



Developing Nonprofit Leadership Skills through Summer Fellowship at The Columbus Foundation

Internship

By

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PROJECT ABSTRACT

I will be pursuing a 10-week fellowship through The Columbus Foundation's Summer Fellowship program in the summer of 2022. I will be paired with a nonprofit organization that aligns with my personal and professional interests to work full-time for the duration of the program. Under the direct supervision of my host agency, I will complete a project to further the agency's mission, either through development/communications or programming efforts. In addition to the 40 hours/week at the nonprofit organization, I will participate in professional development and reflection experiences facilitated by The Columbus Foundation.

Participation in the program will enable me to grow personally, academically, and professionally. The reflective aspect of the internship strengthens my ability to articulate my purpose and vision. By managing a project, I improve my ability to set and reach goals effectively. Working collaboratively with staff at my host organization and The Columbus Foundation enhances my relationship-building skills. The consistent need to communicate professionally and effectively throughout the program builds my charisma. I will become a better leader as a result of the program.



PERSONAL STATEMENT

During my K-12 education, I attended five different schools, each with unique funding sources and demographics. My experience with these diverse institutions sparked an interest in educational pedagogy and the role outside forces play in impacting academic achievement. Ultimately, these schools led me to Ohio State to pursue a bachelor of science in special education with a specialization in early childhood education and a minor in nonprofit management. My interest in education stems from the role it can play in community development and strengthening my understanding of myself, others, and my world.

While attending public school I never questioned the rules and norms that were imposed on my classmates and me as elementary students. However, things changed when I found myself in a new learning community at the start of 6th grade. My private middle school, Leaves of Learning, challenged my idea of what it meant to be a school. The students in my classes were not always my age, my teachers lacked education degrees, and I only attended the program for 14.5 hours a week. My experience as a student was profoundly different from what I had become accustomed to, but nonetheless, I thrived in my coursework. My time at Leaves of Learning taught me that working smarter is better than working harder and that tradition needs to be questioned. It inspired in me a great interest in teaching and the role of the nonprofit sector in spearheading innovation and reform in education.

While a freshman in high school, I volunteered for a local nonprofit child care and family services organization, Columbus Early Learning Centers (CELC). I later joined the team through a paid position. This experience challenged my ideas of what a “charity” is and should be. Up until this point in my life when I pictured nonprofits, I thought of homeless shelters and food banks. I quickly found that many charities including CELC were complicated businesses with elaborate plans and overhead staff.

CELC’s mission of helping children in the first five years of development is the most efficient way to positively change a person’s life. A dollar invested in the first five years yields a rate of return of 14 to 17%. This is because a child’s brain is being built in the beginning of their life. It is much easier to build strong brains than rehab damaged ones. CELC instilled the value of efficiency in me and motivated me to study the nonprofit field so that one day I can lead an organization efficiently.



My experiences with these organizations instilled values of innovation and efficiency that led me to pursue a career in community development and education reform. However, what I have taken from these organizations expands beyond my academic and professional realms. The values that these groups taught me have a constant presence in my interactions with myself and my world. I am grateful to have learned from a rich and diverse community that has given me the tools to be an informed, well-rounded community member.

I hope to continue my journey of becoming an effective educator and community leader by pursuing a fellowship with The Columbus Foundation in the summer of 2022. The Columbus Foundation's Summer Fellowship Program would prepare me to be a future nonprofit leader by gaining valuable, hands-on experience. As a fellow, I would work full-time for a nonprofit organization that aligns with my interests on a project to be completed during the 10-week program. Additionally, I would engage in professional development opportunities through The Columbus Foundation on a biweekly basis. My STEP fellowship would allow me to live in Columbus for the duration of the program while I build the professional and technical skills needed to succeed as the effective education leader I aspire to be.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

For my STEP signature project, I will be completing a full-time fellowship at a Columbus nonprofit organization in the summer of 2022. The Summer Fellowship Program places eligible students with Franklin County nonprofit organizations for ten weeks. The experience will prepare me to be a future nonprofit leader by gaining valuable, hands-on experience by working with a highly effective organization that matches my interests through a paid, career-focused program.

