This summer I participated in an internship at Institut Imagine’s Ophthalmological Genetics Laboratory in Paris, France. As a research intern in the lab, I observed and assisted with a variety of projects relating to the lab’s research. My daily tasks often included performing protocols and then working with those in the lab to analyze results and determine the next steps. The skills I gained from this experience include an increased confidence in my laboratory skills, the ability to apply my knowledge of biology to real-world research, and a strengthened ability to analyze and interpret data. Beyond just the scientific realm, I feel I took a lot away from this experience in terms of the work environment. Because I was working in Paris, I spoke French throughout my internship. This was definitely an added challenge. However, it greatly improved my French skills, speaking so often and with only native speakers. In addition to the language, I learned much about working with those from different backgrounds and cultures from my own. This was an experience unlike any other I have had, and I feel I have grown a lot through facing the challenges of participating in an internship all while in a foreign country.

When it comes to informing my own path forward, this internship helped confirm some of the things I have been thinking about for my future career plans. I went into the internship thinking that although I would learn a lot about research and enjoy doing the daily work involved in that, I don’t have a strong interest in doing research as an ultimate career. Though the science behind everything is still extremely interesting to me, I’d rather have a slightly different vantage point. I’ve been thinking about a career in patent law, and I’m still considering that path after completing my internship.

I am so grateful to have had such welcoming and helpful co-workers and supervisors who were always open to questions or willing to show me how to perform different protocols. I learned quite a bit from all of them and thank them so much for their time and effort. If I were to give future interns any advice, it would simply be to ask questions, no matter how small you think they are. Even if you think it’s something you should already know, don’t hesitate. Most importantly, this is a learning experience, and you won’t learn if you don’t admit you don’t know something.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Abeona Endowed Fund for International Internships for making this internship possible for me. This has been an incredible learning experience on many levels, which would not have been possible without this generous funding.
I spent the summer of 2023 at Western University in London, a city in Ontario, Canada. As a student researcher, I learned about survival analysis and practiced skills related to exploring statistical literature and coding in R. As part of my work, I modeled the amount of time ICU patients spend on ventilators, using data from ICUs at several hospitals in London.

Having models that allow doctors and hospital administrators to predict how long patients will stay on ventilators enables hospital staff to predict ventilator availability. Knowing how many ventilators will be available in the near future can help doctors schedule surgeries since patients need ventilators after some procedures. In general, it also helps administrators plan and manage hospital occupancy, such as deciding whether and when to transfer patients. These models are especially important given the recent increase in ventilator usage due to the pandemic, making unoccupied ventilators more scarce and contributing to a rise in delayed and canceled surgeries.

Aside from developing these models and my statistical knowledge, I was surprised by - and I am very grateful for - the connections I made this summer, particularly with other research interns. I proactively reached out to people, allowing me to experience the joy of new friendships. I made friends with undergraduate, master's, and Ph.D. students from France, China, Colombia, Mexico, Germany, India, and England making for a very global summer experience. I will cherish my memories of adventuring with them and learning with them for a long time.

One of my greatest takeaways from this summer is that there is an important power in self-motivation and self-criticism. Throughout my internship, whenever I managed to finish one of my weekly presentations with a day or two left over before I presented, I had time to think, analyze, and ask more questions, allowing me to make more progress. Years and years of busy academic settings have left me somewhat dependent on strict deadlines as a motivator. While this has encouraged some great work, there is still potential for more thoughtful, useful, and progressive work. This summer, I was reminded that this potential could be fulfilled, given time and curiosity to reflect and criticize. I relished the gift of time and the opportunity to criticize my own work this summer, and I will continue to do so throughout my career and life.

I would like to thank my advisors, Camila de Souza and Felipe Rodrigues, for their guidance, support, and enthusiasm throughout my internship experience. I would also like to thank Carleton College and Anthony Tancredi ’85, who created the Abeona Endowed Fund for International Internships, which helped fund my experience in Canada. Additionally, I would like to thank Fulbright Canada and Mitacs, which together formed the Fulbright Canada Mitacs Globalink Program that organized and helped fund my internship.
This summer I worked as a research assistant at Sorbonne University, under the direction of Maria Rifqi and Christophe Marsala. During the 8-week period, I looked into the geographic, academic, social, and racial data of students accepted by Pantheon-Assas University, and tried to find if this data was a good predictor of academic success in higher education.

Prior to this internship, I set SMART goals that I would work to achieve during the period, and I am glad to say I was able to achieve them. For starters, I worked towards the SMART learning goals by being flexible with whom I was working with/under. At the start of the internship, there were a lot of moving parts and I was communicating with various people that helped expand my network. Eventually, after everything settled, I was able to connect with individuals within my team personally and develop a professional connection. As for the second learning goal I created, I was able to apply the skills I had picked up in machine learning and apply them to a real research question, and even present my results to the team at the end of my stay. Finally, I did all this in a French-speaking environment, and I was able to improve my command of the French language, to the point where I can function reasonably well within a mostly French-speaking work environment.

In working towards these goals, I also learned more about myself and my future plans. I learned that I do enjoy research, and especially research that uses machine learning to learn new things that are difficult to do with pure statistical methods. I also learned a lot more about French (and even European) culture while doing research. An added bonus as I also spent the past term studying abroad in Paris and learning about the socioeconomic, political, and cultural situation of Paris, and to a larger extent, France.

I would also like to use this opportunity to thank the Abeona Endowed Fund for International Internships for giving me the chance to participate in this amazing project. I truly enjoyed the time I spent abroad doing research, but it would not have been possible without their backing. The experience has been a major eureka moment for me in many ways, and I am truly grateful for their support.
This summer, I spent two months interning at a radio station in Paris, France called Beur FM as a “journalism intern.” I participated daily on two different radio shows for the duration of the internship. On “La matinale,” a lighthearted cultural show, I began giving weekly chronicles about museum openings and concerts. Towards the end of the summer, I invested more time into projects I designed myself. For example, I proposed to interview students who had immigrated to France from Maghreb (a region of 5 countries in North Africa). Beur FM is an identity radio station, with a large French audience of listeners with personal connections to Magreb. Additionally, I helped out with “Les Zinformes”, a political talk show each evening. Every day, I presented a chronicle about an international or local news headline. I selected the headline, researched the topic, wrote a 300-word script, practiced presenting my script in French, and then gave the report live on air in the evening.

I learned how to respond to a tight deadline, work independently, and express myself to audiences of different cultural and language backgrounds in an engaging way. On the political talk show, I presented chronicles while surrounded by French politicians, activists, union leaders, and lawyers. I was always the youngest person in the room by decades, and frequently the only woman. To present an engaging chronicle, I had to learn how to master my voice. To master my voice, I had to master confidence. To master confidence, I had to be grounded in space. To do this, I had to feel like I belonged even when everything about the experience made me feel like an outsider. By the end, I could laugh and make jokes. This was in part thanks to one of my bosses, Adile Farquane, who told me to envision that I was talking to one person when I spoke into the microphone.

I did not like broadcasting live on the radio, but I enjoyed the writing and research process. I liked the conversation style of the political talk show, but I did not like the entertainment value. One of the reasons that I struggled to enjoy the broadcasting is due to feeling imposter syndrome that was highly dependent on the context. My boss would introduce me as the “young American journalist”. I was treated with a lot of respect, and I wish I had felt during the internship that I earned that respect instead of thinking that I was pretending to be something I was not.

I am grateful for the financial support I received from the Fred D. Anderson Foundation - The Visiting Professor of American Studies and the Abeona Endowed Fund for International Internships. I am also grateful to the president of Beur FM, Djima Kettane who welcomed me to the company. My advice to other students looking to participate in an internship abroad is to find a supportive living environment that will energize you when you are tackling a cultural challenge that might seem daunting. This summer made me a lot more courageous.
Thanks to the Abeona Endowed Fund for International Internships, this summer I was able to complete an internship at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris. For the duration of this internship, I lived independently in Paris, working in a chemistry laboratory. From this experience, I was able to perform meaningful research and attain a greater understanding of what it is like to pursue a Ph.D. in chemistry. I was also able to work alongside people with numerous different cultural backgrounds and develop the skills necessary to navigate a foreign country on my own.

In this internship, I worked on an individual project, with supervision from my boss. A former Ph.D. student of hers had developed capsules with the eventual intent of carrying biomolecules for uses such as drug delivery. These capsules are formed through water-in-oil emulsions, but for biological purposes, the capsules must be transferred out of oil and into an aqueous solution. My work then entailed exploring other possible surfactant/oil combinations to determine the best method for creating the most stable capsules because the second stage of the work was to use various molecules to attempt to extract the capsules.

I found that this project had the ups and downs that I associate with scientific research. There were weeks at a time when I was trying numerous things, none of which worked. This was frustrating, as I simply had to be patient and keep exploring the project in different ways. Looking back, the negative results that I gathered were also useful, and it is important to gain an understanding of the difficult parts of research as well as the fun and exciting parts.

This internship, while interesting, has not completely clarified in my head what I want to do as a career. I have discovered that I do not want to enter academia, but that does not necessarily mean I do not want to pursue a Ph.D. I have also learned from this experience that having a place of work where I like my coworkers and enjoy spending time with them is important to me. Being happy to see and chat with my lab mates each day improved my experience in this internship. This realization will be important to me in the future as I have developed a greater understanding of the conditions in which I am happiest at work.

This internship gave me the opportunity to learn what I wanted: about being a chemistry Ph.D., about performing research, and about living in a foreign country. I have also, more unexpectedly, learned what I need from my work and made friends through this experience. And, with the skills and knowledge I have gained from this internship, I will be more confident in whatever the future holds.
This summer I worked at De Helleborus, a permaculture farm and hostel located in Groningen in the Netherlands. The hostel consists of fourteen accommodations, including private tents, group tents, and dorm beds. My responsibilities for this internship included cleaning accommodations, helping with the garden, assisting with construction projects, and working as a host. I primarily occupied the hosting position where I greeted guests, gave tours of the campsite, and spread the mission of De Helleborus.

The ultimate goal of De Helleborus is to become entirely self-sufficient. The owners are passionate about creating a space that does not harm the environment but instead uplifts and preserves the natural world. The hostel attempts to do this by recycling shower water, using compost toilets, cultivating the garden, giving the camp cats our leftovers from dinner, etc. I gained many skills through living in this environmentally conscious atmosphere such as how to support an organic farm, build necessary structures for permaculture living, and minimize water and food waste. A major takeaway for me was the amount of work required to live in an environmentally positive way. It can be tedious to check the poop bins every day, weed for six hours, or live in a tent. However, these everyday efforts are what have brought De Helleborus closer and closer to becoming self-reliant and can provide a road map for how to move forward as climate change affects the planet.

In addition to broadening my awareness of the work required to combat climate change, this internship helped me grow as an individual. I discovered the importance of frequent and clear communication in a professional context. Having conversations, even if they are uncomfortable, provides an opportunity to resolve problems and feel heard. I was able to share my concerns about how the hostel treats employees and candidly describe the emotional tolls of living and working at De Helleborus. It was a gift to work at a place with a mission I believed in and feel like I had the ability to make a difference by communicating what changes were necessary to create a healthy working environment.

I advise other students pursuing internships to take the Career Center’s required reflection exercises seriously. Genuinely reflecting on what you are learning maximizes how much you gain from your experience. Internships are valuable opportunities to discover how to navigate personal and professional worlds.

I would like to thank the Career Center and the Abeona Endowed Fund for International Internships for providing me with this opportunity to contribute to efforts combating climate change and experience self-growth and discovery. Additionally, I am forever grateful for the lifelong friends I made at De Helleborus and for my manager, Hannah. Her passion and grace is a blessing and inspiration to everyone who surrounds her.
Abeona Endowed Fund for International Internships

Data Analysis in Paris: A Journey in Self-Discovery
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After spending last spring term abroad in Paris, I stayed in the city to participate in an internship with EREN, a French research team in the field of nutritional epidemiology. Before I go on, I’d like to extend heartfelt thanks to the people who made this experience possible, including the OCS office for the endless logistical and visa support, IFE for matching me with an internship and providing housing support, EREN for being wonderful hosts, and of course, the Abeona Endowed Fund for International Internships for providing me with the financial resources this experience required.

While my internship duties were mainly confined to data manipulation and analysis, my learning went much deeper than that. Most obviously, navigating housing, meals, transportation, and time management in this new environment, all in a language I started learning just two years ago, was no small feat. I’m sure I stuck out like a sore thumb those first few weeks, asking for help in my too-formal French and committing about every American-ism out there. But of course, I learned with time. I picked up some French slang, memorized directions to places I commonly went, and finally mastered how to type on the French keyboard at work.

Like every other part of this experience, the internship itself defied all preconceived notions. What I thought would be a highly collaborative, fast-paced position instead had me sitting at a desk alone with no real coworkers. My misconceptions showed: that on my first day alone, I managed to show up at the wrong building, dress up too nicely for the dress code, and struggle to operate the outdated computer system. As time went on, the unexpected realities piled up, so one of the biggest things I learned from this experience was how to work under unfamiliar conditions and adapt to a suboptimal environment. To that point, my boss was too busy to meet with me most days, and my email communication with her wasn’t exactly standard thanks to language difficulties and that darn French keyboard layout, so working independently and filling in learning gaps myself were important keys to success.

Though I did not work formally with anyone other than my boss, I did make some friends at the company. Each day at around 12:30, a group of us - all interns and grad students around my age - would eat a leisurely lunch together, outside if at all possible. As close to mandatory as any of my actual job duties, this was an important source of relaxation and connection. These lunches, which lasted long after everyone had finished eating, are a perfect manifestation of French culture as it differs from ours. The cliché I learned, is true: while Americans live to work, the French simply work to live - no job is more important than enjoying oneself. And so, as I reflect upon my wonderful time in France, I see I learned not only loads of technical skills but how to live a little better, too.
This summer I interned with the Intel Unit for the World Jewish Congress (WJC) in Brussels, Belgium. At the WJC I researched various forms of extremism, including antisemitism, that are not yet accessible to the general public. Prior to arriving in Brussels, I spent 10 weeks on the OCS (Beyond) Nationalism and Xenophobia in Central and Eastern Europe where I learned about nationalism both past and present in Bucharest, Romania; Belgrade, Serbia; and Mostar and Sarajevo, Bosnia. The program took us to important sites of history and on the side I explored important Jewish historical sites. I was fascinated by everything I learned on OCS and was eager to continue learning and exploring Jewish history and themes of nationalism and its relationship to antisemitism.

OCS gave me ample historical context and personal perspective on issues of nationalism that complimented the work I did with WJC. At the WJC, I researched people, organizations, and events that express forms of extremism and hate that pose a threat to the safety of a range of communities. Through this research, I gained a greater understanding of larger tropes and patterns of extremism.

The Intel Unit is entirely virtual with members spread across Europe. In Brussels I worked hybrid, splitting my time between cafes and the WJC headquarters. Although no one from the Intel Unit was based in Brussels, I became well acquainted with WJC staff from various departments. The more time I spent in the office, the more I noticed how consistently good my colleagues were at taking work breaks. Taking social breaks and having communal lunches gave us the opportunity to get to know one another and talk about our own experiences, about being Jewish in Europe versus America, and other topics. When I incorporated more breaks into my work routine I found that my research, which at times was very emotionally and intellectually difficult, became more manageable. I refined my ability to focus and became a productive and efficient researcher.

Over the course of my internship, I formed close relationships with a few of my Intel Unit colleagues. One thing I learned from my colleagues is that it’s always better to ask more rather than fewer questions. When I became more comfortable asking about anything that sparked my curiosity or confused me, I felt more confident with my work. At times the research was overwhelming and heavy and I found support in the honest conversations I had with my colleagues about what extremism and antisemitism mean for the world and my community specifically. I appreciated the space and time that was given to fully process the gravity of our research.

Working at the WJC allowed me to combine my personal and educational interests in nationalism and extremism and turn the work into something more concrete that will help inform others about the risks of extremism. I look forward to continuing to reflect on the work I did this summer, and I am grateful to the Abeona Endowed Fund for International Internships for its financial support, which gave me the ability to pursue this internship.
Exploring Through the Internship Experience

Luke Wharton ’25
*Computer Science*
Tag Video Systems | Tel Aviv-Yafo, Israel

Thank you to the Abeona Endowed Fund for International Internships for making my internship experience this summer possible. This summer, I worked for Tag Video Systems, a software-based integrated IP multi-viewing, probing, and monitoring solutions for broadcasting and content distributors. My main task was creating and implementing a web app designed to show and search available streams located on a virtual machine for testing purposes.

Through this process, I was able to learn many valuable skills that will benefit me for years to come. First of all, I gained real-world experience implementing the ideas and knowledge I have gained in school to a real-life application. This was fascinating as I navigated the difference in pacing and the workload associated with this setting. This also provided me with the freedom to explore and build this application as I saw fit. There was no predetermined solution to my work, allowing me to experience a more open-ended and creative software design experience. The creativity involved in the experience is something that I did not expect going in, helping me work on my creativity skills in a way that I was surprised by.

In addition, I had to work effectively to stay on top of my work as there were no partial deadlines for the project, with all work going towards the end goal of a finished application. Therefore, I had to make sure that I was staying on top of things and really making process towards this end every week despite not experiencing the same set deadlines that exist within a school setting every few days. This provided me with the necessity to improve my time management skills and forced me to keep myself accountable on the day-to-day.

Moving forward, I plan to continue my career interest in software and computer science, but maybe to a lesser extent. I did enjoy the coding aspect of the internship, but I now realize that I might want some diversity in my work life with my time not being devoted exclusively to coding. I thoroughly enjoyed my interactions with my coworkers and others as we talked about problems and work-related issues, making me think I might want a more forward-facing position and interactions. Overall, I am extremely grateful for this experience as a whole as it provided me with my first real experience in the software world, improved numerous soft and hard skills, and provided me with insight into what I want to do with my life moving forward.

I would advise other students moving through the internship process to not be afraid to do internships in many different fields since it is easy to get locked into one state of mind about what you want to do with your life. The internship process is about exploration and discovery as well as developing skills, making it equally important to engage in a multitude of fields as you try to figure out what to do with your life.
During my two months at the Pharmacy Faculty of the City University of Paris, I worked on a project characterizing two mutant strains of Clostridioides difficile, a bacterium that can cause severe diarrhea and colitis. I used five microbiological procedures to examine key characteristics of the bacteria and identify phenotypic differences between them and a constant maternal strain. This internship was my first experience planning, organizing, and conducting a laboratory project independently. Despite some initial challenges, I significantly strengthened my organizational, time management, and problem-solving skills due to the guidance and modeling of my supervisor and labmates.

I learned many new laboratory techniques such as how to swab petri dishes efficiently, measure the germination of bacterial spores, and work in an anaerobic chamber. I will utilize these concrete skills in future microbiology courses and lab research which will contribute toward my path in medicine and/or biomedical research. I also improved my communication skills in several ways. First, I strengthened my ability to gather my thoughts and coherently convey them to my supervisor and others in my lab. By synthesizing my results and theoretical knowledge, I can have informed, efficient conversations regarding the next steps of the project and potential challenges that must be solved. Additionally, I worked on my ability to educate and explain complex scientific topics to people without a prior understanding of the subject, such as friends and coworkers outside the lab. Given my immersion in the French language, I also improved my written and spoken French skills.

Key lessons I have taken away from this experience include the importance of intellectual curiosity and challenge for my own satisfaction within a work setting. I enjoy working with others to analyze a challenge, research solutions, and use the scientific method during implementation. I learned that I am a person who appreciates having a clear, ordered plan of steps to complete a larger task, as it helps me feel accomplished throughout the process by completing smaller deliverables. As I pursue a career in research and/or medicine, I will certainly use each of these skills of project planning, collaboration, and communication in charting my path forward.

I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to live and work in a new country, improving my French and gaining cross-cultural understanding all while exploring a field of biology that is new and intriguing to me. Thank you to the Abeona Endowed Fund for International Internships for financially supporting my internship and making this eye-opening experience possible. Thank you to my supervisor, Frédéric Barbut, for mentoring me and giving me the responsibility to grow. Thank you to the Carleton Career Center, specifically Luke Klefstad, for providing consistent guidance, support, and opportunities for reflection. Provided my internship experience, I would recommend other students take advantage of the opportunities and connections presented by an internship by asking many questions and discussing new aspects of the career with supervisors. Additionally, continuous reflection on new skills and challenges will help students utilize their experiences to inform future career decisions.
Exploring New Areas in Research: An Unforgettable Summer in Paris

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Throughout my internship at CIRED (Centre international de recherche sur l’environnement et le développement) in Paris, I delved into the world of Data Science research, specifically conducting a quantitative analysis of the African air conditioner market. This experience has been both enlightening and transformative, leaving me with valuable skills and insights that will shape my future path.

One of the main aspects of my internship involved data collection on air conditioners from various websites using web scraping techniques. I also utilized natural language processing to analyze the gathered data. Through these tasks, I learned the importance of attention to detail and the significance of accurate and reliable data in research. The process of data mining, cleaning, and analysis equipped me with essential data science skills that I can apply in various contexts. The internship also provided ample opportunities for self-learning. As I navigated through the complexities of data science, I realized the value of being proactive in seeking knowledge and resources independently. This skill of self-learning is invaluable in an ever-evolving field like Data Science, where staying up-to-date with the latest technologies and methodologies is crucial. Moreover, working at CIRED exposed me to a diverse team with different cultural backgrounds and expertise. Communicating and collaborating with people from various disciplines broadened my perspective and enhanced my communication skills. I learned how to convey complex ideas effectively and adapt my communication style to suit the audience, an essential skill in any professional setting.

One surprising revelation during this experience was my growing fondness for coding. In the past, I was hesitant and disinterested in computer science work. However, as I immersed myself in data analysis and coding during the internship, I realized the power and practicality of coding in everyday life. I am delighted to have discovered a new passion and skill that I can utilize in future research endeavors.

I am most grateful for the guidance and support provided by my supervisor. Their mentorship and encouragement throughout the internship were instrumental in my personal and professional growth. Their willingness to share knowledge and insights significantly enriched my learning experience. Looking ahead, the experience gained during this internship will undoubtedly shape my path forward. I now possess a deeper understanding of the research process, and I am considering pursuing another research opportunity next summer. The internship has instilled in me the confidence to take on challenges and explore new areas in research.

