

Another Successful Year for Internship Programme

The joint Harvard Club of the United Kingdom (HCUK) and Harvard University Center for European Studies (CES) Student Internship Programme has completed its sixth successful year, with Harvard students once again benefitting from a range of internship opportunities with some of the United Kingdom's most distinguished employers. For their part, the HCUK's employer affiliates profited from their Harvard interns' intelligence, creativity and drive.

This summer brought challenges to the programme with changes in regulations governing the UK Youth Mobility Scheme that negatively affected the ability of US students to obtain proper visas. The HCUK and the CES felt it important that the program not lose momentum and decided to continue while waiting for greater clarification on rules. With a smaller pool of eligible students, we focused on filling the internships with the strongest financial support. In the end, only Harvard students with EU passports and students from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan were allowed to apply to the programme, since only students with citizenship from these countries were authorized to work in the UK at the time. Limiting the pool of applicants did not, however, mean reducing their quality and the positions were successfully filled and students have reported that they had excellent and meaningful summer experiences.

The summer of 2010 promises to offer opportunities to a greater number of Harvard students, as the visa issues regarding US students have been resolved. At the same time, new obligations - detailed in the enclosed materials and on www.hcuk.org - have been placed on employers. These may change the character of the offerings; for example, fewer small start-up firms or non-profit organisations may be able to participate because of cost, since employers will be required to offer a minimum wage, especially during the current economic downturn. However, the CES and the HCUK are convinced that the Student Internship Programme will be stronger going forward.

A summer internship through the HCUK-CES is more than just a résumé builder. It is a unique opportunity for the student to discover a world of professionalism and hard work, team building and high expectations. What is more, students gain crucial firsthand experience working outside the United States. It also allows students to benefit from the mentoring of alumni and brings current students in contact with the Club. The HCUK collaborates with the CES to offer students a wide range of professional work environments and to connect employers with Harvard students who are eager to hit the ground running.

Working closely with the employer, the CES devises the internship's parameters and sees that the employer's needs are met. The Center also pre-screens students in order to help employers arrive at their final decisions. Finally, the CES reaches out to Harvard undergraduates through advertising, by assisting students with the application process and by organising pre-departure orientations. One might say that the HCUK and the CES are the supporting structures to a transatlantic bridge. Under the auspices of the Summer Internship Programme, they bring together student and employer in a relationship that can have a profound impact on both. Such positive connections advance the cause of internationalisation and also, one need hardly add, alumni solidarity.

Students' internship experiences so far have been, almost without exception, fantastic. This past summer was no different:



Rares Pamfil (pictured above left with David Sisam) an intern at the grant making fund Arcadia Trust, reports: "My internship with the Arcadia Fund has taught me a lot about how a foundation works, and about the threats to the environment and to cultural heritage that the Fund tries to address. Despite being just a student intern, I have been given the opportunity to work independently on research that will be used in funding decisions, and have been allowed to propose improvements in some of the foundation's bureaucratic processes. This experience has helped me to shape new academic interests and career goals, and it has taught me more about what it means to work in an office setting. In addition to this, living in London was fabulous, as the city is very cosmopolitan and dynamic, so after spending just six weeks here I've decided that I'd like to come back very soon!"

Elizabeth Brook, an intern at Value Retail, an operator of luxury outlet shops, reports: "Working at Value Retail was a wonderful experience. Not only did I have the opportunity to get a hands-on insight into the branding of an international retail business whilst working with the marketing department, but the mentorship opportunities that Value Retail presented me with were incredibly valuable. CEO **Tony McAuliffe** a Harvard alum, made the time to host me for a Sunday brunch to talk about my internship, my plans for the future and such – quite the personalized internship experience!"

Max Wong worked at Pell Frischmann, an innovative firm of consulting engineers, and offers this praise: "Working here is a great way to know one's way around a consulting engineering firm. I was also involved in the financial analysis of the firm's performance. I felt that in this internship, unlike many others, I shared the same responsibility for the firm's success as any of my other co-workers... really being treated as an important part of the team made a huge difference to the internship experience. I valued the respect that my fellow colleagues gave me for this, and I learned to return it with good humour."

Wesley Hopkin (pictured here with Ed Miliband MP, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change) found his internship dynamic and exciting: “The high point of my experience was being able to witness the election of a new Speaker of the House after the last one resigned, an event that has not occurred in over 300 years. In one week I passed Tony Blair in the hallway, campaigned in an election, and nearly saw the ouster of the sitting Prime Minister – and that was only my first week on the job.”



The students’ enthusiasm for the Summer Internship Programme is matched, and often exceeded, by their employers.

Gillian McIlwaine, Public Programmes Manager at Sotheby’s Institute of Art, had this to say about her intern: “We had a great experience with **Hayley** this summer, she was very enthusiastic and bright and always keen to be involved in departmental discussions which we welcomed. We were able to rely on her for various tasks from welcoming our clients to putting together course handbooks. She was a great asset to our small team and the responsibility we gave her reflected that. As with our intern **Anna** from last year, we were very pleased with the high standards of another Harvard intern. We look forward to recruiting an intern from Harvard again next year.”

In 2010 the HCUK’s internship programme will offer a mentoring service for the interns, directed by **Yuko Thomas**, HCUK Executive Committee member. Mentors and interns interact on an informal basis, enjoy a meal or a social activity together, and connect ad-hoc via email, Facebook and phone for questions regarding matters both practical and professional. One student said, “I appreciate not only what I learned during the internship, but also the connection with HCUK while I was there!”

The Harvard undergraduates who participated in our internship programme are especially well prepared to meet the challenges they will face at Harvard and beyond. In order that future students and UK employers continue to benefit from our internship programme, HCUK members are encouraged to come up with exciting internship opportunities. The next group of leaders at Harvard will surely depend on them. If you are interested in participating in next year’s programme, please contact **Christy Colburn**, Student Programs Coordinator, Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, Harvard University (ccolburn@fas.harvard.edu) and/or **Jan Bunstead** (jan.bunstead@post.harvard.edu) if you are a potential employer, or **Yuko Thomas** (yuko.thomas@post.harvard.edu) if you would like to be a mentor.

1 December 2009 is the deadline for applications by employers. Please see www.hcuk.org for an employer application form, timeline, and guidelines.

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