault (DASA) that were to be put on display at the Fairfax Fair. While



making the posters, I realized that the Victim Assistance Network was a network under Fairfax County to help prevent and treat people who were domestically abused and sexually assaulted. The Victim Assistance Network did this through free therapy and a 24 hour hotline. I was also given other tasks that taught me more about what domestic abuse and sexual assault were, including methods to recognize and prevent them.

Not only was I given tasks to complete during the internship, but also I had the opportunity to attend domestic abuse and sexual assault

programs. Because I worked closely with the community educator at the Victim Assistance Network, I got to work outside the office and witness how the county worked directly with the people in the county. I especially enjoyed attending the programs because I learned so many facts about domestic abuse and sexual assault that I probably never would have learned if I had not done this internship.

Overall, the summer internship at the Victim Assistance Network was an amazing opportunity to meet new people, try something different, and learn about domestic abuse and sexual assault. Although this internship did not relate to my major, which most likely will be either business or law, I thought that the internship was a great experience for me. I am very glad that I was given the chance to participate in it.

LAUREN SPRATT

(YLP Class of 2004) Woodson

Internship: Health Department

This past summer I had the opportunity to participate in one of the Fairfax County Youth Leadership Program's alumni internships. My placement was with the Fairfax County Health Department; I worked mostly with the Medical Reserve Corps, which trains volunteers to help Health Department employees in the event of a mass epidemic. The main tasks during my internship involved computer database management for the MRC, which included updating volunteer profiles, communicating with volunteers via email and telephone for missing information, and

rearranging volunteer schedules so they were performing tasks that were most needed. Also, I attended an orientation session the MRC offers for first time volunteers. One of the long term jobs I worked on during my internship was uploading all of the MRC training courses on the internet and creating end-of-course assessments for each one. Overall, I thought this was a great opportunity to learn more about what our county government offers us and I strongly encourage you to apply next year!



YLP Graduate Updates

JOYCE MENG

(YLP Class of 2003) Thomas Jefferson

Currently, I'm studying abroad in Madrid. This past summer, I worked at Credit Suisse as an investment banking summer analyst in debt capital markets in Hong Kong. The summer of my freshman year, I worked at Taishin International Bank in Taipei, Taiwan! So, I've been traveling the world quite bit. My interest in microfinance and social entrepreneurship has also guided my research activities. Right now, I'm a grant recipient / scholar for the Foundation Nantik Lum in Madrid (www.nantiklum.org/), but back at the states, I work as a data analyst with FINCA (www.villagebanking.org/). Despite choosing not to go to Harvard (I picked the Huntsman Program of International Studies and Business at the University of Pennsylvania instead), I love my university.

YLP was truly inspiring, especially since it was my first formal internship. I still think back to my internship with Ms. Paris-Hicklin in the Community Recreational Services Department. Since I'm very interested in the collaboration between government and non-profits aimed for community development (microfinance is part of this process), what I learned is still very relevant to my work now. I am convinced of the importance of community government in promoting sustainable development and a strong sense of

"FCYLP was such an amazing program!"

**- Madiha Nawaz
(YLP Class of 2006)**

inclusion for diverse populations.

YLP Graduate Updates: On the Move, Learning and Having Fun

CYNTHIA WU

(YLP Class of 2004) Marshall

Currently I am at the University of Virginia studying pre-commerce. I'm still not 100% sure what I plan to major in, but I'm trying out a variety of subjects. I did the internship during the summer of 2005 with Braddock District Supervisor Sharon Bulova. I did research and other secretarial duties. I really enjoyed it, and I'm having fun in college but I'd like to warn the high school participants that college is a ton of work!

JENNY KEENER

(YLP Class of 2003) McLean

I graduated from high school in 2004. I had the Therapeutic Recreation internship and I have continued to work there over the summer since I had the internship because I loved it so much.

I am currently studying abroad in Australia, having the time of my life. Back at home, I attend Vanderbilt and am majoring in Special Education and minoring in Psychology. Last summer, I substitute taught in FCPS and will do that again when I get home from Australia. I see myself working for Fairfax County at some point after graduation as well.