In closing, I am incredibly grateful to the Career Center and the French Department for helping me find this enriching internship opportunity. Additionally, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Abeona Endowed Fund for International Internships for their generous support, which made this unforgettable summer in Paris possible. This internship has been a transformative journey, and I am excited to carry the skills and experiences gained into my future endeavors.
Alsdorf Internship Fund

My Transformative and Rewarding Venture in Minneapolis Community Organizing

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As I embarked on my internship with Cooperation Cannon River, a nonprofit community organization dedicated to social justice in Northfield and the Twin Cities Metro area, I knew I was stepping into a world that aligned with my deeply held values. This internship represented more than just a professional experience; it was an opportunity to develop crucial human and interpersonal skills that were lacking in my conventional classroom education.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Alsdorf family and all the donors who make unpaid social justice internships for those without the means to live away from home without an income. I would also like to thank my hosts and mentors at Cooperation Cannon River, who provided me with guidance and support throughout my internship. Finally, I am extremely grateful to the Carleton Career Center for its continued support throughout this process.

Communication and persuasion are skills that I've been eager to enhance, and my internship has been the perfect training ground. Effective communication lies at the heart of successful community organizing. I've had to articulate complex ideas, engage community members, and build coalitions. Additionally, problem-solving and critical thinking have also been central to my internship. Community organizing often involves addressing complex and nuanced problems that demand creative solutions. I've engaged in strategic planning, root cause analysis, and innovative approaches to tackle societal challenges. Furthermore, collaborating alongside community leaders, activists, and stakeholders has taught me the value of teamwork and relationship-building. These experiences have sharpened my skills which will serve me in the future. As I consider a path forward through law school, this internship has prepared me to navigate complex legal issues with tact and empathy. Establishing people skills like rapport and finding common ground built up a stronger foundation for the interpersonal nature of the legal profession. Furthermore, witnessing the importance of fighting for equal rights, access to justice, and systemic reforms has ignited my passion for using the law as a tool for positive change.

The advice I would give to future interns is that you need to be ready to adapt to unexpected challenges on a regular basis. Coming in with a fixed and inflexible vision of adhering to a specific plan will not serve you well in the real world. Outside of an academic setting, there is far more uncertainty, and being willing to improvise is a necessity.

In conclusion, my internship with Cooperation Cannon River has provided me with invaluable skills and experiences that extend far beyond Carleton's classrooms. I am deeply passionate about the organization's mission, and the support from Carleton has ensured that I can fully engage in this opportunity without worrying about the financial burden of an unpaid internship. This internship has been a transformative journey, one that has equipped me with the skills and determination to pursue my aspirations in law and social justice, and I am excited to continue making a positive impact in our community and beyond.
For ten weeks this summer, I worked as the Dona Turbes Summer Studio Intern at Northern Clay Center in Minneapolis. NCC is a community ceramics center and gallery that features pieces made by local and out-of-state potters around the country. NCC facilitates both adult ceramics classes and kids’ summer clay camps, as well as hosts a wide array of resident artists who have their own studio spaces in the building. My responsibilities as an intern were centered around the kids’ camp programming, specifically loading and firing work made by the campers and packing everything at the end of the week to be picked up. I also mixed clay and performed other studio maintenance tasks in between managing the kilns. I also volunteered as a teaching assistant for the clay camps for the first five weeks.

The most important skills I gained this summer are independence, critical thinking and troubleshooting as a studio technician, and communication. Through this experience, I have not only gained independence in firing electric kilns but also have a much deeper understanding of kiln science through programming the kiln, where I learned how different ramp and hold cycles affect the firing process. Being the sole person in charge of loading the clay camp kilns also pushed me to think about how to optimize space in the kilns, as I often had a lot of pieces to load and a limited amount of space. I learned many tricks for packing the kilns tightly while still protecting the pieces from cracking or warping. Lastly, I built my communication skills through learning how to be open with my supervisor if I was struggling and learning how to ask for help. I had a wonderful network of staff supporting me throughout my experience, and I grew immensely in communicating what I felt comfortable with and what I needed support with.

In challenging myself to apply for this position despite my own self-doubts about my abilities and nerves about living alone in the city, I’m really glad that I took this chance; though it was definitely overwhelming at first, I grew a lot and am proud of the work I did. I would encourage my fellow Carls to apply to summer experiences outside of their comfort zone; a key lesson I learned about myself is that I can often do more than I think.

I am so grateful for the wonderful community at NCC. I felt so held and appreciated by all the staff members, and I was so lucky to get to learn from such talented and creative people. I will definitely use the skills I gained at NCC in the future. I really enjoyed my time as a studio technician, and am interested in it as a possible career path. I am so grateful to the Andy, Kim, and Alex Wilson Endowed Internship Fund for making this summer possible; they gave me the opportunity to spend my summer pursuing my passion for ceramics.
Barbara A. Will ’70 Endowed Internship Fund

Beginnings of a Career in Public Service
Grace Enz ’26
Undeclared
International Institute of Minnesota | Saint Paul, Minnesota

I am grateful for the Barbara A. Will ’70 Endowed Internship Fund which allowed me to intern at the International Institute of Minnesota this summer. Prior to this internship, I had experience interacting with refugees and immigrants in educational settings through volunteering as an English as a Second Language tutor and providing homework assistance for Somali high school students. Due to my enjoyment through these interactions, I wanted to learn more about the logistics of refugee resettlement. At the International Institute of Minnesota, I worked in the Matching Grant and Preferred Communities departments which help refugees with employment assistance and provide specialized care for vulnerable refugees. My daily tasks included setting up medical appointments for clients, researching public housing options, filling out Minnesota public benefits applications, organizing case files, and completing intake phone calls with new clients.

These assignments opened my eyes to the challenges refugees face in their adjustment and the numerous steps it can take for case managers to provide resources and benefits. For example, I occasionally had to reschedule medical appointments for clients because the insurance-provided taxis did not arrive. This was frustrating for clients because they had to wait even longer to receive care for their medical conditions since they often had no other means of transportation. In many cases, they were dealing with acute conditions that affected their daily lives. From hearing refugees’ stories and applying for benefits on their behalf, I learned how overwhelming the process can be. One family that I worked with was supposed to receive an EBT card for food and cash benefits several weeks prior, but when I called the county they did not have an answer for why the card was late and could not provide a temporary card. It was really difficult to hear this because the family needed assistance to buy food that was culturally appropriate for their meals, unlike food available on the local food shelves.

I am now aware of the various roles the International Institute of Minnesota plays in assisting refugees and the difference this nonprofit makes. The organization helps clients with all aspects of their lives, from housing to employment to insurance benefits, social security cards, and donating items. I also strengthened my oral and written communication skills in a new environment by interacting with clients and translators on phone calls and learning how to write case notes to detail updates concerning clients. I better understand the importance of organizations such as the International Institute of Minnesota and the various needs refugees have when they first arrive in the United States and even years after. I will use this experience to build upon my work with diverse communities and hopefully continue to gain insight into creating positive change for a future career working in public service with the U.S. Department of State.
Barbara A. Will ’70 Endowed Internship Fund

On the Ground
Chance Tunnissen ’26
Undeclared
TORCH | Northfield, Minnesota

I was raised by a single mom who never went to college herself. My grandparents only lived a mile away and they helped us out by taking me to practice and picking me up from school when she worked late. Neither of my grandparents went to college either, but from the time I was very young, they all emphasized how important it was for me to get a good education. Considering all the resources and opportunities I’ve had available to me, I’m incredibly grateful for how lucky I have been. Even at Carleton, available resources like the Barbara A. Will ’70 Endowed Internship Fund has made it possible for me to pursue a summer internship. When I considered what kind of work I wanted to do, learning more about education while also getting to help other students who come from similar backgrounds to me seemed like a perfect fit.

This summer I was the Summer BLAST Youth Enrichment Intern. Summer BLAST is a program offered in the Northfield Middle and Elementary Schools through another organization called TORCH. TORCH’s focus is to provide educational opportunities and support to students from traditionally disadvantaged backgrounds. In the summer program, students took traditional classes in the mornings which they could earn partial credit for completing. In the afternoon, students were given a variety of enrichment activities to participate in ranging from art and baking to a class focusing on the physics of football. I mainly worked with teachers in a classroom setting as a teacher’s aide throughout my internship, but my role also included supervising lunch and recess, sorting and organizing equipment for enrichment activities, and planning/supervising my own small group activities.

On the first day of work, I still remember the chaos that unfolded as nearly 200 elementary and middle school students filtered into the school lobby on the first day before we had ironed out or informed them of the check-in protocol. On the second day, we found out that rather than ordering 200 milk cartons for each student’s lunch every day, only 200 were ordered in total. In many of my classes, I’ve gotten to discuss education policy on a broad level, and while this is definitely valuable, working firsthand in a school for the summer really showed me how little I really understood. Broader policy discussions are needed, but it’s a lot different when you’re on the ground trying to get 200 students their cartons of milk for the day. My internship has gotten me to consider what I can do to give back for all the opportunities that have been given to me on an individual level, and in relation to my studies, I feel much more in tune with what it means to observe trends and implement policies in person rather than just studying them abstractly.
Barry “Mike” Casper Memorial Endowed Internship

A Summer of Growth, Consideration, and Reflection

Ian Ferrucci ’24
Psychology
University of California, Santa Cruz | Santa Cruz, California

This summer, I embarked on my first research experience as a research assistant at the Diversity in Development (DID) Lab at the University of California, Santa Cruz. This experience would not have been possible without the gracious financial support from the Barry “Mike” Casper Memorial Endowed Internship fund. I am immensely grateful for the funding I received, as it made working an internship a reality, providing me with education and experience to feel more confident in my trajectory in the professional world of psychology.

The Diversity in Development Lab focuses on explicit and implicit biases in young children, specifically how these biases are carried out, and if educational interventions can alter these biases. As a research assistant at the DID Lab, I spread my time out across many different tasks. I conducted online research interviews with children, conducted literature reviews, and maintained the participant database. I also coded look times for an additional study and transcribed answers children gave during interviews. I was able to get experience in nearly all of the regular duties researchers must do: data collection, data transcription, data maintenance, participant recruitment, and literature reviews to get a better understanding of the landscape a given study will land in.

After much reflection on my experience as an RA at the DID Lab, I am grateful for the intentional guidance and mentorship provided to me by the lab’s PI Grace Hwang, graduate student Annie Schwartzstein, and lab manager Caroline Cha. These three people were continuously available to me as a resource to learn from, ask questions, and aid in connecting with colleagues. My manager Caroline Cha worked in the same room as us research assistants and was available to aid in tasks we were conducting and to answer questions about our futures, their future, and other inquiries. From this experience, I not only feel well equipped to carry out any research task I may be asked to do in future labs but also know how to vet future employers to be sure I will be a good fit and that their mentorship ideology will fit my personality and work style. This growth is a direct result of the calculated mentorship I was provided, and for that, I am very grateful. I feel I will also be a strong manager in the future because of the examples I was provided with this summer.

Moving forward, I now see the path to a clinical psychology degree as a long but possible journey. I have learned about different types of graduate programs, how to gain admission to them, and have gained experience in most of the tasks I will be asked to carry out in the future which bolsters my application. All in all, my experience at the DID Lab was exceptionally educational in terms of the research process and duties, along with the world of psychology and how to navigate my many interests in the field, centering my focus on a degree in clinical psychology to one day gain a license as a practicing therapist to help my community.
Barry “Mike” Casper Memorial Endowed Internship

Environmental Policy in and Out of Government
Gabriel Kaplan ’25
Geology
Sierra Club North Star Chapter | Saint Paul, Minnesota

This summer, I worked for the Sierra Club’s North Star Chapter, made possible by the Barry “Mike” Casper Memorial Endowed Internship fund. The internship provided me with wonderful insight into the non-profit and public policy worlds. I initially felt apprehensive about the position – the job description focused on collecting a large number of signatures and other seemingly ‘busy’ work - however, my supervisor and the other Sierra Club staff were excellent. They enabled me to join a number of projects from seeking to close a North Minneapolis trash incinerator, to reforming land-use policy through the state legislature and raising funds from small family foundations.

One question I had going into the experience was whether I wanted to work in or out of government upon graduation. I am a geology major (debating adding political science as well) and I have managed two local campaigns, served in a managerial position on a statewide race, and helped coordinate a legislative campaign in the State House. My time with the Sierra Club further built on these experiences in helping me explore this question. Although a non-governmental organization, my work on their land-use reform project closely mirrored my past in-government legislative experience. It reaffirmed that I enjoy the social components of coalition building along with applying the scientific lens to the public. At the same time, the campaign to close the trash incinerator offered insight into out-of-government work. This project was a more classic, non-profit advocacy experience. We focused on building pressure to force the Hennepin County commissioners to act on the facility. I enjoyed that experience very much - particularly getting to talk to community members about the burner’s effect on air quality - but I do not know if such a path is for me. This internship does not answer exactly what I want to do, no single experience can do so much, but it was certainly a helpful contribution toward my career exploration.

Funding from the Barry “Mike” Casper fund allowed me to work for the Sierra Club without financial burden. I appreciate that past Carls (be it professors like Mike, alumni, or parents) seek to create opportunities for current students. I hope to continue exploring the intersections of science and public policy and I feel better prepared to navigate my last two years at Carleton and my post-college career having had this experience. Thank you to Professor Casper, Rush Holt, and Margaret Lancefield for opening this door to me.
The Carl and Ruth Weiner Fund for Social Justice Internships

Video Mitigation at the Legal Aid Society
Isabel Intrater ’26
Political Science/International Relations & Mathematics
The Legal Aid Society | Brooklyn, New York

I am honored to have spent the summer working at the Video Mitigation Project (VMP) of the Legal Aid Society in New York City. I am also incredibly grateful to The Carl and Ruth Weiner Fund for Social Justice Internships for providing me with the resources necessary for me to partake in this experience. My summer was educational, interesting, and transformative.

The work I did was part of Legal Aid’s mitigation advocacy, which I contributed to by helping with research and planning interviews, conducting preliminary interviews, filming interviews, and then assisting in the editing process. Plea mitigation was not a part of the legal process I had known much about, so it was interesting to learn about this phase of the criminal justice system. The outcome of plea mitigation can be incredibly impactful in someone’s life. Additionally, the team I was working on is attempting a really innovative form of mitigation advocacy by presenting it in video form. Mitigation videos have proven to be an incredibly effective tool for lawyers to yield results such as reduced sentences, alternatives to incarceration, and elimination of bail conditions. Traditionally, the presenting of a client’s story in court is in a written or spoken form, however, the VMP is attempting to bring these stories to the courtroom in a video form, which has historically been very successful for the clients. Access to the resources, time, and money to make mitigation videos has often been a barrier to Legal Aid clients having access to this effective resource in the courtroom, however, the work I was doing was trying to create a process to make these videos less expensive and less time-consuming.

I didn’t exactly know what to expect coming into this internship, however, given the small team, I was given a lot of agency and responsibility. I conducted interviews, pretty much on my own, with key people involved in the case. I also often contributed to and had ideas implemented in the final editing processes on videos. I saw really direct consequences of the work I was doing, as videos I worked on were submitted and created positive outcomes for our clients. I also spent a lot of time in courtrooms, which was really exciting, as well as discussing different case strategies. This internship made me really excited about the legal field, and I am excited to pursue more opportunities.
Chang-Lan Endowed Fund

Taiwan: A Meeting of My Past, Present, and Future

Lyn Chen ’26
Undeclared
Syscom Computer Engineering Co. | Taipei City, Taiwan

Thank you to the Chang-Lan Endowed Fund for helping me connect to my past and my future through an internship at Syscom Computer Engineering in Taiwan this summer. Despite having two Taiwanese parents, since I hadn’t been there for 16 years, I felt disconnected from my own heritage. On the other side of time, like many others my age, I was also grappling with my own potential future. This summer allowed me to reconnect with my roots and experience current Taiwanese culture, while also getting my first experience with an office job and learning about the possibilities within cybersecurity and the tech industry.

While in Taipei, I enjoyed delicious food while exploring with my coworkers, significantly improving my vocabulary surrounding computers and technology and comparing the Taiwan my parents remembered, modern Taiwan, the America I lived in, and the America my Taiwanese friends knew. I also learned about how offices actually ran, in comparison to media depictions, and what some previously mysterious job titles actually translated to. This really expanded my understanding of Taiwan and what work could look like, compared to only knowing stories from friends, family, and movies.

As an Assistant Information Security Engineer, I ended up working with a BAS (Breach and Attack Simulator) called Threat Simulator (TS). BASes are tools that mimic attacker tactics to test existing security tools, and Syscom wanted to test their WAF (Web Application Firewall), firewall, and EDR (Endpoint Detection and Response) in particular. Over my two months there, I familiarized myself with TS and helped Syscom select and perform tests directed at these tools, culminating in a presentation to a company client justifying and explaining the selected tests and demonstrating the basic TS workflow.

I found creating the presentation really fun, after the many surprising challenges of actually using TS, from licensing issues to incorrect IP configurations. I combed through hundreds of tests to select assessments that would target those tools and be generic enough to apply to any client. I needed to understand each attack to explain it and emphasize the consequences of each attack and the background of the simulated threat actors to justify my choices. For example, to test the EDR, because the client was a bank, I chose an assessment that mimicked the hacking group Wizard Spider’s methodologies, since they had previously targeted the financial sector, and their best-known malware, Trickbot, began life as a banking Trojan. I had to gather information from a variety of sources and synthesize them into a simple and visually appealing format for a non-technical audience, while also constantly translating between English and Mandarin while writing, speaking, and researching.

I hope to return to Taiwan, and possibly Syscom, soon, since I already miss my new friends and the city. This was an incredible experience and definitely made me think about trying out work that’s more focused on communication, rather than implementation. Once again, thank you to the Chang-Lan Fund for making this incredible summer possible!
Chang-Lan Endowed Fund

Student Mental Health at Beijing Normal University
Luojia (Anna) Cui ’24
Psychology & Cinema and Media Studies
Beijing Normal University | Beijing, China

This summer, I was honored to have the opportunity to work as an intern at Beijing Normal University's Education Quality Monitoring Center. This center is the first education quality monitoring center established in China, and with its impact on the Chinese educational system, more universities in China have founded education quality monitoring centers. During this summer, EQMC conducted research on the topic of Chinese elementary and middle school students' mental health and investigated the impact of school, family, and society's support on students' mental health. I was lucky enough to join the research from the very beginning. Throughout the data collection stage, another intern and I were in charge of double-checking that all the questions on the questionnaires were logical and accurate, keeping the questionnaires' completion rate updated daily, contacting schools that had not started their questionnaires, and doing some basic data analysis of the questionnaires.

Three important skills I strengthened were: first, my data analysis skills. Most of the data analysis I encountered was solvable through Microsoft Excel, but there are a lot of new techniques that I have never used before. Another skill that I strengthened was my critical thinking. When checking the questions' logic and rationality, it was really important to make sure that each question was tightly tied to the prior and following questions. It required me to stand from the responders' perspective to evaluate whether the questions made sense. The third skill that I strengthened was communication. After the questionnaires had been published, I contacted school representatives from elementary and middle schools all over the country, during which I learned to speak and communicate as a representative of Beijing Normal University.

I think this experience taught me a lot about myself. I joined this internship with a heavy interest in teenagers' mental health and well-being, and by the end of this internship experience, I am more certain that this is a field that I truly care about. Another thing I learned through this experience is that, rather than working in a state-owned enterprise in Beijing, like EQMC, I would also like to have a chance to work in a private enterprise to see what they do differently.

Lastly, I am sincerely grateful for having this opportunity to work in EQMC at Beijing Normal University. I want to give a big thank you to everyone who made this experience possible: Ms. Shi and Dr. Xu, who introduced me to this opportunity; Mr. Huang and Ms. Tian, my supervisors throughout my internship; Dr. Bian, the chair of the office, for giving me this opportunity; and lastly, Carleton for awarding the Chang-Lan Endowed Fund.
Chang-Lan Endowed Fund

Telecommunication Engineering Internship: An Enlightening Journey
Yuelin Kuang ’24
Physics
China Communications Services Zhongrui Technology Co. Limited | Guangzhou, China

This summer, I worked as a full-time telecommunication/electrical engineering intern at China Communications Services Zhongrui Technology Corporation Limited. The company is an affiliate of China Communications Services (China Comservice), a leading organization in telecommunication infrastructure development and maintenance in the South China region.

First and foremost, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Chang-Lan Endowed Fund, which supports internships or fellowships on China-related projects in East Asian countries. My internship experience would not be possible without their generous financial support. I would also like to thank the Career Center at Carleton College for their support in my internship preparation.

During my 10-week internship, I collaborated closely with the engineering team and helped with telecommunication network designs and equipment testing and maintenance. In the initial phase of my internship, I focused on gaining a foundational understanding of telecommunication engineering, a field that used to be unfamiliar to me. Through attending technical workshops, I learned about the theoretical basics of communication network design and implementation. Additionally, I had the privilege to participate in bi-weekly staff meetings, where my experienced colleagues presented their recent progress. Witnessing their innovations and contributions to the development of novel technologies was inspiring. It was also mind-blowing to observe how innovative ideas transformed into useful products.

For the second half of my internship, I traveled to the rural areas in and around Guangzhou, China, to conduct site surveys in various mobile signal base stations, which exposed me to the difficulties faced by the telecommunication engineers in their endeavors to expand the mobile signal coverage in the rural area. As I delved into this mission, I also witnessed the transformative impact of the Internet in providing the students in these areas with a broader spectrum of resources and opportunities. This experience further strengthened my belief in the ability of technology to improve people’s lives. It was also surprising to see how physics knowledge could be used to solve real-world problems, which stimulated a deeper passion for me to pursue a career in engineering.

Overall, this internship has provided me with a valuable opportunity to hone my critical thinking and problem-solving skills. I have also improved my interpersonal communication skills in professional settings. Real-world problems tend to be more complex than what was meticulously designed in the classroom, necessitating readiness for unexpected challenges. For future students who are embarking on their internship, one key piece of advice that I would like to share is to cultivate flexibility. When seeking an internship, it is common to come across internships that have an intimidating list of necessary skills. However, it is important to recognize that an internship is a learning process. If you are not confident in certain skills, you can start practicing and improve them right away. Being open to customization of your skills is crucial for fitting them with real-life situations.
Chang-Lan Endowed Fund

The Last Line of Defense: Testing Engineer
Yuxin Lin ’24

Computer Science & Psychology
AI Speech Co., Ltd. | Suzhou, China

Embarking on a six-week internship as a Testing Engineer Intern at AI Speech Co., Ltd in Suzhou, China, was both challenging and enlightening. My heartfelt thanks go out to the Carleton College Career Center and the Chang-Lan Endowed Fund for granting me this opportunity.

On a typical day, I arrived at the office by 9 a.m., immediately diving into lines of code and scrutinizing algorithms. My core responsibilities were to design test cases, execute automated testing scripts, and meticulously document any abnormalities or glitches for the development team. Day-to-day, the work felt repetitive initially, but a conversation with my supervisor changed my perspective. She emphasized how critical our role is; we’re the last line of defense before the product reaches the consumer. That talk made me realize the first important skill I gained: the ability to find meaning in seemingly mundane tasks.

