

SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

2024

EMPLOYER MANUAL

United Way of Southwest Virginia
Ignite Program



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A NOTE TO EMPLOYERS

Everyone remembers their first experience working.

We remember that first call where everything spoken after, “You got the job!” faded into the background while our smiles grew wide. We remember the faces of the people we interacted with daily; the desk, the front room, or even the field we spent the majority of our time; and that first feeling of indescribable accomplishment we got to experience with others on our team. Your commitment to the Ignite Program is offering this feeling of achievement and invaluable work experience to the youth in our region. Thank you for choosing to partner with us.

The internship component of United Way of Southwest Virginia’s Ignite Program provides our region’s high school students with a temporary summer work experience designed to help students gain career awareness and practical soft skills. Your mentorship of the student(s) who will be working with you and your business will influence many of their habits for their entire career. This is no small responsibility, but we are here to help you along the way.

This Employer Manual will serve as a go-to resource for you and your business before and throughout the program, along with United Way of Southwest Virginia staff support. Your investment in our region is helping to prepare the next generation of Southwest Virginia’s workforce.

Thank you for your support!



Travis W. Staton
United Way of Southwest Virginia
President and CEO

ABOUT UNITED WAY OF SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

United Way of Southwest Virginia fights for the health, education and financial stability of every person in Southwest Virginia because they are the building blocks for a good quality of life.

Through an initiative-based cradle-to-career approach, United Way of Southwest Virginia is creating sustainable solutions to address the challenges facing tomorrow's workforce. United Way convenes cross-sector partners to make an impact on the most complex problems in our region. Through collaboration with government, business, nonprofit and individuals, United Way innovates for positive, lasting social change. With a footprint that covers nearly 20% of the state of Virginia, United Way of Southwest Virginia programs and initiatives serve the counties of Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Floyd, Giles, Grayson, Lee, Montgomery, Pulaski, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, and Wythe, and the cities of Bristol, Galax, Norton, and Radford.

For more information about United Way of Southwest Virginia, visit www.unitedwayswva.org.

ABOUT IGNITE

Young adolescence is a time of intense identity formation and high school students are discovering who they are and finding their place in the world. Recent studies have shown that engagement begins to drop in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade, and that as many as 60% of students are “chronically disengaged” by the time they enter high school. Developing ways to introduce students as early as 6th grade to career options and opportunities so they understand the relevance of what they are learning and stay on track, with a goal in mind, is absolutely critical.

Ignite aims to address these issues starting in middle school all the way through high school graduation, creating connections that keep students engaged in learning, inspiring them to take rigorous courses and build relationships with employers, and increasing the likelihood that they will be interested in and prepared for post-secondary education, advanced vocational training, and/or excelling in the workforce.

United Way of Southwest Virginia’s Ignite Program sparks career interest in the next generation of Southwest Virginia’s workforce through career awareness and hands-on learning. These summer internships are one component of Ignite that will help bridge the gap between the worlds of learning and work by connecting schools and students with employers and employees. Across United Way of Southwest Virginia’s service area, the Ignite Program is investing in the lives of over 30,000 students – enabling middle school and high school students to realize their potential and be ready to enter and advance in the region’s workforce.

More information about the Ignite Program can be found online at www.unitedwayswva.org/our-work/youth-success.

YOUR ROLE

IGNITE INTERNSHIP MENTOR

When preparing for your internship this summer, there are some responsibilities to keep in mind. Your student intern has come ready to learn about your organization and they've also come to develop soft skills they've not yet fully grown into.

To meet these needs, we request that the organization participating in an internship this summer **designate one employee to be the Ignite Internship Mentor**. This employee will directly supervise and hold the student intern responsible throughout the internship. This employee should be doing similar work to what is assigned to the student intern, or the mentor should be knowledgeable in it, so that they may be available to assist directly when need be.

Choose your Ignite Internship Mentor thoughtfully in order to better serve the student intern and provide a thoughtful work experience.

MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Before the Internship:

- ✔ Attend the Ignite Internship Mentor meeting scheduled by United Way of Southwest Virginia, date TBD.
- ✔ Create and provide a job description and various potential assignments for each student intern your organization may have.

During the Internship:

- ✔ Provide a safe work environment and any related training your student intern may need in order to do their work effectively.
- ✔ Evaluate the student intern's performance periodically and sign off on their weekly logs. Be their point of contact and check in with them every time they come to your organization to work.
- ✔ Provide a structured process for expectations and responsibilities along with applicable projects or daily work the student intern can complete.

After the Internship:

- ✔ Fill out any required reports and/or surveys about your summer internship from United Way of Southwest Virginia.

MAJORCLARITY

THE SOFTWARE

Your organization has access to a career readiness software called **MajorClarity**.

You should be given a secure access code by United Way of Southwest Virginia to access your account. **United Way of Southwest Virginia will send an informative email about MajorClarity to all participating mentors and organizations.** Feel free to reach out with any questions you may have or ask questions at the Ignite Internship Mentor meeting.

Important Note: For student safety, United Way and MajorClarity have worked hard to create a safe and convenient portal to ensure a streamlined and secure application process.

We advise that students not contact employers outside of MajorClarity, and please keep your contact with students through MajorClarity up until the interview.

RESUME AND COVER LETTER

Ignite's summer internships will be a first chance for many high school students to get real work experience. Many students will include:

- ✔ **various activities and clubs**
- ✔ **volunteer experience credentials**
- ✔ **they have earned, and**
- ✔ **classes they have taken.**

instead of referencing past employers on their resume. This tells the story of what they've been doing in school and in their community!