After completing the application in December 2021 and the interview process and spring 2022, if selected, I will be placed by The Columbus Foundation with a nonprofit organization that matches my interests and skills. During the summer, I will work 40 hours a week with the partner organization on a project or objective that is meaningful to me and beneficial to the organization. Projects in the past have included developing and implementing a marketing plan to attract new mentors for the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Ohio's school-based mentoring program and administering the 8-week summer youth STEAM academy of the King Arts Complex.

In addition to the full-time work with the partner organization, I will also attend five professional development sessions hosted by The Columbus Foundation, an orientation, and a final luncheon. I will be required to write weekly blog postings capturing my experiences and lessons learned. The Columbus Foundation will use the blog to publicize and promote the Fellowship to the Foundation's Governing Committee, organizations, and the public. The audience of the blog may include future employers, so it serves as a networking opportunity. At the conclusion of the program, I will be invited to make a final presentation of my Fellowship experience.

The program begins in the first week of June 2022, and ends in the second week of August 2022; Exact dates are to be determined. A specific supervisor will be assigned to me by my host organization. I will receive a stipend of 6,350 for my work. Each fellow is considered an employee of the host organization and will be paid through the organization's payroll system.

I am pursuing a minor in nonprofit management. I have taken coursework through the John Glenn College of Public Affairs in nonprofit governance and fundraising that has prepared me to be a competitive candidate in the interview process and an effective fellow.



PROJECT GOALS

Participation in The Columbus Foundation Summer Fellowship program would enable me to grow personally, academically, and professionally. I believe that personal growth, community contribution, and strong relationships are the triad upon which happiness is built. I proactively pursue growth in each of these areas in each of my endeavors. Every goal that I set for myself must align with at least one of these three objectives. This fellowship will build my skills as a leader inside and out of the workplace, further the mission of an organization serving my community, and build professional relationships.

By working for an organization that aligns with my interests and crafting weekly reflections, I will strengthen my ability to articulate my purpose, vision, and end goal. Being able to clearly articulate my purpose and vision will enable me to be a better leader by improving my ability to articulate my team's mission and goals. Participation in the program will increase my confidence in my initiative, creativity, and resourcefulness.

Working on a project under a 10-week time constraint will strengthen my ability to accomplish tasks efficiently. I will have the opportunity to manage a project. This will strengthen my ability to set and meet goals, and improve my delegation and coordination skills while teaching me to use support and resources effectively. These skills will transfer to supervisory roles in the future.

By working as part of a team at my host agency and engaging in professional development experiences with my cohort and The Columbus Foundation staff, I will build and maintain close professional relationships. I will enhance my cooperation, communication, and trust-building skills by working as a team to complete a project. Additionally, I will learn by example how to motivate others and work towards a collective vision through my placement. Engaging with my cohort peers will build connections that have the potential to extend beyond my professional journey.

Completing a culminating presentation and publishing weekly blog posts for The Columbus Foundation constituents will strengthen my communication, specifically presentation, skills. Working with others in a professional setting will require me to consistently represent myself, the program, and my university well. This opportunity will give me experience in developing a persuasive argument through written and verbal communication. This experience will make me a more charismatic individual.



PROJECT BUDGET

PROGRAM EXPENSES			
Budget	STEP Funds	Personal Funds	Total Funds
Program Fee	\$0	\$0	\$0
PERSONAL EXPENSES			
Budget	STEP Funds	Personal Funds	Total Funds
Transportation	\$0	\$60	\$60
Living Arrangements	\$1,480	\$0	\$1,480
Food	\$500	\$0	\$500
Apparel	\$0	\$0	\$0
Material Goods	\$0	\$0	\$0
MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES			
Budget	STEP Funds	Personal Funds	Total Funds
Miscellaneous Travel Needs	\$0	\$0	\$0
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0
Reporting Back – Poster	\$20		
STEP Funds Total	\$2,000		
Personal Funds Total	\$60		
Budget Total	\$2,060		
ARTICULATION OF EXPENSES			
<p>Completing the internship will require me to live in Columbus, OH for the summer of 2022.</p> <p>Transportation fees include the cost of driving to and from the host organization from my residence. I will cover these expenses through my personal savings. I have allocated \$148 per week to be spent on rent and utilities (\$642/month). I have allocated \$50 per week to be spent on groceries.</p>			