My interaction with my supervisor also enlightened me about the crucial role of constructive criticism, which constituted the second important skill I honed. I remember one instance where I felt confident about a particular test script, only to be told that it lacked coverage for several potential user scenarios. Initially disheartened, I soon recognized this as an invaluable opportunity for growth and refinement.

Patience emerged as the third crucial skill. Replicating issues reported by users often involved running tests under different configurations and system environments, sometimes taking hours with no guarantee of reproducing the error. These experiences instilled in me the patience and rigor required in the engineering field.

Unexpectedly, I didn’t encounter the dreaded “996” work culture, leaving me time to pursue a balanced lifestyle. This allowed me to participate in the company’s bi-weekly badminton games, providing a casual platform for networking and personal growth. As I reflect on my path ahead, my involvement in a project aimed at facilitating elevator usage for the visually impaired has been particularly impactful. It has galvanized my interest in leveraging technology for social good, and I intend to explore this avenue in my future endeavors.

For students considering internships, my advice would be to embrace the learning experience fully. Don’t merely focus on the task at hand; look for the larger narrative of your growth and the skills you are developing. Network extensively, take feedback constructively, and most importantly, find a way to align your daily work with a higher sense of purpose.

In closing, I wish to extend another round of gratitude to the Carleton College Career Center and the Chang-Lan Endowed Fund. The multitude of skills and insights I’ve acquired during this internship are not just resume fillers; they are life lessons and competencies that I am eager to apply in my forthcoming ventures.
Chang-Lan Endowed Fund

Researching Ecological-Dermatological Correlations in the Taiwanese Population

Kamaal Somji ’26
Undeclared
EcoLab Taiwan | Kaohsiung, Taiwan

Thanks to the generous support of the Chang-Lan Endowed Fund, I was able to go to Taiwan this summer to help assist a research collaboration between EcoLab Taiwan and Taipei Medical University. In this internship, I assisted my supervisors and colleagues in researching ecological-dermatological correlations in the Taiwanese population. This collaboration and continued research survey is and will continue to be a long-term study, so my two months in Taiwan were mostly focused on the presence of cercariae larvae resulting in a dermatitis known as “swimmer’s itch.” However, I was also able to contribute to some other fascinating research topics, such as eczema, seborrheic dermatitis, and various skin infestations caused by an array of worms and fleas.

The three most important skills I gained from this internship experience were communication, analytical skills, and the ability to work with numbers and statistics. During the course of my internship, I had to create many presentations, compilations of data, and diagrams to better convey the information we had found. With the tutelage of my supervisor, I was able to give a conference presentation in front of hundreds of physicians and scientists, despite my lack of prior experience. My communication skills were also improved in asking my colleagues and supervisors for assistance and improving my Mandarin-Chinese speaking skills while abroad. I was also privileged to have the opportunity to learn about medicinal research up close, and thus improve the analytical and numerical skills associated with such work. I was able to implement theoretical knowledge from classes at Carleton in a practical scientific research setting.

In this setting, I learned many aspects about myself as well. I cherished the opportunity to learn and prepare from accomplished scientists. I was surprised at how much drive my own curiosity and eagerness to learn provided to me. I also found out how much I love connecting with people of various backgrounds. I was able to talk extensively with Taiwanese, Japanese, Australian, and Belgian doctors, scientists, and students, and thus gained a lot of cultural experience. Lastly, I learned the importance of efficiency and focus in a lab. Time management is an essential part of working with other people, especially considering that in this case a lot of them relied on my data compilations for their own work, and it is a lesson that I will retain for future aspirations.

As an aspiring physician interested in dermatology, this internship was particularly beneficial to me in both skills and knowledge and will help chart my future career. I was constantly surprised by how scientific research directly impacts the lives of people, and am most grateful to the Chang-Lan donors, the Career Center, EcoLab Taiwan, and Taipei Medical University for this opportunity. To future students who may participate in an internship, I would advise you to never let your self-doubt sway you from any opportunities to learn and grow.
Chang-Lan Endowed Fund

The Aftermath of Covid-19: Summer Geriatric Depression Research
Yichen Zhang ’24

Psychology & Philosophy
Tsinghua University, School of Social Sciences | Beijing, China

During my internship, I was given the opportunity to work with national data (China) regarding older adults’ depressive tendencies during COVID-19. I worked closely with colleagues and supervisors to learn different ways of analyzing data using statistical software. Moreover, I also conducted a number of semi-structured interviews with older adults with moderate to severe depressive tendencies in elderly care settings. Specifically, the interviews were designed to have a more qualitative view of older adults’ experiences with depressive symptoms during the three years of the pandemic in China. Lastly, I finished a literature review that focused on the risk factors and potential correlational factors associated with older adults’ depressive tendencies and symptoms during COVID-19. The literature review mainly covered published studies from the US, Canada, Britain, Japan, and Korea.

This internship was beneficial in the aspect that I was able to immerse myself in a professional setting, which offered me opportunities to develop my communication skills and abilities to work with other colleagues and team members. During the internship, I was given the responsibility to coordinate visits to elderly communities and collaborate with other groups of researchers regarding shared data and other resources. I am grateful to my supervisor who provided me with consistent guidance and patience throughout the course of my internship. We had bi-weekly meetings where we exchanged the latest progress in the ongoing project and solved issues and roadblocks that I was not able to overcome on my own. For example, when I was drafting the literature review, she frequently proposed systematic and constructive suggestions that helped improve my writing.

My summer research position at Tsinghua University also helped me gain new insight into my future career. I am interested in pursuing a path in clinical or counseling psychology after my time at Carleton. As a result, being able to look at mass datasets on geriatric depression and interviewing older individuals whose mental health was greatly impacted by the pandemic offered me unique and refreshing perspectives on the rising demand for mental health care in the post-pandemic world.

On top of skill and career development, I also gained confidence regarding my abilities to navigate a professional research setting over the course of my internship. As an undergraduate student, it felt intimidating at times to work at an established research institution with individuals who have more expertise and experience. However, I gradually realized that the time and effort that I dedicated myself to the research project naturally translated into significant improvements in my academic and professional skills. Therefore, I would like to advise other students that the self-doubt that often arises when one starts off an internship could be sufficiently calmed with consistent contribution and self-reflection. I would like to thank the Chang-Lan Endowed Fund for making my internship experience possible.
Class of 1963 50th Reunion Fund for Internships

Navigating Nature-Based Education
Laura Boyd ’25
Psychology
Boston Outdoor Preschool Network | Boston, Massachusetts

This summer, I worked as an intern at the Boston Outdoor Preschool Network (BOPN for short). It was a summer packed with joy, curiosity, and creativity. I've always had a passion for working with kids, so this opportunity seemed like the perfect opportunity to expand on this interest and learn more about nature-based education.

As an intern, I worked closely with kids ranging from 2-7 years old, teaching lessons, guiding activities, and helping nurture their curiosity about the natural world. While I've worked with kids a lot in the past, my time at BOPN helped me build upon this experience and build skills and knowledge. I've never worked with preschool-aged children in the past, so I learned a lot about what works and doesn't work with this age group. It helped me develop a lot of patience and empathy for what it means to be a three-year-old navigating the world. Additionally, I got a lot of experience working with lead teachers and interns alike. I found that building connections with my coworkers were useful as we learned each others' strengths and weaknesses which we used to inform which roles we took on, the children we worked most closely with, and the lessons we taught. I also gained a huge amount of experience working with children in the outdoors which was extremely valuable. I've never worked in nature-based education before and it was very eye-opening. I learned about the various merits of teaching children in the outdoors and what the space can offer that is unique from other environments.

While I'm not sure exactly what kind of work I want to do when I graduate college, my time at BOPN did help me realize some of the values I hold for a future internship or workspace. I am an incredibly social person and I thrive off of interpersonal connections and relationships. BOPN was a great workspace because I not only got to work closely with kids every day, but I also created strong bonds with my fellow interns and the lead teachers. In the future, I know that I will look for work opportunities that promote forming interpersonal relationships, as they are a huge source of joy for me. I am a psychology major and I am incredibly curious about why people are the way they are and what motivates them. My internship at BOPN helped me apply some of the tools and thought processes I've learned about in my psychology classes at Carleton which was incredibly valuable. In the future, I may look into opportunities to study child psychology.

I would like to thank the Class of 1963 50th Reunion Fund for Internships for providing me with the funding to be able to have this amazing experience. I would also like to thank my supervisor and the woman who started BOPN, Sarah Besse ’12. Lastly, I want to thank the lead teacher I most closely worked with, Kelly Gilmore.
Class of 1963 50th Reunion Fund for Internships

Confirming Interests in Psychology Research

Huanchen Cai ‘24
Psychology
University of Washington | Seattle, Washington

This summer, I was offered the opportunity to work as a research assistant in a social psychology research lab at the University of Washington in Seattle. This lab is doing research on the relationship between social groups and prejudice toward stigmatized groups (e.g., racial minorities). I mainly participated in two research projects. The first one was about the factors that influence whether White Christians conceive of anti-Black and anti-White racism as interpersonal or structural. I took the lead on this project under the supervisor of Dr. Clara Wilkins. I conducted a literature review that identified independent variables we were interested in, developed or found scales to measure them, designed a survey, submitted an IRB application, and collected data online. I also analyzed the data and reported the findings to my colleagues. The second project I worked on was an experiment on whether religion influences White Christians’ attitudes toward Latinx immigrants. I helped develop the stimulus materials, designed and published the survey, and analyzed the data. I also attended weekly meetings with my supervisor and other researchers to discuss the projects. Dr. Wilkins also helped me put together a submission to a major psychology conference based on my work in her lab this summer, which I am most grateful for.

I learned so much about doing behavioral science research from working in the lab. I learned to publish surveys on two different survey platforms and learned how to program a survey using Qualtrics. My study planning and data analysis skills were also improved. For example, I had many conversations with my supervisor on how to improve the questions we asked participants in the studies and how the stimulus materials should be presented. I learned a lot about what to look for when designing a study involving human subjects that I could not learn simply from reading about studies in a class.

I also learned important things about myself. First, I realized that I am not as bad at data analysis as I thought, which surprised me. I often envied my Carleton peers who took multiple statistics classes and knew techniques that I had never even heard of. However, my supervisor told me that she was really impressed with my data analysis abilities. I will stop doubting my quantitative skills just because I dislike math. Second, I learned that I really love getting paid to do research. The sense of satisfaction from having your questions about human behaviors answered through empirical studies is amazing. I think that this experience further affirmed my resolution to work toward a career in psychology research. Thus, I would advise future interns to never set limitations on what they can or cannot do and to take advantage of the internship funding to explore what their dream career looks like.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the donors who established the Class of 1963 50th Reunion Fund for Internships and the Kolenkow-Reitz Fellowship, which provided the financial support that made this experience possible.
Leaving Home for Homer: A Transformative Summer on an Alaskan Peony Farm

Cathy Duan ’25
Computer Science
Scenic Place Peonies | Homer, Alaska

Through an organization called WWOOF (Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms), I got the opportunity to spend six weeks of my summer at Scenic Place Peonies, a peony farm based in Homer, Alaska. Having no previous farming experience, I went into this experience eager to explore a slice of the farming lifestyle and practice and I am grateful to my hosts for welcoming my curiosity with open arms.

Having arrived before harvesting season, the main task was tending to the foot-tall peonies such that they could grow well and produce good buds; we spread manure and nutrients, weeded (a lot!), removed side buds so that all of the plant's energy channeled to the main buds (farming is all about energy allocation!), and tried to prevent a plant disease called Botrytis from spreading. When harvesting season finally rolled around in late July as opposed to its usual early July arrival, I took part in the entire harvesting process of the now three-foot-tall peonies: cutting acceptable buds, stripping the stems of leaves, spraying and drying the plants in a solution to prevent disease, and then grading and counting up all the buds. These tasks taught me firsthand the necessity of good communication and how to work well on a team.

However, I was also surprised to learn from moments outside of our tasks. On an unusually windy day, one of our high tunnels and the contents inside got damaged. I could see how upsetting this was for my hosts, but they immediately jumped into action to start the repair process. I learned from this moment and countless others that it takes an incredible amount of flexibility, resourcefulness, and perseverance to run a farm. On a larger scale, the late harvesting season (due to this summer’s cooler weather) was also a wrench in plans, but my hosts were able to see the silver lining of it all and made the most out of the situation. We took advantage of the slower July by preparing for other events, helping out on other farms, and exploring Homer. From this, I learned how strong, caring, and interconnected the farming community is, got the opportunity to talk to locals about the blooming peony business in Homer, and got to experience the Alaskan wilderness that these locals cherish.

I would like to thank the members of the Class of 1963 for the Class of 1963 50th Reunion Fund for Internships; without this fund, this experience would not have been possible. I am very grateful for the kindness of my hosts and the friends I made at Scenic Place Peonies. My six weeks were a transformative experience and I am confident that the lessons and experiences I gathered will be invaluable for my path forward.
Class of 1963 50th Reunion Fund for Internships

Summer Fieldwork in Costa Rica
Rebecca Lerdau '25
Biology
University of Minnesota, Powers Lab | Guanacaste, Costa Rica

I spent the summer working at a field station in Horizontes Experimental Forest (EEFH) in Guanacaste, Costa Rica. I was working as a field assistant for Viviana Londono-Lemos, a graduate student in the Powers Lab at the University of Minnesota. The research I was assisting with focused on seed ecology and the soil seed bank in tropical dry forests. Most of the work I did was related to Londono-Lemos’ dissertation research, but I also assisted with some long-term experiments that the Powers Lab has at Horizontes. Being in Costa Rica was so cool, and being able to explore a new place from an ecological lens was exciting.

In my time at Horizontes, I did many things. I monitored seedlings and set up germination experiments. One of my favorite parts of the fieldwork we were doing was having the opportunity to go to two separate national parks in Costa Rica to visit transects and collect soil samples. Each of the parks was a bit different and it was so interesting to explore how tropical dry forests in the same region differed. Using the soil samples we collected, we took half of the samples to try and grow something from the soil and sieved the other half to find seeds and germinate those individually. I learned a lot about doing tropical fieldwork, and seed ecology techniques, as well as about living and working at a field station. I learned so many new things, and now am interested in continuing to explore and learn about tropical dry forests.

I was able to meet and work with many people, including local scientists. Learning from the local scientists was such a valuable part of my internship experience. They are extraordinarily knowledgeable about the place where they live and work, and taught me so much. It reinforced my understanding of the importance of local collaborations when doing fieldwork in an area you are not from, and particularly in the importance of deliberately trying to work in ways that are not exploitative or extractive of the local communities.

When working with the local scientists, the main language spoken was Spanish. Though I had spoken some Spanish beforehand, the immersion was helpful in expanding my vocabulary and general communication skills. The things I learned from working across languages and with people from a variety of cultural backgrounds will be useful to me in my future career. This internship experience helped me gain a better understanding of science graduate school options and tropical ecology career paths. I really loved tropical ecology, and am now considering it as a potential career because of this internship experience.

Reflecting on my internship experience, I am especially grateful for my supervisor. She was incredibly supportive of me and was committed to making sure I was learning and growing. I am also thankful for the Carleton Career Center and the Class of 1963 50th Reunion Fund for Internships for funding my internship.
This summer, I was privileged to work at Scripps Research Institute in San Diego. Specifically, I worked as a research assistant in a lab within the Department of Molecular Medicine. This lab focuses on studying a group of essential enzymes, tRNA synthetases. My project was to investigate the pathological mechanism of the mutant asparaginyl-tRNA synthetase. The mutation in patients would cause microcephaly, which means delayed brain development, onset at birth. Understanding the pathological mechanism would help us develop treatments that would help to prevent the disease or alleviate patients’ symptoms.

The three most important skills I’ve developed were the ability to think critically, analyze data, and deliver thoughts effectively when working with a team. Firstly, working as a research assistant, I was able to practice critical thinking skills extensively. To initiate a research project, every researcher has to develop a model that explains the mechanism that the study subject engages in, and based on that, researchers are able to design experiments and observations to collect substantial evidence either to prove or disprove their theory. In order to establish a well-supported model, researchers have to have a good knowledge of the subject and think critically about what’s known and what is unknown according to previous studies. With the help of my mentor, I went through all the primary literature and data relevant to my project and eventually came up with a hypothesis and model that I worked to prove during my internship at Scripps.

Secondly, as I moved on to performing experiments to test my hypothesis and proposed model, I’ve obtained a massive amount of data, which is presented in various forms. The ability to interpret data critically and present it in a concise and effective way is a skill I developed during my internship as well. I worked with both quantitative and qualitative data during my internship. I learned so much from my mentor about how to use the correct figures to present the data and show the significant difference, comparing and contrasting between controls and experimental groups, and recognizing the limitations in methods and biases in data collection. I had the great opportunity to summarize and present my data and findings during the lab’s group meeting, which I believe contributed greatly to my development of skills in analyzing data.

Finally, working in a group with my mentor and other researchers, who came from very diverse backgrounds, I improved my communication skills. Recognizing each of the team members’ strengths, interests, and even the mood of that day are all key factors in establishing effective communication. Furthermore, using terminologies that are more general yet still accurate is also key in scientific communication with people of different scientific backgrounds (biology vs. chemistry).

This experience provided a great insight into academia and finally helped me in deciding to apply to graduate school. I’m super grateful that I’ve encountered extraordinary mentors and coworkers. At the end of my internship, I was surprised about how much I learned and accomplished. The best advice for future interns is to never hesitant to ask questions!
Class of 1963 50th Reunion Fund for Internships

Plasmid Design in St. Paul, Minnesota
Phoebe Sinner ’24
Biology
NovoClade | Saint Paul, Minnesota

During the summer of 2023, I worked at a University of Minnesota start-up company called NovoClade. This company works with different invasive or overpopulated insect populations that are harmful to plants, animals, and people. The goal of our lab work was to create a line of transgenic Drosophila suzukii, that are genetically modified to be incompatible with the wild-type population. There were several other interns working on this project doing everything from, 3D printing, genetic crossing schemes, DNA injections, genome analysis, and more. My role was to design and alter plasmid DNA to be injected into these flies.

I learned a lot about plasmid design and cloning, CRISPR DNA editing, and about genetic crosses. I also gained experience in many lab protocols including minipreps, PCRs, Gibson assembly, enzyme digests, Golden Gate assembly, DNA extractions, bacterial culturing, plating, and DNA quantification. There was quite a bit of troubleshooting and problem-solving in this lab, which required both big-picture context as well as a detailed understanding of the protocols, methods, and underlying molecular processes that make it all possible. Much of the troubleshooting I did involved primer design, genetic analysis, and protocol editing.

Something I encountered during this internship that I had not experienced in previous labs was how education-oriented the staff and environment were. Both the lab manager and the company’s CEO worked hard to make sure all the interns were learning the reasoning behind the project they were working on, as well as the mechanisms in action that made extreme underdominance possible. Each intern had the opportunity to read and present a paper related to the work we were doing and was encouraged to incorporate methods from the literature into their own work. There was an emphasis on questioning both our own and others’ processes during lab meetings, and the staff was always available to bounce ideas off of or ask specific workflow questions. A value of mine, to always ask questions if you are stuck, was reinforced working in this lab. It is never a bad thing to not know something, the worst thing you can do is pretend or assume you know everything, asking for help or a second opinion is always more productive than guessing or staying quiet.

From this experience I have learned that I am more interested in cellular and molecular biology, I love plants and animals and the work I did this summer was exciting and endlessly interesting to me. I would like to thank the Class of 1963 50th Reunion Fund for Internships, for funding my experience this summer. The work I did not only helped me narrow down my future career goals, but I also got to contribute to meaningful research and development that will benefit Minnesota crops!
Class of 1963 50th Reunion Fund for Internships

Investigating Cnidarian Symbiosis and Immunity at Texas State University

Micah Strike ’24
Biology
Texas State University | San Marcos, Texas

When I first learned of this internship opportunity, I did not intend to accept it. I assumed that doing an official REU would be preferable simply because of the selectivity of those programs, so I really was not considering anything else. However, after talking with Dr. Mike Nishizaki at Carleton, I came to realize that the next step in my research career would involve taking on a long-term project that could be continued at Carleton the following year. While my internship experience was challenging at times, I developed key professional and academic skills that have set me up well for my senior year at Carleton.

The most important experience I gained this summer was seeing how labs function on a day-to-day basis. The PI spent most days working in her office and overseeing her students’ projects, while the postdoc and grad students spent time in the lab as well as writing papers. I can envision myself being successful in any of these roles in the future, but for now, I prefer doing hands-on work in the lab. I also enjoyed designing my experiment and creating my research poster; in doing so, I realized that the creative aspects of the scientific process appeal to me the most. These insights have prompted me to consider what type of research job I want to have after finishing grad school. Whether or not I remain in academia matters less to me than my desire to have a fulfilling career that allows me to explore my interests using creative experimental design.

While my internship was a good experience overall, it did inevitably come with challenges. I learned that while I’m good at handling unexpected situations outside of my control, it is much harder for me to deal with mistakes that I am responsible for. While it’s still an ongoing process, I am beginning to figure out how to react to mistakes constructively. I hope that my response to making errors will become less of a self-critical reaction and more of a logical response to the situation. By making this shift I will be able to work with less anxiety and see more success in my research as a result.

As a whole, I consider this internship experience to be an ideal stepping stone between my undergraduate research experiences and the research I will be doing in grad school. I was able to take on a large-scale project, I presented my research at an official poster session, and I gained experience working in a lab alongside grad students and postdocs. Now, I am looking forward to continuing my research at Carleton and beginning the process of applying to grad school.

Thank you to Dr. Lauren Fuess and Dr. Erin Borbee for providing mentorship and resources throughout my internship. Thank you to Dr. Mike Nishizaki and Dr. Amanda Hund ’10 for connecting me with this opportunity, and thank you to the Carleton Career Center for providing me with funding via the Class of 1963 50th Reunion Fund for Internships.
Visualizing Hypoxia, My Summer 2023 Experience

Kai Weiner ’25
Computer Science
University of California San Francisco | San Francisco, California

I spent this summer as an undergraduate intern in the Altschuler/Wu lab at UCSF where I have learned, grown, and accomplished so much. The Altschuler/Wu lab specializes in cutting-edge computational approaches to biology, and one of their projects tests the effects of hypoxia (varying levels of oxygen less than standard), on the activity of genes across different tissues. The hypoxia project resulted in a large amount of complex data that I was tasked with creating a website application to help visualize.