K.C. O'MALLEY

(YLP Class of 2004) Chantilly

I am currently a "youngster" (sophomore) at the United States Naval Academy. I am an English major, but because everyone graduates with a B.S., I am taking a plethora of



math, science, and engineering courses. I had some great summer experiences, sailing to Newport, RI on a 40-foot sailboat with 6 other students, as well as being underway on the SSN Columbia, a fast-attack submarine based out of Pearl Harbor. I graduated from YLP in 2005, and I was in the County Executive's office – which was a wonderful experience. I met some very important people, saw various parts of the county and the different programs that make the entire county work. It gave me a wonderful understanding of the functionality, as well as the decision-making and politics in Mr. Griffin's position.

The YLP program was one of the highlights of my High School experience. I still brag about random facts I learned that makes our county so much better than everyone else's here at school (everyone here is VERY proud of where they are from!). I made some wonderful friends that I continue to keep in touch with.

GRACE MILAD

(YLP Class of 2003) Westfield

I'm doing very well. I'm in my 4th year at UVA. My major is Human Biology, an interdisciplinary major consisting of the sciences and humanities. I'm trying to think about everything that has happened between being at Westfield and now almost graduating from UVA. :) Too much! Right now, I'm applying to med schools, all in the area. I've finished most of my interviews. It's a really exciting time. I still have a "government" side to me. My Human Bio seminar deals a lot with policy on public health topics, I'm taking a Philosophy class on Justice and Health Care, and I'm interning with a refugee clinic & work closely with doctors and people of the Center of Health Disparities here at UVA. I don't want to bore you with excessive details. I definitely want to know what the other YLP alum have been up to. Hope to hear from you soon!



JEFFREY EGELAND

(YLP Class of 2006)

South County

I am currently attending Virginia Tech's Engineering Program and I was accepted by the "Men in Engineering" theme housing program. I am employed by two u m p i r e associations and I am working for Virginia Tech to help park cars during home football games. I am attending the Engineering Expo and submitted several resumes to different companies including Exxon Mobile, Danaher, Northrop Grumman, and Lockheed Martin to name a few and might have an interview lined up with CGI. I would like to see a few engineering jobs available through the government through YLP for the alumni program. It's good to hear from YLP and I hope to hear back from you all.



I plan to minor in green Engineering by the end of my sophomore year and double major in computer engineering and ESM.

DIANA NGUYEN

(YLP Class of 2003)

Annandale

I am now a junior at Virginia Commonwealth University. I am majoring in biology and hope to go into the optometric field within a couple of years.

When I was with YLP, my internship was at the Wastewater Collection Division and that was a pretty interesting experience. One could kind of describe it like the TV show, "The Office," because pretty much I had my own cubicle and did paper work here and there. Therefore, that internship led me to know what to look for in any work field.

Overall, I am pretty content with where life has taken me so far and I am having a blast in school.

YLP Graduate Updates: On the Move, Learning and Having Fun

EUNMEE YANG (YLP Class of 2002)

Falls Church

I am graduating this year and planning to apply to medical school this fall. So, I am considering a full-time position, where I might work for one year or less. During the one year gap, I am hoping to gain more real-life experiences that will help me become more aware and knowledgeable about health-related issues.

MADIHA NAWAZ (YLP Class of 2006)

West Springfield

FCYLP was such an amazing program! Freshman year is pretty exciting, so different from high school! I'm currently attending American University and am majoring in International Relations.

Make Sure You Are On The YLP Contact List

Please e-mail your most up-to-date information to:

Cynthia.szwajkowski@fcps.edu

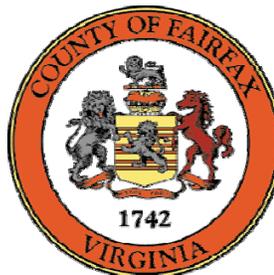
Please include your name, high school, school you currently attend, current address, email and phone number.

Applications for the Summer 2008 College Level Internship are available at:

http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/FCYLP/FCYLP_Alumni_College_Internship_Program.html

All applications are due to be submitted by February 15, 2008 at the latest.

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