ABOUT THE INTERNSHIP

INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS

United Way of Southwest Virginia's Ignite Program provides our region's high school students with a four-week summer internship component designed to teach critical workplace skills and prepare students for the workplace through hands-on work experience. Internships bridge the gap between the worlds of learning and work by connecting schools and students with employers and employees.

Length of Internship

The internship this summer should take approximately four (4) weeks or more to complete. Summer internships will need to take place between **June 1 and July 31, 2024**. United Way of Southwest Virginia recommends about 16-20 hours of work per week, depending on the employer's preference and needs of the intern.

Payroll & Timesheets

Pay for **ALL** of the internships should be listed at \$12.00 or current minimum wage. **Employers may hire a student at a rate higher than \$12.00 after the interview process is over and they are ready for employment in the program.** Payroll information, timesheet requirements, and other information concerning payment will be between the student and the employer. If there are any issues in payroll procedure, United Way of Southwest Virginia must be alerted.

United Way of Southwest Virginia will request a weekly total of hours worked from the student AND mentor. These hours should match and will be used to track internship hours completed.

Work Schedule

Each student who participates in an internship this summer will need to complete a total of 80 program hours plus 2 pre-employment training hours. Each student's work schedule at their work site will look different. It is up to the employer and the student to come up with a schedule that works for them.

Presentation

At the end of the internship all students will complete a presentation explaining their experience from the internship. In addition, select students may be asked to participate in a live presentation about their work experience with their employer. You will be notified if your intern is selected for a live presentation.

Pre-Employment Training

The student intern will need to participate in United Way of Southwest Virginia's Pre-Employment Training and be **paid by the employer**. This training will count towards the student's total amount of 82 hours worked.

Absence

Employers will instruct interns in their own protocol when it comes to what absences count as excused or unexcused. Interns will not be paid for the hours they miss for an absence. However, students are encouraged to work with their Ignite Internship Mentor to makeup their missed hours.

Communication for an absence must be done through a phone call directly to their Ignite Internship Mentor. If a student notifies their mentor that they will be coming in late or notifies him/her that they cannot come in at all, they must call at least an hour before their original start time. Students may not alert their mentor of an absence or a late arrival through email, text, or social media.

WORTHWHILE WORK

YOUR INTERN SHOULD BE...

...doing work specific to a field or department.

- Assisting with projects and implementation
- Online research
- Data analysis and compilation marketing/social media
- Helping to raise money

...completing general office or daily work.

- Filing and organizing
- Data entry
- Answering phone calls and general emails

...handling other miscellaneous projects.

- Taking notes, serving as a meeting secretary
- Brainstorming
- Organizing online or physical work spaces
- Building databases

YOUR INTERN SHOULD NOT BE...

- ...completing work that would take the place of a full-time employee.
- ...doing copious amounts of job shadowing or observation work.
- ...working alone for long periods of time.
- ...traveling in a car alone with any adult associated with the internship site.
- ...working alone or with only one other adult in an isolated environment.

FIRST WEEK GOALS

The internships this summer will come with plenty of exciting opportunities for you and your participating student intern. United Way of Southwest Virginia asks that you make sure to complete these goals below within the first week of your student intern being on site. These steps will ensure you and your student intern are on the same page throughout the program.



Welcome Tour of Business

- Staff introductions
- Orientation of work space
- Instructions on where to park



Organization Overview and History

- History of organization
- Mission and goal of organization
- Any recent developments/accomplishments



Terms and Conditions Discussion

- Payroll information
- Procedure for absences
- Unacceptable behavior
- Dress
- Cell phone/social media usage



Expectations and Goals

- Weekly logs and objectives
- Communication styles
- Daily and weekly tasks

WORKPLACE READINESS

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Develop Soft Skills

“Soft” or applied skills, such as teamwork, decision-making, and communication, are skills that help young people become effective employees and managers. Developing students’ soft skills is critical to their ability to contribute to a strong and vibrant workforce.

Appropriate Dress

All student interns must inform their Ignite Internship Mentor of appropriate dress for their particular workplace. Each employer will have different requirements when it comes to dress.

Email and Social Media

Student interns should use their school email and primary phone number to contact their Ignite Internship Mentor. Using a school email is important for consistency and alignment with their MajorClarity account.

A secondary email address should be provided if the student is a graduating senior or their school does not allow outside emails to their school account.

FOR STUDENTS TO KNOW

Student Safety

Your safety is what is most important.

Safety training will be a part of Pre-Employment Training. If you should ever feel unsafe, harassed, or discriminated against at the work site you should leave and immediately contact both your direct supervisor/Ignite Internship Mentor and United Way staff with any concern you may have.

Confidentiality

Everything you see, help create, or share in conversation at your workplace during the internship must stay strictly between you and your workplace. Do not share the information and work of others by mouth, text, or social media.

Unacceptable Behavior

You are going to be held responsible for reading and understanding all materials in this manual. If you fail to meet the guidelines in this manual, you will receive one strike by your Ignite Internship Mentor. If you receive three strikes, you will no longer be able to participate in the program.

STUDENTS WILL BE IMMEDIATELY TERMINATED FROM EMPLOYMENT IF...

...he/she is under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol.

...he/she uses tobacco products on your organization's property

...he/she participates in a fight on your organization's property

...he/she ruins, vandalizes, or destroys any of your organization's property

...he/she possess firearms, explosives, weapons, or any other hazardous material on your organization's property

...he/she lies or fails to report properly to his/her Ignite Mentor or on the weekly log

...he/she uses his/her cell phone excessively or does not follow the organization's cell phone policy

CONTACT INFORMATION

www.unitedwayswva.org/our-work/youth-success

Crystal Breeding

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