I am new to the field of data visualization, so the beginning of this internship involved a lot of learning about a data visualization package and planning the course of my workflow. Having created a website before in my software development course at Carleton, I was very confident I would breeze through this project and have a website running before even the halfway point of my internship. This fantasy vanished once I encountered the first of many roadblocks - the data visualizing package I was learning wouldn't work with Flask, the website creation package I already knew.

There would be several such roadblocks over the course of my work, making necessary next steps in my work into dead ends. I spent an unreasonable amount of time trying to get around that first roadblock, scouring the internet and only finding outdated answers. Eventually, I realized that punching at this metaphorical wall so that I could stay on course with my work plan would probably waste more time than switching focus to something else. So I decided to invert the order of my plan and finish creating graphs of the data before the website. I ended up with a much messier flow of work than planned, with a lot of switching between steps rather than clearly dividing areas of work. And this improved spontaneity allowed me to make far more progress and adapt to new developments. One of my huge takeaways from this internship is the value of some flexibility during my code work.

I also got a lot better at asking for help. I have an unhelpful sense of pride in my ability to do work and anxiety about bothering others, so it was very difficult for me to reach out to the seemingly intimidating members of the lab. But asking for help led to such rewarding conversations that I realized it was worth the initial anxiety.

I am so proud of what I accomplished this summer, I worked harder than I thought I could and produced a website that I feel great about. This summer has been such a learning and growth experience and, more importantly, so much fun! I am hugely grateful to the Altschuler/Wu lab for allowing me to work with them this summer, especially to Steven Altschuler for meeting with me. I also want to thank the Carleton Class of 1963 50th Reunion Fund for Internships for their generous funding that made this summer possible.
Class of 1964 Endowed Internship Fund

Finding a Passion for Law
Mustafa Abbashar ‘24
Political Science/International Relations
Hennepin County Public Defenders Office | Minneapolis, Minnesota

This internship experience was beyond vital to my development as a student and as a future professional. I came to Carleton searching for a field that would allow me to utilize my skills. During high school, I developed a variety of differing interests ranging from biology to the visual arts. Unfortunately, I never envisioned these passions to translate into feasible long-term goals. My direction (or lack thereof) notably changed after I changed my major to Political Science during the fall 2022 term.

During the spring term preceding my Hennepin County internship, I was enrolled in Constitutional Law II with President Emeritus Steven Poskanzer P’15. The aspects of my character that I discovered during this course are worth a second reflection essay. In the interest of time, this class helped me develop skills that were relevant to my experience at Hennepin County. Deploying skills that I learned in Constitutional Law, I was able to read through police and investigator supplements and spot possible holes in facts and arguments consistently. During a moot court exercise in the course, I had experience with being highly critical of a side that I didn’t necessarily disagree with. This skill is crucial in law and it has been crucial for the cases that I conducted discovery on. The aforementioned skill has proven to be relevant in my LSAT studying and I am sure it will be useful during other courses I take at Carleton and beyond. This is one of the most important abilities that I was able to nurture at Hennepin.

I was immediately struck by how engaged I was in my case discoveries. I went through body-cam footage, security camera footage, police reports, jail calls, and eyewitness testimonies. I also conducted in-field casework including subpoena serving and jail interviews. Every assignment I received was been different and compelling.

In an attempt to not jump the proverbial gun as I did in regard to my major decision, I will not make a decision yet regarding the type of law I wish to specialize in. As I did in Carleton, I will utilize law schools’ generalist education to determine which type of law works best for my interests and skills. Nonetheless, the Hennepin County Public Defenders office provided me with a priceless self-searching experience that solidified my future goals in law. Slowly but surely, my skills and interests aligned with the legal profession.

I am eternally grateful that I was able to find this passion given the wealth of sometimes overwhelming opportunities a U.S. undergraduate degree can provide. I thank the Class of 1964, their Endowed Internship Fund, and the Carleton Career Center for providing me with the crucial financial backing needed for me to explore my endeavors. Additionally, I thank Geoffrey Isaacman ‘92, P’24, the attorneys, paralegals, and clerks who were more than willing to host honest and open discussions with me regarding a future in all things legal. Their attitudes toward interns and their trust in my abilities encouraged me greatly.
Class of 1964 Endowed Internship Fund

Working with a Worker-Coop
Ella Cunningham ’24

English
Curbside Compost Cooperative | Northfield, Minnesota

This summer I interned for Curbside Compost Cooperative in Northfield, MN. This internship was a great way to connect a variety of my school and work experiences and connect more with the Northfield community. As a Curbside Compost intern, I had a balance of physical and computer work. I helped with on-the-ground composting, where I would drive along in the compost truck with a compost worker-owner, picking up the community’s compost. I helped to clean and prepare compost buckets for future subscribers and did other general maintenance tasks. I attended the Coop’s weekly operation meetings and the Wednesday “expansion” meetings. During these meetings, we would decide what computer work to focus on for the week, which I would work on during our “co-working” time. One exciting moment was when I was tasked to write a grant. I was surprised and excited when I was given total agency over completing a small business grant. I quickly realized my time writing long papers as an English major prepared me to whip out a few pages of the grant, and I felt really accomplished when I completed it and, with a few edits, got to send it in right away.

Later in the summer, my fellow intern Natalie Lang-Ree ’25 and I were tasked with weighing compost buckets to collect data for the company. One day, instead of driving the route around Northfield, we decided to go via bike. The independence we were given as interns allowed us to be flexible in this way, and we were able to save gas money and have a fun time riding around Northfield. My experience doing geology research was useful when it came time to organize and manage our data. By the end of the summer, Natalie and I managed to get data from nearly 600 households around Northfield!

I was inspired by the work environment at Curbside Compost, and the work that they are doing. As a worker-coop, they run on a system of horizontal leadership, and I could feel the way each worker-owner’s sense of agency impacted their work ethic, and attitude toward the job. The organization’s structure also gave the flexibility for the worker-owners to be involved in activism in and around Northfield. I learned a lot from being around this community of activism. As I begin thinking about future jobs, I am interested in seeking out worker-coops, and this type of community work environment.

Through this internship with Curbside Compost, I drew from my time studying English and geology, and I learned how to implement this knowledge into real work situations. I also learned about myself in collaborative work situations. I am grateful to the Class of 1964 Endowed Internship Fund for funding this experience. And I look forward to attending the Curbside Compost Birthday Party this fall.
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Research: Love and Troubleshooting
Margaret Hu ’26
Undeclared
Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard | Cambridge, Massachusetts

This summer, I completed a research internship at the Broad Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts under the guidance of Dr. Mounica Valluruapalli in Dr. Todd Golub’s ’85 lab. I was involved in two projects, one investigating how mutations in splicing factors can act as genetic drivers of myeloid disorders, and the other focusing on finding methods to enhance macrophage phagocytosis of cancer cells. I gained so many new skills from this experience, but the three most important were becoming more familiar with molecular biology research techniques and how wet lab research works, improving my comprehension abilities for advanced scientific materials, and learning how to present science well. I went from having zero wet lab experience to being able to independently carry out experiments, I read a large number of review papers and primary literature focused on my projects, and I presented some of these papers at journal clubs.

One of the more surprising things I learned from this experience was the importance of troubleshooting in research. There were many times when experiments did not run smoothly, and it sometimes took weeks to troubleshoot and find the source of the problem. A thorough understanding of the material was required to diagnose the error, and I learned how to find resources on the web that provided more information. Troubleshooting also taught me to not be frustrated when things go wrong. In the beginning, I would feel a bit panicked when an experiment didn’t work multiple times, but as time went on I learned to stay calm and approach the problem with an analytical mind. I believe this skill will transfer outside of the lab as well.

The key lesson I learned about myself from this experience is that I really do love research. Going into the summer, I wasn’t sure if I actually liked research or just the idea of research because I had never done wet lab research before. However, this internship confirmed that research is something I could see myself doing for the rest of my life. The excitement I felt every day even while doing the smallest tasks or troubleshooting was a completely unprecedented experience for me. With this realization, my path forward has become much clearer. I’m not sure if I’ll end up pursuing an MD or an MD/PhD, but I know I want research to be a significant part of my career. My dream is to conduct research that is informed by what I see in the clinic.

I would like to thank Dr. Todd Golub ’85 for offering me this amazing opportunity, Dr. Mounica Valluruapalli for being an incredible mentor and for patiently guiding me through everything, the Class of 1964 Endowed Internship Fund for funding my summer experience, and the Carleton Career Center for all of their support. This summer was truly a life-changing experience and I am incredibly grateful to everyone who made it possible!
Class of 1964 Endowed Internship Fund

Milkweed Summer
Anya Mitton-Fry '24
Biology
Denison University | Granville, Ohio

This summer I worked as part of Dr. Andy McCall's '97 research team studying common milkweed at Denison University. My work this summer exposed me to many different aspects of the research process. I was able to participate in fieldwork, improve my data cleaning and analysis skills, and work to generate conclusions at the end of a three-year multi-site research project. An unexpected experience that I had as a part of this summer was participating in a three-day long data retreat with some of my research mentor's collaborators on this large project. I was able to get insight into aspects of the research process that I never would have been able to as part of a class, such as hearing how collaborators can come together to transform extensive datasets and years of research into publications. I was also pleasantly surprised by how much I enjoyed practicing my data analysis skills using R and RStudio. After learning R during spring term, I was excited to be able to apply it to research that I had helped collect.

I am extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to explore ecology and field research through this summer position. It helped to cement my desire to pursue a career in ecology after college and gave me the confidence to trust that I could succeed in my future career. Beyond just having the experience, I was also able to create a network of support through my mentor and the other summer research students.

The biggest suggestion that I have for students applying to internships is to make the most of the time that you have! It sounds cliche, but so much of what I learned from my summer research experience didn't come from formal instruction in the field or in the hands-on research itself. It came from discussions with my fellow researchers and conversations with my mentor. If you are in a position that interests you and pushes you, you will be able to learn a lot from the informal interactions as well.

Thank you so much to all of the people who made my summer research experience possible. I would like to thank the Carleton Career Center for helping me to work out the logistics. I would also like to thank the Class of 1964 Endowed Internship Fund for funding my internship. Their generous support is what gave me the opportunity to pursue research this summer. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Andy McCall '97 for being a wonderful mentor throughout the summer.
Class of 1964 Endowed Internship Fund

My Introduction to Law and the World of Sports
Eli Venetis ’24
Economics & Cinema and Media Studies
Frank Salzano | New York, New York

First, I would like to acknowledge the Class of 1964 Endowed Internship Fund which helped make this opportunity possible for me. This summer, I was fortunate enough to intern for the law firm Salzano Ettinger Lampert & Wilson LLP and their joint sports agency, Alliance Sports Group. Over the course of the summer, I had a variety of tasks. I mainly worked for Frank Salzano and Jason Lampert who do civil law, and criminal law, and work on the sports side of things as well. One of my tasks was helping another associate of the company try and organize a purse bid for an upcoming major boxing match. On the criminal law side, I helped Jason prepare for a case he had coming up which was eye-opening. Another opportunity that I was granted was attending family court and seeing how one of those cases played out.

Three major skills that I learned, or rather improved upon, during my internship were critical thinking, proper research, and discipline. All of the tasks that I was given required a combination of these skills so naturally I think they most definitely improved during my time as an intern. I want to take these skills and go on to my next opportunity with the goal of using these improved skills to work on other skills. I also am going to continue working for Salzano Ettinger Lampert & Wilson LLP in a remote fashion which I am extremely grateful for.

During my time at Carleton, I have gone through phases as to what it is that I want to do with my life and career. This internship provided me with more information as to what that could be. The main thing that surprised me was actually during family court. The lawyers in family court, particularly during a custody battle, essentially attack the other lawyer’s client and nothing is off limits. It was extremely cinematic actually in that I felt like I was watching an extremely dramatic court hearing in a movie.

I am just extremely grateful for the opportunity that I was granted by Frank to gain a broad sense of what a law firm can do and for being introduced to the sports and entertainment world. For students looking to get their feet wet in any internship, I would highly recommend getting to build a relationship with your superiors and peers to maximize your experience. I had a great relationship with both Frank and Jason, which made the internship so much fun. Through the good relationship as well as doing good work, they trusted me more and gave me more responsibility. This made me feel that I was contributing to something, which is the best feeling you can have.
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The Essence of Life
Jens Bartel ’25
Chemistry
J. Craig Venter Institute | La Jolla, California

This summer I had the wonderful opportunity to work in San Diego at the J. Craig Venter Institute (JCVI) as a Synthetic Biology Lab Intern. I worked on an ongoing project of constructing a CRISPRi library for a synthetic cell with a minimal genome created by JCVI. The purpose of this library was to enable future researchers to determine the exact function of genes deemed essential for life yet still not fully understood. Throughout this process, I learned a multitude of skills, both essential for working in a laboratory environment as well as for everyday life. I learned and honed the basic lab skills needed for synthetic and molecular biology. I even became familiar enough with them to work with my supervisor and drastically decrease the amount of time spent on certain protocols without greatly affecting the quality of the results, all the while with the goal of adapting these protocols for a robot. I also learned key communication and networking skills as well as how to best contribute in a collaborative environment and in meetings.

When I began this internship, I was unsure of what exactly I wanted to do going forward, both in my remaining time at Carleton and beyond. I had long been interested in chemistry, genetics, and biochemistry, but I always thought that these were fairly separate fields, and even if I could find a field that combined two of them, finding all three in a single field would be impossible. However, this expectation was flatly rebuffed during my time at JCVI, as I found synthetic biology to combine all three of these topics. It combined my newfound love of organic chemistry and synthesis with my old fascination with cellular systems and pathways, and at the core of it were the instructions provided by the genetic material of the cell. Somehow, I had stumbled upon a field I long thought too exactly perfect to exist. With this newfound knowledge and my experience at JCVI this summer, I plan to continue my chemistry major and add on additional classes that help prepare me for graduate school in this fascinating and rapidly evolving field.

As this experience has now come to an end, I look back and realize that I would not have been able to pursue this opportunity without the generous support from the Class of 1970 Endowed Internship Fund. While I knew that San Diego would be much more expensive than what I am used to living in Ohio and attending school in Minnesota, I was still surprised by how true that expectation was. Thank you, truly, for allowing me to have this opportunity that taught me so much and opened my eyes to a new field of knowledge that I hadn’t dreamed existed.
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Trekking through a Summer of Child-Led Exploration
Anna Frankel ‘24
*Sociology and Anthropology*
Boston Outdoor Preschool Network | Boston, Massachusetts

This summer, I worked as an intern at the Boston Outdoor Preschool Network (BOPN) in Wellesley, Massachusetts. BOPN is a nature-based preschool with multiple locations in the Boston area. Children at BOPN learn through exploring and playing in the natural world.

I worked with three teachers in a toddler half-day class. Our summer was divided into two, four-week sessions. We began each day with an opening circle before trekking to our adventure spot. When we arrived at the adventure spot, we set up a tarp as a home base. Once everyone was settled and had eaten a snack, the kids would begin to explore. Common activities included digging in the dirt, climbing logs, playing in puddles, throwing rocks in the river, reading books, and doing arts and crafts.

My primary role in the class was to ensure the kids' safety as they engaged in their environment. Two-year-olds are just discovering how to move themselves through the world and interact with their peers, and this learning comes with lots of bumps in the road. One of the many lessons I learned was how fast learning and capable such young children can be. Throughout the course of the summer, I saw immense changes in the ways they explored their environment and interacted with me and each other. Many of the kids went from barely interacting with their peers to playing with, talking to, and working alongside each other in just a matter of weeks. It has been extremely rewarding to see how the children pick up on the behaviors we model for them; such as greeting everyone by name in the morning or giving a friend a hug when they are crying. On one particularly special occasion, I noticed a child helping her friend balance on a log the way she had seen me do so many times previously.

It was equally rewarding to watch and encourage the kids as their motor skills and confidence developed. This was particularly evident when we returned to familiar adventure spots. One spot was characterized by a really steep dirt hill. At first, all of the kids needed a lot of help and encouragement to climb up and down this hill. When we returned to the same spot just a week later, I was blown away by their increased confidence, strength, and coordination. Many kids were now able to climb the hill completely unassisted. Through these experiences, I realized how beneficial it can be to encourage young kids to take risks and test the limits of their own capabilities.

I’m really grateful that I had this opportunity to be a part of a community that views teaching and learning through the lens of child-led exploration. It has shown me what learning can look like in a non-traditional setting and has encouraged me to further explore the environments and approaches through which learning can take place. I want to thank the Class of 1970 Endowed Internship Fund for making this experience possible.
Class of 1970 Endowed Internship Fund

Cancer Research in Houston

Wanying Na ’24
Chemistry & Biology
MD Anderson Cancer Center | Houston, Texas

This summer, I was a CPRIT (Cancer Prevention & Research Institute of Texas) Summer Undergraduate Researcher at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas. For ten weeks, I was a part of the Watovich Lab in the immunology department, working on a project to understand the role of the gut microbiome in response to immunotherapy. During this project, I was able to learn lots of new lab skills, such as mouse handling, cell culture, and flow cytometry. In addition to lab skills, I was able to contribute to the process of designing the experiment, troubleshooting, and optimizing along the way. This made me learn more about how scientists do science, and have a deeper grasp of scientific thinking. In particular, I found it extremely fulfilling to be able to come up with a hypothesis based on literature and current data in the lab, and then think further about what experiments I can do to further elucidate biological mechanisms.

On top of the precious lab and scientific thinking skills, I was able to interact with so many incredible people throughout the experience. The MD Anderson Cancer Center is located in the Texas Medical Center, which is the world’s largest medical center. Due to this awesome location and the fact that MDACC sees hundreds of thousands of patients a year, the research teams at MDACC collaborate with clinicians to make their research truly translational. Because of these amazing collaborations, I was able to connect with people who work on very different things. In Dr. Watovich’s lab, there are graduate students, post-docs, MD-PhD students, and clinical fellows. The lab also collaborates with a couple of different departments. During conversations with various people, I learned so much about what each career path is like, and I felt so much more informed in making career decisions for myself in the future.

For this experience, I’m so grateful to Sarah Schneider and Dr. Elizabeth Park for the untiring help and guidance, Dr. Stephanie Watovich ’83 for the amazing mentorship, and all members of the Watovich lab for their expertise and support. Without the help of the Class of 1970 Endowed Internship Fund and the CPRIT Research Training Award CPRIT Training Program (RP210028), this experience would not have been possible. I want to thank the Carleton College Career Center for matching me with the fund, and helping me with housing in Houston. I also want to thank Prof. Debby Walser-Kunz for bringing me into the amazing world of immunology, and Prof. Raka Mitra for introducing me to Dr. Watovich ’83 and the MDACC Undergraduate programs.
Class of 1970 Endowed Internship Fund

Harnessing the Sun: The smartest way to use the Earth’s resources

Sylvie Reiners ’26
Undeclared
University of Arizona, School of Geography and Development | Tucson, Arizona

This summer, I worked as a research intern at the University of Arizona’s School of Geography, Development, and the Environment, in the lab of Greg Barron Gafford and his team. I would not have been able to participate in this or earn the invaluable experience that my summer provided me without the generous support of the Class of 1970 Endowed Internship Fund. Not only did this financial support allow me to do something that genuinely interested me and advanced my blooming career, but it also incentivized me to work for the good of humanity instead of going back to my minimum-wage job at home.

Greg and his team pioneered a farming method known as agrivoltaics (agri meaning agriculture and voltaics meaning photovoltaic, or solar power). This involves the production of crops under rows of solar panels and is specifically developed for arid environments such as my home in the Sonoran Desert, Tucson Arizona. They also have partner sites in Israel and Kenya. Arizona is a huge agricultural power, with 30% of lettuce coming from one town (University of California Davis). However, the crops grown here are not adapted to this harsh desert environment, and the difference is made up of millions of tons of water, the most important and limiting resource in the Southwestern United States. On top of this, Arizona is a great producer of solar energy, a resource which, to harness, requires no small acreage of land.

Greg’s team and partners seek to solve two problems with one solution. By combining solar field land on top of agricultural fields, our land is used efficiently, water use plummets, worker conditions improve, and crops grow better. That last part is a lot of what my research was concerned with this summer. To convince farmers and governments that agrivoltaics is a viable solution, it must be backed up by data that shows that crops will grow as quickly, if not faster. This was the phenology part of my research, which measured the growth data of the control and test sites. It is also important that the crops contain the same or better amounts of nutrients; the nutrient analysis testing performed this summer will determine this, as well as how the soil reacts to agrivoltaic methods. There is also concern that the construction of solar panels will leach heavy metals such as arsenic or lead into the soil, and consequently into the plants. To combat this, there is heavy metal testing occurring in the lab. During my time in this lab, I didn’t focus on one specific project or issue but instead helped where I was needed in the research. This gave me a wonderful view into all the projects occurring in the lab, and the intricacies of the policy that surrounds it. While agrivoltaics is a wonderful and fascinating idea to research, the aim of it is to make real change in the way crops are produced in the world. To change this, lots of data is needed to make policy changes.
Class of 1970 Endowed Internship Fund

A Summer of Research at the University of Chicago A.C.I.D Lab

Maya Wolff ’24
Psychology
University of Chicago | Chicago, Illinois

This summer, I worked as a research assistant at the University of Chicago Addictive, Compulsive, and Impulsive Disorders (ACID) Lab. This lab focuses on psychiatric research related to OCD, trichotillomania, borderline personality disorder, and various other psychiatric disorders. My work consisted of some data entry and other mundane tasks, but I spent most of my time interacting with study participants, doing phone screenings, and helping participants navigate the hospital. I was surprised by, and very grateful for the amount of clinical experience I gained as a first-year research assistant. The research coordinators at this lab gave me a lot of responsibilities that helped me grow as a researcher and exposed me to situations and populations that I had never worked with before.

The studies at the ACID lab ranged from treatments for trichotillomania and OCD to a study on Cocaine Use Disorder. At Carleton, I work at a psychology lab, and that provided me with great experiences related to conducting research and understanding psychology principles. However, working at Carleton, our main study population is college students - which does not offer as much diversity as a major city does. This summer, I worked with psychiatric populations who lived primarily in the south side of Chicago. One skill I definitely improved upon during my internship was my ability to communicate with people of different backgrounds. Prior to this internship, I had never worked directly with individuals with psychiatric disorders. I had learned about different psychopathologies in classes at Carleton, but actually talking to these individuals about their symptoms and how those symptoms affected their day-to-day lives was really eye-opening.

The more time I spent with these individuals, especially when I did phone screenings for potential participants, I was challenged in my problem-solving abilities. I often encountered people who were aggressively trying to participate in the study even though they did not meet strict criteria or just participants who were chaotic on the phone. Each day at my internship was different, depending on who I interacted with and what tasks I was asked to complete. I am very thankful for how much I grew in the fast-paced environment. There are some skills that you can't learn in classes or textbooks, that you can only get from experience. For me, problem-solving is one of those skills.

I am so thankful for the clinical experience I gained from this internship because it has helped me clarify what path I want to take to become a therapist in the future. It has also helped me navigate which areas within psychotherapy I would be most interested in pursuing. I am very appreciative of the Class of 1970 Endowed Internship Fund for providing me with the resources I needed to be able to complete this internship and experience life in a city, working at a medical center. I learned so many new skills that I will bring with me into my future at and after Carleton.
Learning How to Work on My Own
Ingrid Anderson ’25
Mathematics
University of Minnesota, Department of Radiation Oncology | Minneapolis, Minnesota

This summer I worked as a research intern at the University of Minnesota Medical Center Radiation Oncology Department. My position entailed working alongside my internship host and assisting them in their ongoing research studies. We were going to look at the effects of Gamma Knife radiation surgery on brain metastases in cancer patients. Before I started my internship, I completed training for HIPAA. This went well as I got more and more excited about my internship. I started with data entry in the first half of the summer. I was looking at charts and MRI scans of patients with brain tumors to obtain information about these patients who underwent this surgery. After I finished all the data entry, I began to manipulate it in order to be able to extract trends and statistics from all of my data. I did this by using Python and R to rearrange the data to fit what I was looking for. I also was able to make some survivorship curves based on a textbook my internship host gave me, comparing the differences in survivorship based on the differences in treatment. I then was able to complete a lab report-like writeup about my methodology and results, as well as a discussion of this study.

I learned a lot about myself and the way that I work. I spent a lot of the summer working from home since it was mostly data entry or computing. This gave me a lot of control over my hours and where I was able to work from, which I like a lot, although it took some time to get used to. I had to learn how to work on my own without the guidance of an advisor and learned to problem-solve if I was struggling with the programs or had questions about the write-up. I also learned how to advocate for myself and reach out to my advisor when I had these questions. He was very amenable to helping me out when I needed it and made me feel comfortable asking for help, which is something I have struggled with in the past. Those are just some of the skills I used and improved upon while participating in this internship.

I am very grateful for such a considerate and helpful internship host to help guide me in my studies this summer. I am also thankful to the Carleton College Career Center for allowing me to find this internship and helping me out when I needed assistance in applying, as well as accommodating my financial situation. And finally, a huge thank you to Mary Sanders Jones ’74 for establishing the David T.C. Jones ’74 Endowed Internship Fund which allowed me to participate in an internship to the fullest extent possible. I will take everything I learned moving forward from this internship and into my future schooling and career.
David T.C. Jones ’74 Endowed Internship Fund

Working in a Medical Laboratory at UCLA

Jordan Appelbaum ’25

Biology

University of California, Los Angeles | Los Angeles, California

During my internship working in a medical research lab at UCLA, I was involved in a project surrounding the early detection and treatment of Diabetic Kidney Disease. My goal was to purify around 1 mg of specific protein to then be used to detect antibodies of that protein in a human sample. I accomplished this goal by doing a variety of different lab tasks such as researching scientific literature, creating protocols, transforming E. coli with plasmids, inoculating the E. coli, purifying the protein through a column, doing Western Blots and SDS page gels, as well as interpreting and presenting the data I collected.

The capacity to be self-sufficient, the value of being precise and meticulous in all you do, and consistent communication with peers and supervisors were the three most important skills that I learned during my internship. Additionally, I was given the opportunity to be more independent and try to complete the project on my own after the PhD student I was working with closely left the lab. Because of this, Dr. Damoiseaux challenged me to read the literature and attempt everything on my own before asking him to walk me through something. This experience made me realize that I’m capable of more than I realize and that even though tasks may initially seem challenging and overwhelming if you take it step by step while asking specific questions and conducting your own research, you’ll eventually succeed in reaching your objective.

My future goal is to go to medical school and become a physician. The valuable hands-on experience, the deepening of my technical expertise, and the enhancement of my scientific acumen that I acquired throughout the duration of this internship will play a pivotal role in guiding my future endeavors by equipping me with the necessary skills to excel in the challenging field of medical studies. Working alongside professionals in the field allowed me to witness the practical implications of medical research and the process of developing medical technologies for clinical trials. The experience has not only deepened my understanding of healthcare but has also allowed me to make a meaningful impact on people’s lives through medicine.

Additionally, I am most grateful for the opportunity to work on such an incredible project in a cutting-edge laboratory surrounded by extremely smart and dedicated individuals. I advise other students who plan to work as summer interns to give one hundred percent of their effort with every task they undertake. When you put in a lot of effort and care about your work, it is obvious to the people around you that you are motivated to succeed and take pride in the work you are doing. People are willing to work with you and help you when you show them that you care.

Thank you to everyone who made this experience possible. This list includes Dr. Robert Damoiseaux, Dr. Susanne Nicholas, Mr. Michael Mellody, Mrs. Mary Sanders Jones ’74, MSSR Laboratory, UCLA Bioengineering, UCLA Health, and Carleton College.
Dolores D. Oswald ’46 and Hanan D. Wedlan Endowed Internship Fund

Knowing the Ancient Texts
Abdullah Ansar ’25
Cognitive Science & Philosophy
Augustana College | Rock Island, Illinois

My summer internship with Dr. Khalil Andani at Augustana College was a transformative experience, one that deepened my understanding of Islamicate philosophy. This reflection essay will recount my experiences, express gratitude to the Dolores D. Oswald ’46 and Hanan D. Wedlan Endowed Internship Fund for their generous funding, and explain how this research opportunity has uniquely positioned me for future success.

As a research assistant, my role involved translating, reading, and editing texts in Persian and Arabic, all aimed at supporting Dr. Andani’s scholarly work in Islamicate philosophy. This work was not only intellectually stimulating but also deeply rewarding, as it allowed me to contribute to the academic discourse and engage with the profound philosophical ideas that have flourished within the Islamicate tradition. One of the most illuminating aspects of this internship was the opportunity to delve into Islamicate philosophy and explore the rich tapestry of ideas, perspectives, and philosophies that have flourished over centuries. Through the process of translating and reading texts in Persian and Arabic, I discovered a treasure trove of intellectual heritage that often goes unnoticed in the Western philosophical canon. This experience expanded my horizons and deepened my appreciation for the diversity of thought within Islamicate philosophy.

Additionally, this internship provided me with essential skills in critical thinking, research methodology, and scholarly writing. I developed the ability to meticulously analyze and interpret intricate texts, ensuring the precision and accuracy of translations. The editing process honed my attention to detail, a crucial quality in academic pursuits. These skills will undoubtedly serve as formidable assets as I advance in my academic journey and pursue advanced studies in Islamicate philosophy.

As I contemplate my future prospects, I am confident that this research experience will significantly enhance my chances of gaining admission to a reputable graduate school for philosophy. The knowledge and skills I acquired this summer have equipped me with a unique perspective and expertise in Islamicate philosophy, setting me apart from other applicants. Furthermore, my time working closely with Dr. Andani has provided me with mentorship that I believe will be invaluable in guiding my academic pursuits and preparing me for the rigors of graduate-level research.

In conclusion, this summer internship has been a transformative journey of discovery and growth within the realm of Islamicate philosophy. I am immensely thankful to Dr. Khalil Andani for his guidance, the Dolores D. Oswald ’46 and Hanan D. Wedlan Endowed Internship Fund for their generous support, and the opportunity to immerse myself in the world of Islamicate philosophy. I am excited about the doors this experience has opened for me and am eager to continue my academic journey with a newfound passion and commitment to the study of philosophy, enriched by the profound wisdom of the Islamicate tradition.
Quantum Technology at Work in Industry

Woohyeok Choi ’24
Undeclared
EYL Inc. | Seoul, South Korea

During my internship experience, I worked on translating the user manual for one of EYL’s products, QCC, hardware inventory clearance, field test of cipher (EYL’s product), network (raw socket) programming, quantum entropy chip testing, and making a program by extracting quantum random number EYL’s products. From this internship, I have learned networking and socket programming skills and gained hands-on experience in how quantum technology can be applied within the industry.

The biggest takeaway for me personally was what to specialize in within the industry for my personal career. Dabbling a bit within the active industry allowed me to gain some insight into what type of technology is applied in which setting, and this really allowed me to narrow down my choice of interest in terms of what I want to commit myself to. I am especially grateful that I was able to have this internship in a smaller company because the highly interactive and small community allowed me to easily see how the different branches of computer science (hardware, software, frontend, backend, etc) communicated and cooperated to get their work done.

With that said, my advice for other students would be to not just chase after the internships for well-known companies but to also experience smaller companies even if it does have as high of a name or brand value. Each type of company really allows one to experience different and unique things that one will not be able to learn from another setting.
Dolores D. Oswald ‘46 and Hanan D. Wedlan Endowed Internship Fund

My Summer with CTUL

Myles Fisher ’25

History

Centro De Trabajadores Unidos En La Lucha | Minneapolis, Minnesota

I am deeply grateful to Dolores Oswald Wedlan ‘46 for the generous funding of my internship this summer. It was such a pleasure to work with everyone at CTUL, and my growth during this summer was made possible by their financial support.

This summer I worked with the Minneapolis-based workers’ rights center el Centro por Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha (CTUL). CTUL works with low-wage workers in the Twin Cities, offering support for crises like wage theft and sexual assault while empowering workers to improve their own working conditions and work in solidarity with other workers. Currently, they are working to gain support for the Building Dignity and Respect (BDR) Program, a program that monitors and holds accountable the entire construction industry for abuses of power. My primary work was with Trevon Tellor, the Ally Coordinator for CTUL. Myself, Trevon, and the other interns from Carleton and St. Olaf worked to improve and grow CTUL’s base of allies from communities across the Twin Cities. Our goal was to expand the number of allies CTUL can call on to join them at their September rally for the BDR campaign. From networking with pastors, rabbis, and imams to get the support of their social justice-oriented congregations to planning and assisting with events to gain petition signatures, we took different strategies and tactics to drum up interest and gain friends and allies for this cause.

Working with CTUL has been a great way to do work aligned with my values. I believe strongly in justice and empowerment, and CTUL’s work aligns with those values. Rather than organizing on behalf of workers, or simply meeting worker needs as it comes to the center, CTUL is both proactive and worker-led. CTUL’s major decision-making bodies are comprised of the workers who are members and pay dues. Strategies and campaigns are built with worker input and collaboration.

One of the most exciting things about my internship that I am taking with me going forward is that it is possible to do work in social justice as a career. Previously, I had felt as though the work I wanted to do in the world of social justice was work that would have to live on the side of my career. However, coming and working with CTUL, an organization that does meaningful social justice work with an analysis of power means it is possible to do this work as a career. While I don’t think labor organizing is going to be the work I do for my whole life, knowing that a career in this field is possible is very helpful and informative as I try to forge ahead in my life.

Once again, thank you so much to the Dolores D. Oswald ‘46 and Hanan D. Wedlan Endowed Internship Fund for their generous financial support. Additionally, thank you so much to Trevon Tellor, Claire Mathews-Lingen, Carlos Garcia Velasco, Simon Elliot, Kali Suchy, Merle Payne, Ruth Schultz, and all of the staff at CTUL for their warm welcome and support.
Dolores D. Oswald ’46 and Hanan D. Wedlan Endowed Internship Fund

Experiencing the Property Management Industry
Yuv Kataria ’24
Economics
Arnell Capital | Chicago, Illinois

After an action-packed three months of exploring parts of Europe and the UK during my study abroad program, I was not looking forward to being off-campus in the Fall of 2023. Typically, I feel like I have no routine when I am back home, and an excess of free time drives me to boredom. So, I was both relieved and excited when I was able to connect with Mauricio Gonzalez ‘15. Mauricio runs a search fund named Arnell Capital, through which he was able to find and acquire his newly owned company, Concierge Plus. I started interning for him right in the midst of this deal, and it was a great learning experience overall. Apart from writing about the opportunity, I would also like to thank Dolores Dawn Oswald Wedlan’46 and Hana D. Wedlan for helping make this possible for me due to the fund they set up in 2020 to help students fund internships.

My role was mainly centered around Mauricio, as he was my direct supervisor. We tried to stay in constant communication through a weekly Friday meeting, as well as texts and emails throughout the week. The structure was basically him assigning me projects and tasks during these meetings, and I would work on them as much as I could independently before reporting back to him. A few examples are thorough research on our company and the space that we operate in and a comparative analysis of feature offerings between us and our competitors. He also taught me a little bit about data analysis, specifically using Excel, as we talked through a couple of datasets that he had on historical price structures and customer service surveys, and how these could be analyzed through certain parameters to portray useful results.

More than anything, I believe this to have been a learning experience. In all honesty, although the internship did not fully live up to my expectations and I was not as involved as I wanted to be, it was still fruitful. Being a part of Mauricio’s team, and even simple research projects were useful in the sense that they forced me to learn about the property management software industry. I have come out of the job with significantly more knowledge about companies that work in this space, along with having built up and refined my communication, time-management, and research skills. I believe it to be a good stepping stone to future internships because it has made me want to find another opportunity during the year to be able to diversify and learn something about a different field under the scope of finance/economics or real estate.
My summer in the U.S. Department of Commerce spanned eight weeks at the D.C. headquarters doing a variety of work for the Economic Development Administration - a subdivision of Commerce. My tasks ranged from charging cord reorganization to the compiling of weekly updates for senior staff and the Office of the Secretary. Every day involved reporting to numerous different bosses, mostly in the office of public affairs. I learned a great deal from this summer, despite the work being far different from what I had expected.

My initial impression of a summer internship in Commerce would have involved working directly with potential policies and analyzing data about how those policies could impact constituents. Instead, my work dealt more directly with researching potential applications for the grants distributed by the EDA. When I came in on the first day and it became clear that the work would be different than I thought, I had to pivot quickly and learn the skills that would be necessary for the summer. The most important skill from the summer was undoubtedly honing my interpersonal skills. "Coffee chats" are a cornerstone of the Commerce internship program, so there were a number of times when I had to navigate conversations with adults that I did not know well and learn about their careers. Another important skill was learning how to properly look out for potential improvements to workflow and advocating effectively for their usage. For example, in each intern cycle, an intern is assigned to write the aforementioned weekly report. Therefore, three times a year, an intern must spend weeks working with a higher-up to perfect the language necessary for the report. In an effort to simplify this process, I created a step-by-step guide to creating the report for interns to have in cycles going forward. However, instead of demanding that my boss use this resource in the future, I had to be tactile in suggesting it.

Another important part of my learning this summer was simply adjusting to the flow of an eight-hour workday. It proved difficult at first to go so quickly from just a few hours of class a day to long periods of time where I was at my desk expected to work quietly. By the end of the summer, though, I became much more comfortable with the flow of the day. This summer was such a gift in that I was able to experience an internship after my first year which will allow for a much more informed decision about how I want to spend my next summer and build out my course schedule this fall.
Dolores D. Oswald ’46 and Hanan D. Wedlan Endowed Internship Fund

A Career-Changing Experience

Chris Melo Mejia ’25

Psychology

Hispanic Center of Excellence | Chicago, Illinois

My summer internship took place in Chicago, Illinois. During the internship, I learned what the process of research looked like by participating in a research lab that studies the effects of dance on the cognition of older adults with mild cognitive impairment. Additionally, I also went to lectures about medical school. I also had to make an independent project at the end of my internship which was a systematic literature review. During the entire internship, I developed three important skills. I developed research skills which allowed me to be critical and skeptical about the research I was reading. Being able to read an article and question it increased my critical thinking skills and allowed me to be able to fully understand scientific texts. I also developed a sense of initiative through the lecture and independent project which increased my leadership skills. An increased initiative helped me do things I would have never done or even thought about before this internship. The final skill I developed was how to properly write a literature review and conduct the beginning stages of research.

Not only did I develop these skills, but I also learned a lot about myself and who I want to be. Before this internship, I was unsure about what I wanted to do after Carleton. This internship made me realize that being an academic will always be a part of my identity. However, it isn't something I would do as a career. I found myself enjoying the medical aspect of the internship more. This internship helped me see that my personality is very fitting for psychiatry. Additionally, conversations with medical students and future psychiatrists affirmed my desire to get into the medical field. My research experience also showed me that I want to heal people but also get to know them on a personal level.

With the new skills I gained from this internship and a newfound sense of self, I hope to make the application for medical school as easy as possible for me. I also hope to apply my research skills to the research I will be doing in Carleton. I am extremely excited to bring the skills and perspectives that I learned from my internship to Carleton. Of course, this would not be possible without the help of Dolores D. Oswald ’46 and the Dolores D. Oswald ’46 and Hanan D. Wedlan Endowed Internship Fund. I would like to take a couple of sentences to thank you for allowing me to have this opportunity. None of my growth and personal discovery would be possible without your help. I would also like to thank the Hispanic Center of Excellence, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Luke Klefstad for giving me such an impactful internship. I am eternally grateful for everyone's support.
Dolores D. Oswald ’46 and Hanan D. Wedlan Endowed Internship Fund

Popcorn Lung Research in Ohio
Frank Sheffield ’24
Chemistry
Nationwide Children’s Hospital, Abigail Wexner Research Institute | Columbus, Ohio

During the summer of 2023, I had the opportunity to participate in the REaCH-LABS Summer Internship opportunity at Nationwide Children’s Hospital in Columbus Ohio. During this internship, I was able to gain valuable independent research experience and shadowing experience. My research focused on a disease called Obliterans Bronchiolitis more commonly known as Popcorn Lung. Obliterans Bronchiolitis (OB) is a terminal lung disease that affects the small airways of the lungs and is characterized by airflow obstruction and narrowing of the bronchioles. The causes of Obliterans Bronchiolitis have been commonly associated with transplantation, inhalational injury, and multisystem autoimmune diseases, however the pathophysiology of OB is poorly understood. I took on the challenge of investigating the pathophysiology and the effects the disease has on one’s body. This experience was absolutely phenomenal and assisted me in reaching my ultimate goal of becoming a physician.

To learn more about the structural biology of the disease, western blots were performed on the airway and parenchyma tissue of individuals with four treatments. The cohort consisted of individuals ranging between the ages of 37-50 with various smoking histories. The groups were established as follows; (control) no history of lung disease, individuals diagnosed with Obliterans Bronchiolitis from retransplantation or idioopathically, individuals diagnosed with Lung Fibrosis, and individuals diagnosed with Asthma. Each sample of airway and parenchyma tissue was probed for protein expression of alpha-smooth muscle actin, calponin, and transgelin. In addition to testing the structural proteins present, I looked at the effects of common treatments given to individuals with OB. I cultured human airway smooth muscle cells (ASM) isolated from donors with obliterans bronchiolitis or no lung disease. Lastly, I measured the immune response in individuals with Obliterans Bronchiolitis. Cytokine levels in parenchyma tissue were measured using a Meso Scale Discovery U-Plex Assay, probing for IFNγ, GM-CSF, IL-10, IFNβ, IL-1RA, IL-6, IL1x, CXCL10, TNFα, TGF-β1, TGF-β2 and TGF-β3.

Overall we were able to observe significant airway narrowing and inflammation in an individual with obliterans bronchiolitis. Structurally I was able to identify that Calponin expression was significantly increased in the parenchyma tissue of OB patients but did not increase in the airway of patients with OB. When measuring the immune response we were able to see a significant increase in CXCL10 expression within individuals who obtained OB from transplantation. We speculate that higher calponin expression could indicate abnormal proliferation and activation of smooth muscle cells within the airway walls. CXCL10 is a signaling chemokine for adaptive immune response. The elevated expression of CXCL10 could indicate a T-cell response in patients with OB. Overall, our data suggest both smooth muscle thickening and inflammatory immune activation are present in patients with OB, likely attributing the severity of obliterative bronchiolitis.
Dolores D. Oswald ’46 and Hanan D. Wedlan Endowed Internship Fund

Internship Reflection at SinoLink Shanghai

Xingyi Zhang ’24

Mathematics & Psychology
Sinolink Securities Co Ltd | Shanghai, China

During my internship at SinoLink Shanghai, I had the privilege of diving into the world of finance and gaining invaluable insights into the workings of a prominent financial services company. This experience not only allowed me to explore various aspects of the finance industry but also provided me with a deeper understanding of my own values and career aspirations. My primary role was with the product design team, where I was involved in market research, financial analysis, and designing innovative financial products. I also had the opportunity to collaborate with my colleagues to develop an asset securitization product, working closely with clients to align their goals with our financial solutions.

Throughout my internship, I honed my research and analytical skills. From evaluating a mining machinery company’s long-term debt-paying ability to understanding the intricacies of different types of asset-backed securities, I learned to dissect complex financial information and distill it into actionable insights. The ever-evolving nature of the finance industry demands adaptability. My liberal arts education at Carleton not only equipped me with knowledge but also instilled the ability to learn efficiently. I swiftly acquired knowledge about the Chinese capital market and financial terminologies, proving that I could learn and thrive in a dynamic environment. This realization boosted my confidence in tackling challenges beyond my comfort zone.

This internship was instrumental in shaping my career aspirations. Initially uncertain about the finance industry, I now see it as a viable and exciting career path. My newfound skills, coupled with a deeper understanding of the industry, have solidified my interest in finance, and I plan to explore opportunities in this field further. Additionally, I intend to prioritize a workplace that aligns with my values and promotes a positive work environment. I am profoundly grateful for my supervisor, who served as an excellent mentor and guided me in my learning journey. I am also thankful for the award provided by the Dolores D. Oswald ’46 and Hanan D. Wedlan Endowed Internship Fund, as this experience was invaluable in my personal and professional growth.

To other students considering internships, I offer two pieces of advice. First, leverage your network and seek informational interviews. Connections with alumni, parents, or friends can open doors to opportunities you might not have considered. Second, don’t limit yourself to a specific industry; explore diverse roles that align with your skill set, as you might discover unexpected passions and talents.

In conclusion, my internship at SinoLink Shanghai was a transformative experience that not only enhanced my financial acumen but also clarified my career goals and values. It has set me on a path of continued learning and exploration within the finance industry, and I am excited to see where this journey leads.
Interning at the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre (TAEC) has been one of the most unique and rewarding experiences in my life. I never thought I would have a chance to visit Asia, much less live and work there for a month. Looking back now that the work is completed, I can say that this has been my most fulfilling summer so far.

The majority of our work was helping to prepare the museum for its upcoming exhibition: Claiming Inspiration: Artisans, Culture, Commercialisation. The exhibition will follow the Oma people of Laos in their attempt to protect their traditional designs and knowledge from theft. In 2019, the Oma had their designs misappropriated, and have since been working with the TAEC to protect their art and provide a framework for other ethnic minority groups across the world.

We created content for the tablets featured in the exhibition. The tablets will have more specific information than the exhibition plaques and posters, giving especially savvy or interested visitors a way to learn more about the Oma. As we created the entire tablet display, our work combined research, writing, and design. We learned a lot about the Oma, copyright law, and patterns of cultural appropriation.

Even if I never get back (though I certainly hope to) I believe that my time in Laos will influence the rest of my life. Though I’ve been outside of North America before, it was never for more than a vacation. Laos is designated by the UN as a Least Developed Country (though it’s set to graduate to Developing in 2026). I thought I knew, or could guess, about how people in an LDC lived, but I really had no idea. I’m not sure exactly what I thought, maybe something abstract about dirt roads and photos of sad children, but it was not like that at all. Western countries tend to portray LDCs and DCs as places to pity. While Laos definitely has a lot of problems, they are not that different from what the USA is dealing with; poverty, food insecurity, and lack of medical care.

I cannot emphasize enough how important this internship was to me. I am incredibly grateful for the support of Carleton College from the Donald A. Camp ’70 and Elizabeth Hart Camp Endowed Internship Fund. Without support, it would not have been financially feasible for me to spend my summer this way. I will be an RA and Peer Leader next year, and I am excited to share my experience with my residents and friends while encouraging them to explore their own options for similar experiences.
The Elizabeth and George Frost Internship Fund

My Summer with Northfield’s Planning Department

Jack Allen ’24
Geology
City of Northfield | Northfield, Minnesota

This summer, I had the pleasure of being a planning intern for the City of Northfield’s Community Development division. I did a number of tasks and projects for the office during my eleven weeks. Broadly, these can be categorized as compliance-related (reviewing sign/fence permits, creating zoning cheat sheets for myself and other city planners, and more), reporting (crafting summary reports and press releases, creating an inventory of vacant lots within the city, etc.), or community building events (interviewing local artists, assisting with farmer’s market events, and more). In my free time, I spent lots of time reading about zoning ethics and historic preservation efforts.

In addition to all of my tangible accomplishments, I also gained invaluable advice and information from my boss and other coworkers. I recall my midpoint conversation with my supervisor being particularly helpful. She asked me what I was considering doing after graduation, to which I replied uncertainly. I mentioned that I was interested in pursuing a master’s degree in environmental planning (or perhaps an adjacent field), but that I wasn’t confident if this would happen immediately after graduation or some years later. Upon hearing this, my boss directed me to specific master’s programs at the University of Minnesota, especially those that she knows people have attended. She helped clarify my general interest in “environmental planning” to something more nuanced, like risk management or natural disaster planning. I’m really grateful to have received some direction from this conversation. More generally, this internship has taught me that I enjoy a public-facing job, where my actions have direct impacts on my community. I find that to be a very rewarding experience.

Going into this internship (and the application process), there’s quite a bit of advice I wish I had received beforehand. When it comes to applying, it’s crucial to set reasonable expectations for yourself. Be honest about the number of applications you want to submit, and chart out rough goals of when you’d like to have things submitted. Checking job posting websites once a week is a great way to get an inventory of what’s out there and start building your schedule. If you can’t perfectly adhere to your schedule, that’s okay! It’s also important not to be too hard on yourself if life happens and you’re unable to meet a temporary goal. This mentality can also be applied to the interview/feedback process. If a job doesn’t want to hire you, then it’s not meant to be, and that’s okay. It’s essential that you don’t get too discouraged from small upsets. Even if you don’t secure an official internship, there are still plenty of ways to have a meaningful summer and gain professional experience. Overall, maintaining a positive attitude is necessary and will lead to a healthy and fulfilling application cycle.

Acknowledgments: I’d like to thank the sponsors of The Elizabeth and George Frost Internship Fund for providing the necessary financial support for this summer experience. Whether it was rent, food, or transportation, my needs were sufficiently met. I’m beyond grateful for this assistance.


The Elizabeth and George Frost Internship Fund

Exploring a Career in Chemistry with the Hedley Lab
Alana Berger ‘24
Chemistry
University of Glasgow | Glasgow, United Kingdom

I spent my summer in Professor Gordon Hedley's Lab at the University of Glasgow with the aim of determining whether chemical research was a career I wanted to explore after graduation. I thank The Elizabeth and George Frost Internship Fund for this opportunity. My research with the Hedley Lab focused on analyzing the light emission behavior of F8BT, an organic compound often found in OLEDs, using single-molecule spectroscopy. The experience commenced with a conceptual literature review and concluded with a final report and presentation.

I grew the most through these tasks. My immediate reaction when I began the literature review was to panic. This was PhD level physical chemistry way beyond the reach of my undergraduate chemistry knowledge. It took several different strategies, but eventually, I found an approach that enabled me to gain a solid understanding of the concepts without feeling overwhelmed. I was proud, excited, and surprised to find that at the end of the review, I came away able to understand ideas beyond my self-perceived ability. My improved scientific literacy will be especially useful in my senior comps this following year. The final report and presentation helped develop both my digital literacy skills and my communication through writing. Both of these skills will also aid in comps and any future career.

As stated above, one of my biggest accomplishments and self-realizations in the experience was that when I set my mind to learn something, I was able to do so. This was significant for me as I often feel a bit of imposter syndrome as a chemistry major. This internship also helped illuminate how I want my future career to look. I enjoyed dedicating myself to a single research project for an extended period of time and the expertise and investment that accompanied it. If I do decide to pursue a PhD or research in the future, however, I will want to focus on a subject with a more immediate human impact. I also found that staying in an underground lab all day was depressing and thus, wherever I work next, I want to be surrounded by sunlight and trees.

Working at the Hedley Lab did have one additional benefit: I got to form and strengthen relationships with professors, peers, and friends in Glasgow. As I am considering moving to Glasgow at some point in the future, it was extremely beneficial, socially and professionally, to work on these connections.

I had a wonderful time researching with the Hedley Lab in Glasgow and learned so much about myself, my career aspirations, and single molecule spectroscopy. I am grateful to Walter K. Dean ’67 and Lillian F. Dean ‘68 for enabling me to have this experience. It allowed me to have the opportunity to explore what I want my future to look like. The ability to try and test is such a special gift to have given me and I appreciate it so much.
The Elizabeth and George Frost Internship Fund

Growth Beyond Borders: Internship Revelations
Quinn Buhman ’24
Political Science/International Relations
Spring University Myanmar | Chiang Mai, Thailand

During my internship, I was deeply involved in various tasks, from conducting grant research to coordinating a cooperative webinar between Carleton College and Spring University Myanmar. The remote nature of my work, combined with the challenge of collaborating with individuals 12 hours ahead of my time zone, presented unique challenges. However, these challenges were not without their silver linings.

Three pivotal skills I honed during this period were adaptability, effective cross-time zone communication, and feedback reception. I learned to pivot, engage with different members of the organization, and gain insights from varied perspectives. Effective communication became paramount, especially when collaborating across different time zones. I implemented strategies to optimize communication and workflow, ensuring alignment and productivity. Additionally, I utilized various digital tools and collaborative platforms to enhance remote interactions. The feedback sessions with my supervisor were enlightening. I learned to approach feedback with a growth mindset, viewing it as a roadmap for continuous improvement.

Reflecting on this journey, I realized the importance of self-awareness and resilience. The challenges I faced pushed me out of my comfort zone, prompting introspection. I discovered my ability to adapt to unforeseen circumstances and the significance of maintaining a positive attitude even when faced with disruptions.

This experience has charted a clear path forward for me. The insights I gained into effective communication, the intricacies of international cooperation, and the significance of feedback in a professional setting will undoubtedly influence my future endeavors. I am now more inclined to pursue roles that allow me to leverage these learnings and contribute positively to the field of international development.

One essential lesson was the practical implications of policy decisions and the role of international organizations in shaping global education. While I was aware of the theoretical aspects from my coursework, witnessing it firsthand during my internship provided a deeper understanding.

I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to grow both personally and professionally during this internship. The challenges, while daunting at times, were instrumental in shaping my perspective and skills. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to The Elizabeth and George Frost Internship Fund for making my internship experience possible. Their generous support has been instrumental in providing Carleton students, including myself, with invaluable internship experiences.

To other Carleton students seeking internships, my advice would be to embrace challenges with an open mind. Every challenge presents an opportunity for growth. While the journey might be filled with unexpected twists and turns, it’s the learnings and growth that stem from these challenges that truly matter. Embracing every experience, both positive and challenging, will pave the way for a rewarding career journey.
I would like to express my immense gratitude toward The Elizabeth and George Frost Internship Fund for their generous support and for making this experience possible.

This summer, I worked with professors and students from UC San Diego, Chapman, and Carleton. The project is ongoing, and its goal is to understand 1) connections between the racial identities of Asian American undergraduate students pursuing STEM fields, 2) their experiences in these fields, and 3) any underlying factors that drove them in such an academic direction. We began the summer by transcribing previously conducted interviews, primarily using an online transcription service, and editing the errors that the service created. We also read a lot of current sociological literature relating to the topic, learning about Asian American individuals and their experiences in society as well as focusing on pedagogical studies that have been done relating to BIPOC students. Our main area of learning, however, centered around community cultural wealth, a sociological understanding that describes the ways of knowledge that marginalized people develop in response to oppressive systems.

After we finished transcribing these interviews, we began to code them. Initially, I did some individual qualitative coding work, looking at how the interviewees discussed and referred to their racial identities. Later, however, I joined up with others from the team and we began developing a codebook that centered around the principles of community cultural wealth. The next steps are to apply this codebook to each interview and attempt to make sense of the trends that present themselves.

I am deeply interested in studying public health, and accessibility to education is a component of public health studies. This summer was the first time I had done any sociologically focused research, and it has been fascinating, causing me to want to pursue a social science route in relation to public health.

I am very grateful to have been able to work on this project. The research experience was invaluable, and I have honed the skills necessary for the qualitative analysis done in social sciences. This project also ended up being incredibly personal. As an Asian American student who spent a lot of time as a learner in STEM fields, I was able to better understand the underlying cultural context of the interviews. I was also challenged to reflect on my own trajectory through STEM fields and place my actions in the context of community cultural wealth learning.

This summer provided an exciting opportunity to further pursue sociological research, and I am incredibly appreciative of my time working on the project.
Elizabeth K. Ester ’79 and Michael T. Brody Endowed Internship Fund

Unraveling the World of Ionic Liquids: A Journey in Research
Mays Neiroukh ’25
Computer Science
Milwaukee School of Engineering | Milwaukee, Wisconsin

This summer, I had an incredible experience in the Milwaukee School of Engineering’s Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) program. I worked on a research project that focused on leveraging machine learning in the design of novel ionic liquids. As a computer science major, I didn’t know much about ionic liquids before, but this internship taught me a lot and allowed me to write a research paper on the topic.

I want to thank Elizabeth K. Ester ’79 and Michael T. Brody for funding this opportunity. Without their support, as an international student, I wouldn’t have been able to participate. I also want to express my gratitude to the Carleton Career Center for connecting me with this opportunity.

One of the most profound lessons I gleaned from this experience is the power of interdisciplinary collaboration. Bridging the worlds of computer science, chemistry, and machine learning opened my eyes to the immense potential that lies at the intersection of these fields. It emphasized the importance of diverse perspectives and skill sets in tackling complex scientific challenges.

Surprisingly, I discovered that I’m really interested in ionic liquids and what we can use them for. What started as something new and strange became something I’m really passionate about. I now know that I would like to extend my knowledge in programming to be applied in different fields like biomedical engineering. I also realized my interest in conducting research and finding answers to those scientific questions that keep us pondering.

Looking back, I see how important internships can be in helping us figure out what we want to do in our studies and jobs. To fellow students, I offer this advice: Embrace every opportunity, even if it takes you out of your comfort zone. It is in these moments of challenge and unfamiliarity that true growth occurs. Be open to learning, be receptive to mentorship, and be persistent in your pursuit of knowledge.

As I move forward, I’m taking with me the confidence and excitement I got from this internship into my future studies and work. The skills and insights gained from this experience will undoubtedly inform my future academic endeavors and propel me toward a career marked by innovation and discovery.

In closing, I want to thank everyone who made this internship possible. What I’ve learned and experienced will always be a big part of my story, showing me how important it is to learn from others and to explore new opportunities.
Elizabeth K. Ester ’79 and Michael T. Brody Endowed Internship Fund

Understanding Research and Medical School
Allen Perales ’25
Biology
Hispanic Center of Excellence | Chicago, Illinois

This summer I participated in research through the Hispanic Center of Excellence at the University of Illinois at Chicago. I worked with Dr. Robin Mermelstein on a tobacco and cannabis observational study. In this study, participants (ages 18-25) who smoked tobacco and cannabis were monitored through surveys and a real-time data-collecting phone. This phone interviewed the participants at random times during the day to gauge their emotional state before and after the use of a substance. Unfortunately, since the study required more participants for a thorough analysis, I analyzed the frequency of motives (reasons) for using tobacco and cannabis. I used this information to then present it to my cohort.

Key lessons I learned during this experience were the value of feedback, support, and communication. If I had not gotten feedback from my cohort members, I would not have learned how to present research or write a research paper. They were very honest and critical. Although the advice sometimes frustrated me, I found it very motivating and supportive. It was a bit surprising that I could use the advice as motivation. I learned that taking a break and then tackling the issue later made me much more efficient at correcting my mistakes. I do not like to stop working because it feels like I am “giving up.” However, this experience showed me that I can tackle a problem that is frustrating me more efficiently when I take a moment to relax.

This experience was a great opportunity for me to reflect on my future goals. I learned a lot about research and medical school. I aspire to become a health professional but I have become more skeptical throughout college. I realized that I lacked experience in the medical field for me to decide whether I wanted to pursue medicine or not. Therefore, I will now focus on getting into the clinic as much as I can. I am very grateful to have received this instruction and advice surrounded by like-minded people. I was able to hear different opinions and perspectives on opportunities and advice.

For students in other internships, my biggest advice would be to just ask questions. Be curious even if the topic is not relevant to you. It can sometimes lead to something of value to you. And if it doesn't lead to something valuable then, at least you got to learn more about a topic someone knows a lot about. More importantly, you were able to connect with someone.

Acknowledgments: Dr. Monica Vela P’21, P’25; Dr. Robin Mermelstein; Raul Vazquez; Dr. Andre Paredes, Hispanic Center of Excellence, Carleton Career Center, the Elizabeth K. Ester ’79 and Michael T. Brody Endowed Internship Fund, and the Trustee Endowed Internship Fund.
The Endowed Internship Fund for Public Service

Asia Trade Policy at the International Trade Administration
Peter Sallinger ’24
Political Science/International Relations
Global Markets Asia, International Trade Administration | Washington, D.C.

For 10 weeks during the summer of 2023, I interned at the International Trade Administration’s Office of Asia in Washington, D.C. The International Trade Administration (ITA), which is part of the Department of Commerce, contributes to the trade policy of the United States’ executive branch. It also supports domestic and foreign businesses with their import and export needs. I worked mostly with ITA’s SE Asia team, which covers primarily ASEAN countries. I also supported some ITA work on multilateral and strategic initiatives related to APEC.

Throughout the summer, I had the opportunity to attend and report back on relevant events throughout the D.C. area, discuss career paths with colleagues, and make real contributions to ITA’s work. I loved getting to hear from companies, foreign and domestic, as well as policymakers and senior members of the Biden Administration.

Over the course of my internship, I had the opportunity to improve my writing skills and focused on crafting concise briefs for my team, including ITA’s Deputy Assistant Secretary for Asia and even ITA’s undersecretary (the head of the agency). I also improved my networking skills and grew more comfortable asking colleagues about their lives, both inside and outside of government. Additionally, I became accustomed to working as part of a team. I enjoyed supporting my office’s efforts and grew comfortable working in a professional environment. I learned during the experience that it is important for me to speak my mind, as I can be naturally introverted.

My time at ITA helped me solidify my interest in spending part of my career doing public service at the federal level, specifically in the field of international relations. I had the opportunity to speak with multiple colleagues who told me about their career paths working in international relations for the federal government. I also learned a lot about the pros and cons of getting a master’s degree/advanced degree, which will certainly help me to chart my future from a more informed point of view.

I came away from my time in D.C. with a strong appreciation for the work of public servants and their dedication to a functional, successful executive branch. I’m very grateful for my colleagues’ patience, support, and friendly attitudes, and for their interest in my development and future. I would advise other students entering internships to be enthusiastic, and appreciative, and to do their best work.

I would like to thank my team at ITA, the Carleton Career Center, the Trustee Endowed Internship Fund, the Carleton Internship Fund for Government Service, the Endowed Internship Fund for Public Service, and my hosts this summer, Carleton parents/a Carleton alumnus, for making this experience possible.
Eric ’85 and Sue Munis ’86 Nord Internship Fund

Connecting with the Community in Northfield

Lillian Buchman ’24

History

Northfield Public Library | Northfield, Minnesota

This summer I worked as an Outreach Fellow for the Northfield Public Library. I was first interested in this internship because it was in English and Spanish, and I was eager to practice Spanish over the summer. When answering the question what did I do as part of this opportunity, the question is really what didn’t I do? One thing I appreciated about this internship was the diverse array of assignments I was given; I was involved in publicity, community outreach, teaching and leading programs, designing an exhibit, and other smaller, miscellaneous tasks.

My favorite part of the summer was instituting a two-week-long exhibit that focused on the quinceañera, a Latine tradition that celebrates a girl’s fifteenth birthday and her transition to womanhood. For the exposition, I created posters and a window display that included information I had researched and written up as well as photos. I coordinated with a party-planning/quinceañera business in Faribault called Sueños de Quinceañer so that they could bring dresses and other quinceañera items to put on display. Besides the dresses, patrons could come to the library to see tiaras, bouquets, and other quinceañera memorabilia, in addition to checking out books I had selected about the celebration. Originally, the exhibit was supposed to be up for one week, but it was so successful that we extended it another week by popular demand. The exhibit was also featured on NPR! I put this display together myself, and it demanded a lot of time and work, but I am satisfied with the result and it is a project I am proud of.

The other aspect of this internship that I enjoyed, and also surprised me, was connecting with the community of Northfield. I was introduced to townies of all ages and walks of life, from visiting kids at the YMCA summer camp with the library’s bookmobile to teaching adult Spanish-speaking immigrants English. Creating purposeful relationships with different people within the community gave me the opportunity to reflect more on my position as a Carleton student and what it means to live in Northfield. Most Carleton students are in and out of Northfield in four short years, and the roots they plant are related more so with the college; there’s the sense that Northfield offers a lot to Carleton students (places to eat, study, hang out), and students think of this relationship as purely transactional and not meaningful. The people I’ve met through this internship, specifically my supervisor and my students at my English conversation table, are people whose relationships I intend to cultivate and continue well after Carleton. I’m grateful to consider these people good colleagues and friends. I feel that I have an investment in Northfield outside of the college, something that is generally unique for Carleton students, but I believe shouldn’t be.

Finally, I would like to thank my supervisor, Angelica Linder, for inspiring and challenging me. I would also like to thank Eric ’85 and Sue Munis ’86 for financially supporting my internship.
Eric ’85 and Sue Munis ’86 Nord Internship Fund

Exploring Neuroscience with the Help of Artificial Intelligence and Mice

Joseph Park ’25

Biology
Cedars-Sinai | Los Angeles, California

To start, I would like to sincerely thank Eric Munis ’85 and Sue Munis Nord ’86 who created the Eric Munis ’85 and Sue Munis Nord ’86 Nord Internship Fund and supported me financially this summer so that I would be able to spend a summer exploring what scientific research might be like as a career. I learned so much about neuroscience, a subject I am interested in, and the internship was a great opportunity to supplement my learning at Carleton.

My internship was at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, a non-profit academic healthcare organization in Los Angeles, CA. More specifically, I worked as an intern at Dr. David L. Hunt’s neuroscience lab. I had a chance to get involved with a project focused on investigating the relationships in the activity of cell types in the mouse brain to a broad repertoire of behaviors so that we can gain novel insights into the more complex coding properties of neurons in the hippocampus. An important aspect of this project included quantitatively analyzing the behaviors and motor learning that occurred as mice navigated a virtual reality maze.

I was fascinated by how different subjects came together and were interconnected in important ways. Although the lab is focused on neuroscience mainly, statistics, computer science, and genetics, were crucial to different steps of the research. For example, DeepLabCut, a markerless pose estimation software that uses deep learning to track body parts of animals, was a key part of collecting data. Deep learning, which is a method in artificial intelligence, allowed us to effectively and efficiently use videos of the mice to identify the location of the body parts throughout trials. Then, I used Python, the programming language, to analyze the data and categorize what DeepLabCut had tracked into different behaviors such as whisking and running. Moreover, the electrophysiology that was used to measure neural activity was fascinating and was a great way to experience how technology is advancing science.

Research aside, I was able to learn so much from the people in my lab. I am genuinely impressed by their desire and willingness to learn and be curious about a variety of topics that interest them, whether or not those interests relate to their field of expertise, and they often incorporate the things that they learn into their research to improve their work.

I strongly felt throughout my internship that Carleton’s classes are equipping me with the skills that will help me to be a problem solver and critical thinker which are important to the research process. This summer was a valuable opportunity and will be something that I frequently reflect on as I continue learning at Carleton and prepare for a career in science and medicine.
Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund

Exploring the Niche Field of Pure Math
Aaron Banse ’25
Computer Science & Mathematics
Williams College | Williamstown, Massachusetts

This summer, I participated in a math research opportunity with Polymath Jr. My group was focused on researching knot theory, specifically ribbon knots. It was very interesting work, and I learned a lot about the field, as well as myself. I figured out that while math research was interesting, it might not be something I want to do as a career. Nevertheless, I strengthened some very valuable skills.

We worked entirely online, so I had to continue to improve my online communication skills. The project was very collaborative and required me to keep up to date with everything. The project was also very open-ended. That meant I had to find my own goals to work towards in the hopes they could contribute to our larger plans. A lot of the time, I had to pursue an idea that only might be useful in the end. I am not usually one to do very well without clear goals, so I struggled a bit to find my direction at first. However, once I figured out what I was going to spend my time on, the work became a lot easier to get into.

I’m a double major in computer science and math, so next summer, I want to get a computer science internship, if possible. That way I can spread out my experience and try out all my potential career options early. My experience this summer will give me great experience for a lot of jobs in the future, so I’m glad I had that opportunity. One thing I learned that surprised me was how experimental the research was. Mathematics research often just meanders in different directions until all the experimentation leads to some breakthrough, often in places you would never expect. Our projects weren’t directed at proving or solving a specific problem, but instead finding out as much we can about the math in a specific direction.

I’m grateful for the friends I made in the internship as well. I still keep in touch with a few of them. It’s nice to know so many people going into the niche field of pure math. One thing I struggled with was the very loose deadlines we had. This meant I had to self-regulate all the time I spent and when I needed to get things done. My best advice for people in future internships would be to take charge of your own deadlines and get things done earlier. Often, it is really easy to get ahead and stand out by doing this.
Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund

Investigating the Impact of Fructose Consumption on Liver Function

Caroline Crampton ’25
Biology
North Carolina State University | Raleigh, North Carolina

This summer, I worked in the Kennedy lab in the Molecular and Structural Biochemistry Department at North Carolina State University. Because of the Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund, created by Jack Eugster ’67, P’02 and Camie Eugster P’02, I participated in Dr. Kennedy’s research on fructose consumption’s impact on liver function. During this internship, I spent a lot of time in the cell culture hood, so I learned the importance of sterile technique to prevent contamination. While I had experience plating yeast cells in the Genetics lab, plating yeast is very different from plating live cells suspended in media as the cells in media are more susceptible to contamination and mechanical disruption. In addition to sterile techniques, I gained experience creating cell media, counting, plating, and splitting adherent macrophage cells. Additionally, I learned how to perform dilutions for precise cell plating and acquired skills in western blotting, immunostaining, and isolating liver cells after a mouse sacrifice. I also learned how to use several new software. I became proficient in using ImageJ to quantify the collagen levels in liver tissue to determine how much fibrosis occurs in the liver. I then learned how to efficiently display my results using the software GraphPad to create a visualization of the varying fibrosis levels for each of the three diets the mice followed.

Throughout the internship, I greatly improved my ability to work with numbers and statistics, analyze and interpret data, and apply knowledge to a real-world setting. When I first began working in the lab, I struggled to complete simple dilution questions; however, after the countless dilutions I performed for precise cell plating, I strengthened my mathematical abilities and carried out the calculations independently. Moreover, after analyzing the quantification of collagen in liver tissue and graphing the results, I feel as though I have improved my ability to interpret data as well. After exploring the variety of visualizations to present the data, I determined the most effective way to display the information. Additionally, my ability to apply my knowledge to a real-world setting has improved. Understanding the molecular mechanisms behind fructose-induced cell damage, allowed me to connect theory with the real-world implications of a high-fructose Western diet.

My most significant challenge in this experience was overcoming my initial hesitation to seek help. Since the lab group consisted of two fourth-year PhD students and my professor, I initially felt unprepared among the experienced lab members. As a result, I tried to complete all the tasks assigned to me without help to prove that I was capable of the jobs that accompanied the internship. However, after several major mistakes that ended up forcing me to restart experiments, I learned the importance of asking for assistance, especially given my lack of prior cell culture experience.

Overall, I have learned so much from my experience working in the Kennedy lab at NCSU and am incredibly grateful to Dr. Kennedy, the Carleton Career Center, and the Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund for making this experience possible!
Discovering Unexpected Results in Utah

Natalia Crimmel ’24

Biology

University of Utah, Miller Lab | Salt Lake City, Utah

During my internship at the Miller lab, I used mutagenesis to study the role of phosphorylation sites in β-tubulin. β-tubulin is essential to ensuring proper chromosome segregation during cell division, so a better understanding of this protein’s function will increase the understanding of the processes that govern cell division. I learned a wealth of technical skills that will be useful in my future educational and professional pursuits, but I also had a lot of interesting conversations and gained some unexpected skills that I ended up really valuing.

In terms of technical skills, I got to practice a wide variety of laboratory techniques. I learned that even if I have a solid understanding of the purpose of a certain technique, it still takes practice to achieve a usable outcome! I also learned a ton conceptually about using yeast genetics to study chromosome segregation. Something that was challenging but important for me was bridging complex, abstract concepts to concrete laboratory experiments to investigate novel issues. It was really interesting to observe how people in the lab approached and achieved this; it was definitely an aspect of science that I had glossed over in my head before when thinking about lab work, and it pushed me to think about biology research differently.

When I applied for my internship, I thought I’d be off on my own conducting projects that were assigned to me. Instead, I worked under the guidance of a graduate student, which gave me much-needed support, but also provided me with the opportunity to learn a lot about what graduate school is like. I was also surprised by how collaborative the lab was; all of the lab members bounced ideas off of each other, and the weekly lab meeting was a chance to share recent successes (or often failures) and seek insight from peers. I really enjoyed this aspect of the lab, and it definitely changed my perception of graduate school and the lab environment, which I really appreciated.

I think the most important thing I learned and experienced was dealing with failure and uncertainty, both in the short- and long-term. A few times, I messed up an experiment, setting us back at least half a day. When this happened, I struggled not to beat myself up or feel incompetent. While these were relatively minor road bumps, it seemed like a big deal at the moment, and learning to reassure yourself and move forward is a skill that takes practice. A novel feeling I experienced was uncertainty in science. I was used to definitive science from my previous coursework, but uncertainty surrounding whether an experiment will work or if your approach is correct is central to lab work; this left me feeling disarmed at first. However, I came to appreciate why uncertainty can make research exciting, as there is the potential to discover unexpected results.
Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund

Genomic Insights from the Deep
Arisha Khan ’25
Computer Science & Statistics
University of Central Florida | Orlando, Florida

This summer, I had the privilege of working at the Gaither Lab, a part of the University of Central Florida’s research community. While the lab typically focuses on the evolution of marine fish and the diverse species in our oceans, they also explore topics such as eDNA (environmental DNA) and red tide. During my time at the Gaither Lab, I worked in the field of genetics and population analysis, with a particular focus on Coryphaenoides rupestris, a deep-sea fish. Despite my limited background in biology, this experience was a journey filled with learning, unexpected discoveries, and profound realizations.

My primary task was to decipher short fragments of genetic information gathered from different populations of the rupestris sampled at varying depths and locations and present them understandably. I used computer programs like Stacks and the BWA sequence matcher to aid in this process. Once the data was prepared, I analyzed it for discernible patterns. I employed specialized tools such as STRUCTURE and Discriminant Analysis of Principal Components to identify groups with similar genetic makeup. Additionally, I used statistical tools to explore genetic differences among various populations of the fish and to effectively communicate the data.

One of the most rewarding moments during my internship was collaborating with my supervisor to develop a parallel processing version of the lab’s primary bioinformatics pipeline, resulting in a 200% increase in processing speed. In addition to my primary project, I had the privilege of contributing to a project led by Dr. Robert Fitak. We used the programming language R to gain deeper insights into the genetic makeup of organisms containing cable bacteria.

This internship reshaped my career trajectory for the better. I discovered a strong interest in using data and computers for research, especially where biology and computer science come together. As a result, I am now planning to pursue a graduate degree in bioinformatics. I also intend to take additional biology classes to build a solid foundation. Furthermore, I eagerly anticipate exploring opportunities on the industry side of bioinformatics next summer, where I hope to apply my skills to make a meaningful impact.

Looking back, this internship was a significant turning point for me. It equipped me with new skills and provided me with a much clearer vision of my career path. I am extremely grateful to the Gaither Lab and my internship host, Samuel Greaves ’16, the Career Center, the Kolenkow-Reitz Fund, and the Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund for making this opportunity possible. I am genuinely excited to see where my future in bioinformatics will take me.
Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund

Refining and Reattempting in Research
Mariam Nechiporuk ’25
Biology
University of Utah, Department of Biochemistry | Salt Lake City, Utah

This summer I received the opportunity to work as an intern at the University of Utah in the Department of Biochemistry. I joined Greg Ducker’s ’06 lab and spent 10 weeks researching heart disease and the methods to study it. Specifically, I conducted isotope tracing mass spectrometry experiments based on lactate's role in producing energy for the heart. My time as an intern included learning how to perform, analyze, and present data from experiments, applying my scientific background from previous courses, and navigating a new city.

Looking back at the past 10 weeks, I believe I've grown a significant amount. The most difficult jump for me to make was connecting the science and application of my project. Not only was it necessary to apply somewhat abstract concepts from past science courses to the lab work, but the specificity of my project required significant dedication to learning the scientific background. At the end of my 10 weeks, I made and presented a poster on my project, and I believe that this process allowed me to rigorously test what I had learned. Additionally, by completing my poster, I learned how to share in-depth information in an accessible way to a broad audience - something I believe will also serve me in various other situations. Lastly, this internship has greatly helped me develop my critical thinking skills. I've learned that science is a process centered around refining and reattempting experiments. For every larger experiment we performed, there was at least one more experiment required to confirm or improve upon previous results. This type of careful reflection allowed me to evaluate my work and think critically about how to improve my process and correct mistakes.

I'm excited to use the things I've learned during my internship in my academic and professional future. I think that gaining hands-on lab experience was invaluable because it transformed how I viewed the scientific process. I believe it will also change how I approach science courses at Carleton and beyond, now having a greater understanding of how science is applied beyond the classroom. I hope that gaining some lab experience will open doors to other opportunities in science, or possibly medicine. Additionally, I'm especially grateful for the intensive alumni network and career resources at Carleton itself. I look forward to learning more about the opportunities provided by these networks and hopefully becoming more connected to my peers and my school. I would advise anyone else looking into enriching summer opportunities similar to the one I was a part of to utilize the extensive support provided by Carleton.

As such, I would like to thank the Carleton College Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund & the Provost's Office for Student Research Initiatives for making these opportunities possible and helping fund my internship, and supporting my academic endeavors. Additionally, thank you to the University of Utah Department of Biochemistry, Dr. Greg Ducker ’06, and my mentor Hayden Low, for providing me with the opportunity to participate in their research, as well as their guidance in helping me succeed.
Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund

Epstein-Barr Virus Research at the Vaccine and Gene Therapy Institute
Emma Neham '25
Biology
Oregon Health & Science University | Beaverton, Oregon

This summer I served as a Vaccine and Gene Therapy Institute (VGTI) intern, which is one of Oregon Health & Science University’s many research departments. In this position, around 20 students were placed in different labs and conducted their own research projects. I worked with Dr. Rebecca Skalsky, whose lab focuses on the roles micro RNAs have in establishing latency pertaining to Epstein-Barr virus (EBV).

To summarize, my project utilized CRISPR-Cas9 to knock out the gene in EBV that encodes micro RNAs. The Skalsky lab is highly interested in evaluating the phenotypes of EBV when micro RNA expression is knocked down, as they hypothesize that their absence is linked to an increase in tumor-suppressor gene expression. Firstly, I generated a CRISPR lentivector library to disrupt individual EBV micro RNAs through molecular cloning of guide RNAs. In order to do this, I learned a new technique called cloning, which was quite rewarding to utilize. Next, I examined CRISPR-mediated EBV micro RNA knockdown in IBLiCas9 cell lines. I used quantitative reverse-transcription PCR to detect levels of EBV micro RNAs to confirm that CRISPR-Cas9 editing was successful. Lastly, I tested phenotypes associated with EBV micro RNA perturbation, specifically when expression of the micro RNA BHRFI-2 was knocked down. My CRISPR lentivector library will be used in future assays to characterize phenotypes and to further quantitate gene expression. I also attended various panels held by researchers and a few seminars, which further aided in my understanding of virology and reproductive health research.

My time at the VGTI not only allowed me to both improve my laboratory skills and learn techniques but also taught me to think critically about my project. I learned to dig deep and to ponder questions regarding why certain assays were performed and mechanistically what they do. I also became more self-confident when running experiments, as my techniques greatly involved attention to detail. This opportunity also aided me in my ability to draw conclusions from experiments, especially when I was tasked with presenting a slideshow to the other interns and researchers at the end of the program about my project.

I am incredibly thankful to have worked in the VGTI as an undergraduate intern. This experience has confirmed that I have a deep passion for research and healthcare. I anticipate applying for undergraduate research opportunities at other universities on the East Coast next summer. I sincerely thank the Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund, Rebecca Skalsky, and the Carleton College Career Center. I look forward to participating in another summer research internship and to pursuing a career in healthcare.
Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund

Battling Blindness One Research Paper at a Time
Daanyal Raja ’25
Biology
Stanford Medicine, Byers Eye Institute | Palo Alto, California

This summer, I wanted to pursue an opportunity that would provide insight into whether or not I enjoy research. I also wanted to gain technical skills in a professional environment, whether by using universal software or something similar. Through networking, I was lucky enough to get an internship at the Stanford Department of Ophthalmology as a Student Trainee. My supervisor, Dr. Darius Moshfeghi P’25, is the Chief of the Retina Division at the Byers Eye Institute and was a great mentor during my time at Stanford.

Over the course of my internship, I worked on two different projects. The first project was compiling, recording, and reporting on a new appointment frequency for premature babies to ensure that their vision is uncompromised by retinopathy of prematurity (ROP). If left untreated, ROP can lead to retinal detachment and blindness. Since premature babies are at high risk of ROP, examinations were planned based on a case-by-case frequency. Patients would be examined for ROP on a weekly basis until the baby reached a postmenstrual age (PMA) of roughly 40 weeks before transitioning to bi-weekly appointments. My job was to track patient statistics over the course of each visit and report them in a research paper.

The second project I was assigned was researching geographic atrophy (GA) and age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Essentially, retinal tissue begins to degenerate, leading to blindness. Currently, there is no way to stop or cure AMD. My job was to create a working model of cells in a multiphysics module called Comsol and see how the cells operate under various strain and stress conditions. Our hypothesis is that these cells (RPE cells) are under stress and strain, leading to more cell death and blindness. Considering that the model I made is very promising, there is a strong basis for future research. If the hypothesis is proven, a new drug will be developed to cure or better address AMD. I am currently working on the research paper for this project.

This internship significantly improved my digital skills through software, forced me to think critically to conquer road bumps, and allowed me to work with others in a team-oriented environment. Admittedly, I was surprised to learn I would mostly do computer work. If anything, I will have to find in-person lab work next summer! My internship also made me realize how much of a team all the researchers are; even though I am not at the same level as them, they treated me like an equal and were incredibly helpful when I came to them with questions. I am grateful for that and for Dr. Moshfeghi’s P’25 guidance throughout.

Overall, this experience will be a stepping-stone for other research I would like to do before and during graduate or medical school. I want to thank Jack ’67, P’02 and Camie Eugster P’02 for funding this experience through the Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund. My summer internship experience would not have been possible without their support.
Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund

My Summer on the Glacier
Lia Salomon ’25
Geology
Juneau Icefield Research Program | Seattle, Washington

This summer I participated in the Juneau Icefield Research Program (JIRP), a 75-mile traverse across the Juneau Icefield while learning about glaciology and conducting pertinent glaciological and climatological field research. The program was broken up into four blocks in which we would spend about two weeks at each of the four camps spread across the icefield. We started block one at Camp 17 on the Lemon Creek Glacier where we learned how to safely travel across the glacier, including crevasse rescue, and had introductory lectures on mass balance, hydrology, glacier motion, and indigenous traditional ecological knowledge. I dug my first mass balance pit in a sideways rain downpour.

We then traversed to Camp 10 on the Taku Glacier for block two. Here I dug and sampled four mass balance pits, ice core isotope analysis, drone surveys, and scientific illustration practice. We learned about geophysics, snowflakes, ice shelves, and scientific communication. I spent a lot of time at Camp 10 skiing across the flat glacier and getting sunburnt up my nose. Then I traversed to Camp 18 above the Gilkey Glacier and did a research project on lapse rate measurements. We set up three temperature sensor transects across different regions on rock and snow, did some data analysis, and presented our findings to the group. I will be presenting an abstract for this project at the American Geophysical Union fall meeting. For the fourth and final block, we traversed to Camp 26 which is situated next to the Llewellyn Glacier. Here I helped conduct a GPS elevation survey of the Llewellyn Glacier to find changes in elevation due to melt.

I’m so grateful to have had this opportunity to be a part of JIRP this summer. I was able to live a dream of conducting fieldwork on a glacier and skiing all summer long. I met amazing fellow earth science students as well as exceptionally talented glaciology experts and mountain guides. These connections will be helpful in the future while finishing my senior comps thesis and applying to graduate school. I learned so much about what it means to be a part of and run an expedition, what it means to be a scientist studying glaciers and climate change today, and what my goals are for my future. I reflected a lot on the impact and importance of the work that we were doing and how to carry those values into the work I do in the future. It was also a very challenging experience physically and mentally on those long traverse days, and when the blisters were getting painful. But, I learned so much about what I am capable of and how to feel supported by and support my fellow JIRPers.

I would like to extend a huge thank you to the Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund for making this incredible summer research experience possible.
Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund

Developing Perseverance as a Researcher

Ben Schneider ’25
Chemistry
University of Utah | Salt Lake City, Utah

This summer, I did an internship at the Sundquist Lab at the University of Utah Medical School’s Department of Biochemistry. My internship involved doing research involving a gene found in certain New World monkeys and mice called retro-CHMP3, which could inhibit the replication of HIV. I was assisting the people already doing this research by exploring the efficacy of certain DNA constructs of retro-CHMP3 in inhibiting HIV replication in 293T cells (human embryonic kidney cells). This research mainly involved a lot of tissue culture work, but also a lot of a technique called western blotting, which detects the proteins present in a sample. This allowed me to see exactly what proteins I was getting in my results, which allowed me to determine if the retro-CHMP3 was actually there. I also did CA ELISAs, which detect the HIV virus, to see to what extent replication occurred.

This was definitely a challenging experience in some ways, so I would say that perseverance was a skill that I strengthened. Due to the finicky nature of working with live cell culture, as well as the various complicated procedures I was performing, my experiment did not yield significant results many times. This was definitely frustrating. However, I just tried to stay positive and keep pushing through, and I eventually did get results.

Asking for help and asking questions were two other skills that I definitely developed over my internship. As a newbie in the lab, I had to constantly ask my supervisor and the other people in the lab for help regarding my experiment, and it made me get more comfortable with doing that. I’ve never been great at asking for help because I always feel like I’m burdening the person, but I think constantly having to do it and always being met with kindness made me more comfortable with it. And asking questions enabled me to learn more about the techniques that I was performing and their scientific basis.

This research opportunity was amazing in that it provided me with the opportunity to explore what it’s like to do research in an academic setting and what that career would look like. I’m currently following the pre-health track, and will likely do research if I end up going to medical school, so it was great to see what I would be doing. I’m so grateful to Carleton and the University of Utah for providing me with the funding to do this, and to the PI I worked with, Wes Sundquist ’81, P’16, for giving me the chance to actually work in his lab.
Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund

Growing Outside of the Major
Annelise Sokolow ’24
Mathematics
Duke School of Medicine | Durham, North Carolina

This past winter, I took the term off to pursue an internship with the Arepally Lab at Duke School of Medicine. Dr. Arepally’s lab is a hematology/immunology research lab that specializes in researching a very niche part of the immune system, the Complement System, and the role this system plays in various diseases. During my three months working in this lab, I was on a project that was looking at the effect of the Complement System in patients with Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP). The main goal of my part in the project was to help find a way to measure Complement protein activation in ITP patients’ plasma in a laboratory setting. During the first half of my internship, I performed daily ELISA’s to see if proteins in ITP patient plasma would trigger complement proteins to bind to platelets. Unfortunately, we weren’t getting data that indicated if our approach to activating the Complement System was even working. So, the latter half of my internship was spent performing experiments that used Flow Cytometry instead. We were starting to get better data towards the conclusion of my internship, but it ended before we finalized a method.

Although my internship finished before we reached the end goal, I gained a lot from this experience. Skillwise, I learned how to isolate both plasma and platelets from patient blood, in addition to learning how to culture cells and perform ELISAs and Flow Cytometry experiments. All of these skills will be extremely beneficial in my understanding of biological processes moving forward, on top of being a helpful foundation for any future labs I may work in. I also learned how to communicate effectively with my supervisors and other interns. I would have daily conversations to clarify things in each day’s protocol with my supervisor and helped train new lab members on basic procedures. Overall, the most important thing I learned was how to adapt and grow in a field I am not trained heavily in. I was nervous coming into this internship because as a math major, I had never taken any sort of course in immunology, and had no idea if I would be able to do what was asked of me. Something that surprised me was how beneficial all of my introductory science labs were in providing me with basic skills for such an advanced lab. I never thought about how much fundamental chemistry or math would be involved in running the experiments I ran. If I were to give any advice to other students, it would be to have an open mind and not to be intimidated by an internship that is outside your specific major/concentration.

This internship has really opened my eyes to the possibility of pursuing laboratory research on top of pursuing a medical profession. I am so grateful for the opportunity to be involved in this research, and for Jack Eugster ’67, P’02 and Camie Eugster P’02 in 2016, who allowed me to afford this opportunity. I will always cherish my time working in Dr. Arepally’s lab and am so excited to see how this experience will manifest in my future.
Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund

Summer Research Experience at Vanderbilt University
Ben Szeto ’26
Undeclared
Vanderbilt University | Nashville, Tennessee

This summer I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to work in Professor Katherine Friedman's '90 lab under the guidance of Dr. Katrina Ngo. The lab studies de novo telomere addition in yeast. Through this experience, I was able to learn important laboratory techniques, present my research, and perhaps most importantly, experience the day-to-day of working in an academic research environment.

I had taken the basic chemistry and organic series prior to starting the internship but lacked any significant lab experience. Although I had an introduction to Dr. Friedman's research the previous winter through the Careers in Biomedicine externship, my understanding was limited and at a more theoretical level. I did not understand the various assays that allowed them to make such conclusions. It was challenging to read the research papers prior to starting. My limited biology knowledge made it difficult to digest the information; much of it was jargon to me. I was worried that the people in the lab would become frustrated if there was anything in the readings that I did not understand. On my first day, I remember them asking me if I understood various concepts and I reflexively said I did. When they would explain new content they would ask me if what they were saying was getting through to me and I would just nod along. Eventually, I think they understood what was happening and they began to slow down their explanations to become more digestible. I became more comfortable asking questions and went from going through the motions of each step in the assay to understanding the reasoning behind them. So while I was able to develop important laboratory techniques, the most important thing I gained was the confidence to ask questions.

Another important takeaway was experiencing what life as a researcher is. I enjoyed the camaraderie of working with a group of individuals from a variety of backgrounds. Each individual was at a different point in their career and it was interesting to see how their roles interacted. I was able to observe a grad student going through their qualification exam, and another who had completed her PhD and began their postdoc. The routes they took were each quite unique, to say the least. Talking to them made me increasingly interested in pursuing a career in academia. However, I also had some deep conversations about the flaws in the system. My PI was the only female in the department until quite recently; there is a great desire to limit the number of authors on a paper, limiting collaboration, etc.

Overall, working with Dr. Friedman '90 and Dr. Ngo proved to be extremely beneficial and will guide me as I decide what my next steps will be. I am extremely grateful to both of them for providing me with this experience. I am also extremely thankful for the financial support provided by the Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund and the Carleton College Career Center for supporting me through the process.
Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund

Starting Down the Research Road
Kate Ulrich ’25
Chemistry
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center | Seattle, Washington

This summer, I worked as a research intern at the Fred Hutch Cancer Center in Seattle, Washington. I couldn’t have asked for better hosts for my first research experience. Dr. Lastwika patiently explained a wide variety of lab techniques to me and both she and Dr. Paul Lampe ’79 provided detailed information about their research focus and goals. I am most grateful to have had such kind mentors and fellow lab members throughout this experience. I was nervous about my lack of experience, but everyone’s patience alleviated my concerns.

The most important skills I have learned from this experience are competence in foundational lab protocols, communicating my results to others, and asking for help when confused. I got a lot of practice sorting through my confusion in order to ask questions in ways that got across where I was struggling. From this experience, I have learned that, although I really enjoy lab work, especially work like this that has a clear connection to improving patient outcomes, I don't think it is what I want to dedicate the rest of my life to. During my summer, I was hoping to get an idea of what research can look like in order to better assess if I wanted to pursue research or medicine. This experience has taught me that the day-to-day interaction with patients, as I did as a nursing assistant last summer, is more fulfilling to me. However, I still greatly enjoyed my time researching this summer and would be happy to work in a similar position for some portion of my life.

Despite coming into this experience with a concept of what the research process looked like, somehow I was still surprised by how much time and thought goes into every step forward in the process. I barely got anywhere in three months, which is what I was expecting, but it was still a weird feeling to look back on what I did and know that I was doing a lot every day that still didn't really move anything far forward. It's amazing to think about how much time has gone into getting all of the knowledge we have so far.

My advice for other interns would be to see if your organization has any sort of organization-wide summer programming early on. I didn’t realize that Fred Hutch had a lot of summer outings and professional development opportunities until partway through the summer, and I wish I had known to ask sooner. Also, asking coworkers about how they got to where they are now was very helpful. Overall, I think just trying to be open and enthusiastic about the whole experience is a good goal to shoot for. I am so grateful for the time spent here this summer!
Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund

Developing Next-Generation Proximity Labeling
Vasilii Vaganov ’24
Chemistry & Biology
Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard | Cambridge, Massachusetts

I had the great pleasure and privilege of spending my summer working with the talented individuals at Xiao Wang Lab at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard. I am grateful to Chanan Sessler for being an excellent mentor and allowing me to collaborate with him on developing an advanced photosensitized proximity labeling (PL) technique that minimizes cell damage and greatly improves labeling efficiency and spatial specificity compared to other PL techniques. I also want to express my gratitude to the Career Center at Carleton College for their financial support that made this unforgettable experience possible.

As an intern at a science-focused institute, it is important for me to explain my project in detail. My project focused on proximity labeling, which is a commonly used technique for identifying molecule interactions within living systems. PL primarily focuses on protein-protein interactions, which can help us better understand the molecular functions of our body. By gaining a more comprehensive understanding of these interactions, PL can help create a “biological map” of the essential molecules in our body. This can be a powerful tool in advancing medicine. PL works by utilizing an engineered enzyme that is genetically fused with a protein of interest. This proximity-labeling enzyme activates an inert small molecule, creating a short-lived reactive intermediate that covalently labels endogenous molecules in a promiscuous but proximity-dependent manner.

A new method for proximity labeling called light-based proximity labeling (LBPL) has been developed, which uses light to activate an enzyme instead of the substrate. LBPL has become an attractive alternative to traditional proximity labeling due to its ability to provide higher spatiotemporal control over labeling. However, many existing LBPLs do not take advantage of the potential increased biocompatibility of photosensitizers, which are light-activated species that allow labeling. This is because they rely on high light intensity or high proximity labeling molecule concentration. To address this issue, Chanan and I have worked on developing a next-generation photosensitized proximity labeling system that minimizes damage to the cell while achieving higher labeling efficiency and spatial specificity than existing PL techniques.

By the end of the summer, we obtained consistent results with the developed LBPL system involving miniSOG as the photosensitizer and mono-alkyl p-phenylenediamine as the proximity labeling molecule. We also got some insights into the mechanism of how this proximity labeling works. Overall, the data suggests that our LBPL has higher biocompatibility by requiring up to a hundred-fold lower concentration of proximity labeling molecule than existing LBPL systems while maintaining high spatiotemporal resolution.

During my involvement in this project, I was able to investigate the intersection between chemistry and biology. Throughout the process, I acquired valuable knowledge and skills in the synthesis and purification of organic molecules for biological assays. Additionally, I gained hands-on experience in using confocal microscopy and cell culturing. I am grateful to Chanan Sessler, Xiao Wang, and the entire laboratory team for their support and guidance, which made my small but special endeavor such a valuable and memorable experience!
Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund

Mammalian CHMP3 Effects on Retrotransposition
Aniketh Vipparla ’24
Biology
University of Utah | Salt Lake City, Utah

This summer I worked as a visiting summer undergraduate intern at the University of Utah in the Elde Lab. I was mainly working with the ESCRT pathway which is a membrane remodeling pathway that plays a key role in many cell functions such as cytokinesis and protein transport but is also hijacked by viruses for budding. I worked with the retroCHMP3 protein which is a newly discovered protein in New World monkeys and mice that has been shown to selectively inhibit viral budding while maintaining host ESCRT processes. Due to one of the functions of the ESCRT pathway being retrotransposition, it was interesting to study the relationship between the retrotransposed retroCHMP3 protein and the ESCRT pathway.

The main questions I was looking at were if retroCHMP3 inhibits LINE1 retrotransposition in Saccharomyces cerevisiae and if there is a fitness cost involved in retrotransposition in organisms. Over the course of the summer, I had to read many papers and analyze results and protocols, which helped me grasp information better and also helped improve my paper-reading ability. I also was able to learn some new lab skills and techniques that I hope to implement in my research here at Carleton.

I enjoyed being a part of the beginning steps of a project, where there was a lot of information gathering and troubleshooting the experiments. We ended up troubleshooting our protocol a lot, as there were many instances where our experiments simply showed completely unexpected results and it took a while to nail down exactly what was going wrong. This process, although tedious, was enjoyable for me, because every day it felt like I was attempting to solve complex puzzles in the lab.

I liked working in a lab with so many people who were knowledgeable in so many different areas of laboratory science but also biology as I could ask anyone questions about my experiment and they would give a variety of suggestions that I could then base my next steps off of. I had the opportunity to work under Steve Cho who is an MD/PhD student, as I try and decide whether I would like to pursue an MD/PhD or not. It was a great experience to see everything that he was doing and how the whole program was run as he started the PhD part of the program.

I would like to thank the Elde Lab and specifically Steve Cho for helping me accomplish all of this research and have an amazing experience this summer. Also, thank you to the Han Lab for supplying us with the plasmids necessary to conduct these experiments. For my funding for the summer, I would like to thank the University of Utah, the Eugster Endowed Student Research and Internship Fund, and the Provost’s Office - Student Research Initiatives.
Fred D. Andersen Foundation - The Visiting Professor of American Studies

Broadcasting Live on French National Radio in Paris, France
Abigail Goff ’25
Religion
Beur FM | Paris, France

This summer, I spent two months interning at a radio station in Paris, France called Beur FM as a “journalism intern.” I participated daily on two different radio shows for the duration of the internship. On “La matinale,” a lighthearted cultural show, I began giving weekly chronicles about museum openings and concerts. Towards the end of the summer, I invested more time into projects I designed myself. For example, I proposed to interview students who had immigrated to France from Maghreb (a region of 5 countries in North Africa). Beur FM is an identity radio station, with a large French audience of listeners with personal connections to Magreb. Additionally, I helped out with “Les Zinformes”, a political talk show each evening. Every day, I presented a chronic about an international or local news headline. I selected the headline, researched the topic, wrote a 300-word script, practiced presenting my script in French, and then gave the report live on air in the evening.

I learned how to respond to a tight deadline, work independently, and express myself to audiences of different cultural and language backgrounds in an engaging way. On the political talk show, I presented chronicles while surrounded by French politicians, activists, union leaders, and lawyers. I was always the youngest person in the room by decades, and frequently the only woman. To present an engaging chronicle, I had to learn how to master my voice. To master my voice, I had to master confidence. To master confidence, I had to be grounded in space. To do this, I had to feel like I belonged even when everything about the experience made me feel like an outsider. By the end, I could laugh and make jokes. This was in part thanks to one of my bosses, Adile Farquane, who told me to envision that I was talking to one person when I spoke into the microphone.

I did not like broadcasting live on the radio, but I enjoyed the writing and research process. I liked the conversation style of the political talk show, but I did not like the entertainment value. One of the reasons that I struggled to enjoy the broadcasting is due to feeling imposter syndrome that was highly dependent on the context. My boss would introduce me as the “young American journalist”. I was treated with a lot of respect, and I wish I had felt during the internship that I earned that respect instead of thinking that I was pretending to be something I was not.

I am grateful for the financial support I received from the Fred D. Andersen Foundation - The Visiting Professor of American Studies and the Abeona Endowed Fund for International Internships. I am also grateful to the president of Beur FM, Djima Kettane who welcomed me to the company. My advice to other students looking to participate in an internship abroad is to find a supportive living environment that will energize you when you are tackling a cultural challenge that might seem daunting. This summer made me a lot more courageous.
Fred D. Andersen Foundation - The Visiting Professor of American Studies

My Summer Internship at Reimagining Migration in Boston, MA
Maddie Gold '24
American Studies
Re-Imagining Migration | Boston, Massachusetts

Over the summer, I worked as an intern at the nonprofit Reimagining Migration. This organization works to change the way educators think about belonging in schools, and advocates for the needs of immigrant students in K-12 schools. The organization is fairly small, so I worked entirely with my supervisor in a shared office space. Among some other random tasks, I did research, wrote summaries of articles, created PowerPoint presentations, and wrote a blog post for the website.

I learned a lot from this experience and gained many skills. First, I learned how to analyze data. I did this through the creation of a PowerPoint. I was asked to parse through data done on various school systems and how their students respond to questions about identity and belonging. It seemed like a very daunting task at first, but once I started, I quickly found my footing. I was able to identify important information and turn it into an easily understood statistic on a PowerPoint slide. In addition, I was able to work on my networking and communication skills. I had the privilege of joining my boss at a few workshops he was doing for public school systems in Rhode Island and in the greater Boston area. There, I spoke with teachers, administrators, and even a few students. It was really interesting to hear their perspectives on issues of immigration and belonging and was rewarding to see that the work Reimagining Migration is doing really has an impact on these communities. Finally, I worked on my writing skills. As a creative writing minor, I was curious to see how my skills would translate to policy and nonprofit writing. Through drafting a blog post, I found that it was more challenging than I thought it would be. My writing was almost too thorough – my boss wanted it to be shorter and more accessible to those who would be reading it. I took his feedback and continued to revise the blog until we were both happy with how it turned out. Although it was a long process, I am proud of how I was able to improve upon my writing skills and use my writing for social change.

As I move into my senior year at Carleton, I am incredibly grateful for this internship experience. I am now more sure that I want to continue my work in the nonprofit/policy sector. This internship has even made me consider going into immigration law. I am thankful to Adam Strom for having me as an intern at Reimagining Migration. I would also like to thank the Carleton Career Center and the Fred D. Anderson Foundation – The Visiting Professor of American Studies for making this experience in Boston possible for me. I have learned so much from this internship, and am eager to continue my advocacy work in the future.
Fred D. Andersen Foundation - The Visiting Professor of American Studies

Summer With The Cambridge Women’s Center
Cassidy Goldman ’25
American Studies
Cambridge Women’s Center | Cambridge, Massachusetts

This summer, I interned at The Cambridge Women’s Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts. I worked during the center’s drop-in hours, during which they provided food resources, one-on-one support, and a safe space to hang out for any person who identifies as a woman. On some days, my focus was on distributing food and toiletries or monitoring the clothing room, where members can get free clothing that’s been donated. On other days, I provided one-on-one computer assistance, emotional support, and resource referrals. Most of the members are trauma-informed, having dealt with some form of trauma in their lives. Many are experiencing some type of homelessness or economic insecurity.

Throughout the summer, I gained practice applying conflict resolution strategies, as center members could often be agitated, yelling, or verbally aggressive. I improved my ability to find a balance between showing authority and acknowledging my limitations as an intern and deferring to a supervisor, and enforcing rules vs. exercising appropriate judgment about moments for exceptions. Generally speaking, I had to work on gaining confidence in the authoritative side of the role. I also had the opportunity to work one-on-one with multiple members in Spanish. This was a good (albeit difficult) challenge for me to apply more complicated uses of the language than I have in the past.

One of the most important skills I strengthened while working at the center was maintaining composure while dealing with situations involving extremely upsetting information and trauma. I learned how hard it is to spend such a large quantity of time discussing people’s experiences of homelessness, domestic violence, poverty, and abuse. I found this work to be the most meaningful while also the most emotionally taxing.

All of these challenges provided opportunities for reflection about what path I might choose going forward. I think that pursuing some form of clinical social work might allow me to create the same kind of meaningful one-on-one connections while providing me with more education, structure, and support for how to manage the emotional drain of the work. During the internship, I spoke with one of the center directors at length about the challenges of funding and organizing non-profit work, which made me wonder about what type of organization or practice would be the best fit for me in a future career. I don’t know the answer yet for sure, but this internship provided me with the opportunity to better understand my own strengths and weaknesses and the pros and cons of different forms of social work.

I’d like to express my sincere gratitude to the Fred D. Andersen Foundation, without which this experience would not have been possible.
Fred D. Andersen Foundation - The Visiting Professor of American Studies

CTUL Building Dignity and Respect Solidarity Work
Eliza Lox ‘25
American Studies
Centro De Trabajadores Unidos En La Lucha | Minneapolis, Minnesota

During my time interning for Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha (CTUL) I learned valuable skills relating to media, design, community building, and nonprofit business models. CTUL focuses on uniting workers together in order to create stronger communities and fight against unjust labor practices. My experience working with the organization opened my eyes to not only the disparities of race, class, and gender in relation to labor; but also the ever-strong ability of people to come together in struggle.

CTUL roughly translates to Center of Workers United in the Struggle. Their work consists of teaching and providing resources to workers in regard to their rights as employees. My role during the internship was to make social media posts about CTUL events, creating fliers - specifically for the Building Dignity and Respect (BDR) Campaign. The BDR Campaign urges contractors to sign into a legally binding agreement to uphold certain standards on their projects such as not participating in wage theft or allowing sexual assault. On top of graphic design, I did community engagement. I would talk to Minneapolis residents about the campaign, collecting signatures to a petition and raising awareness about unfair labor practices. I learned to be brave in going up to people and talking to them and the importance of being an active listener.

Through my graphic design work, I improved my skills using the website Canva. I learned how to have visual consistency in the color scheme I used and what makes something visually interesting. I also am better at recognizing that it is okay to just send something out in the world even if it is not perfect.

I also generally learned about how nonprofits are structured and function. CTUL has co-directors who more generally lead the organization, directors for different areas, and leads for specific projects. Under those people are organizers, logistics people, campaign leads, and fundraisers. I learned about the tension between the people working at CTUL and the workers who are members.

Finally, I learned to take responsibility for my own work. Sometimes the other interns and I would be given the space to figure out what we wanted to work on, plan it, and do the work to get it done. As the internship went on, I gained trust in myself to make decisions about my work without my supervisor and I am thankful that he allowed me the space to do so.

Overall, I am grateful for the opportunity to work with this organization. I wouldn’t have been able to do this work without the Frank D. Anderson Foundation, who gave me the award. Labor and labor organizing is a central part of American Studies and this internship helped me to better understand that. I would tell other students to choose an internship in something they are passionate about and they will get a lot out of it.
I didn't know what to expect when I arrived at Tephra Farms. I had never worked on a farm before and I had never really considered the possibility before a few months ago when I was trying to figure out how to spend the summer. I knew I didn't want to do a traditional pre-professional internship. I wanted to be able to experience the world in a way I hadn't before. So when my friends started talking about WWOOFing, working on an organic farm for the summer, I decided to look into it. I chose Tephra Farms in White Salmon, Washington, where my main duties were to feed animals, work the farmer's market stand, make skin care products, and harvest vegetables for a partner farm.

I learned many practical skills during this experience, everything from using a saw to building a fire line to taking care of crops to dealing with a mouse infestation. I gained many of these skills through my everyday tasks but others came from responding to unexpected events. I learned that working on a farm means adapting to ever-changing circumstances and dealing with a series of unforeseen events. This included dealing with chicken predation, a nearby forest fire, and fights between dogs. I learned how to approach problem-solving and supporting others when dealing with these challenges. I found myself very quickly growing personally connected to the farm and its animals, particularly my host's dogs (she ran a breeding program). I found myself motivated in my work by an investment in the outcome of this work, which I learned is something I value in a future career. This experience of spending so much time working outside and being in nature gave me a lot of time to look inward and reflect. My hosts emphasized the value of being connected to the process of producing your food and understanding where it's coming from. I've internalized these ideas and practices and intend to take them forward with me.

I'm grateful to the Fred D. Andersen Foundation for making this experience possible for me. I created invaluable connections and had the opportunity to learn a ton about animal care and food systems. I would advise Carleton students to take advantage of the internship funding program to make unconventional internship opportunities like this possible. We all face pressure to spend our summers furthering our careers. I don't know what I want to do for the rest of my life so I found this opportunity to create connections in new places and explore a new way of life more valuable than following a linear career path.
Supporting Children as a Future Educator

Turiya Smith '24
American Studies
Reach for Resources | Minnetonka, Minnesota

My summer internship with Reach for Resources as an Inclusion Intern was an extremely enjoyable experience. I learned so much about disabilities, children, and myself. The internship host, Emily, provided me with information on many disabilities. Along the way, I gathered more information about each child because a disability can never fully define a child. A person doesn't always exhibit all the symptoms, and they may suffer with some symptoms more than others. Emily taught me in orientation that all that is written on their profile depicts the child's worst day and worst behavior, but no one is at their worst every day. So I was flexible in not knowing for sure what each day would look like, but trusting that I had enough information to accomplish the goal of helping them participate in camp and enjoy their experience.

Each day I would check the profile of the kid I was assigned and note any problem behaviors and any suggestions on how best to handle those situations. Then I would drive to the location where the camp was being held. Upon arrival, I would have to introduce myself to the leaders of the camp and sometimes explain my role. Then I would have the leader introduce me to the child I was assigned. It usually took a while for the kid to warm up to me, but I found ways to initiate conversation and asked questions to get to know them and how they would like to participate that day. Sometimes it meant just being by their side and reminding them to be quiet during instructions or teaching them the instructions slowly and visually demonstrating things. It was a balance between trying to get the kid to participate in the camp's activities and meeting their needs. Sometimes if they didn't want to participate we would do other activities. I was always flexible to follow the child's lead as it was their camp experience, but I also encouraged them to test their limits.

Being in a forward-facing position, I was directly helping others. I was always reminded of the importance of my role when I helped kids through tough emotions and difficult situations. This internship really helped me realize I love working with kids. I had never done it before but it made me feel so much love and happiness while working. I was thinking of being a teacher, and after this, I am certain that being a teacher will make me happy to go to work each day. I also am able to recognize the ways that disability impacts children and I am dedicated to creating an inclusive classroom.

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to participate in an internship this summer. The Career Center and the Fred D. Andersen Foundation is the sole reason that this experience was possible for me. As an independent student, it is necessary for me to make money to take care of myself. Thanks to this fund I was able to gain professional experience, learn new things, and solidify my future plans!
Fred D. Andersen Foundation - The Visiting Professor of American Studies

Advocating for Unarmed Civilian Protection
Aaron Zivsak ’25
American Studies
Nonviolent Peaceforce | Washington, D.C.

This summer I had the opportunity to intern at Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) in Washington, DC. The organization aims to protect civilians from violence through unarmed civilian strategies, build peace side-by-side with local communities, and safeguard human lives all around the world. Their work is guided by values of nonviolence and nonpartisanship, and they work to promote peace without promoting the interests of any particular group, government, or ideological faction. I found NP when searching on a number of different humanitarian and peacekeeping job boards. After having my first interview and learning more about NP’s on-the-ground work with communities across the globe, I was eager to help contribute and advocate for the people being most affected by today’s violence.

Almost immediately after I arrived at the DC office, I started working on a range of different projects and tasks for the NP advocacy team. Firstly, I became a point person to attend and take notes at various government, UN, and nonprofit meetings around the DC area and online. This gave me the opportunity to meet and learn from some of the top humanitarian practitioners in the field. Moreover, being able to attend these meetings gave me insight into how first-hand information from the field is received at the higher level and how this information can be presented to effectively advocate for change. These experiences also helped me realize how difficult it can be for humanitarian and advocacy workers to convince policymakers to support a project. I am grateful that my supervisor, my colleagues, and I were able to discuss some of these challenges as a group and talk about how they can be faced. Secondly, I helped write a variety of different policy briefs, snapshot updates, and one-pagers on NP’s work in Ukraine, Iraq, South Sudan, and Sudan. The experience of coordinating and disseminating information between different in-country teams, our HQ in Geneva, and the advocacy team in DC was a unique position I was able to have. Another valuable skill I learned while working at my internship was understanding the different work dynamics between my colleagues. As our organization included teams of people in over 10 countries, it was fascinating to observe and engage in the various intercultural meetings and relationships within the organization. This insight into the organization’s culture gave me a new perspective that I will definitely consider when looking at job opportunities in the future.

I am extremely grateful for the Fred D. Andersen Foundation which allowed me to have this valuable and unique internship experience. This fund allowed me to use what I have learned about American Studies in the classroom and apply it to the real world. I am excited to continue to explore the field of non-profit humanitarian work during my time at Carleton and in the future.
Helen M. Golde ’85 Endowed Internship Fund

Fighting Against Climate Change
Conor Babcock O’Neill ’24
Biology & Computer Science
NOAA - Manchester Research Station | Port Orchard, Washington

Working as an Aquaculture Research Assistant this summer at Manchester Research Station was a fantastic insight into industrial and governmental research. Previously, in the course of my work at Carleton, my lab work had been much more process-driven. As students, we are encouraged to think about each step of creating a paper or lab report, and the emphasis is placed on how well the writing is done, and how well we are able to translate our learning about experiment design into fully-fledged projects.

Working with NOAA, I gained an appreciation for how different government research can be. The topics are often much narrower, based on specific grants, and the overall focus is on optimization. In the case of the sablefish I was working on, my smaller study was looking at net-pen growout of juvenile sablefish with differing vaccine treatments; meanwhile, my fish had come from a larger pool of fish earmarked for a study that would put the fish in a RAS system and then the net pens for growout. I listened to colleagues give talks on minute temperature changes accelerating the larval growth process, or how small changes in the diet could, at the scale we were working with, lead to big savings or efficiency increases. All of these studies were centered around sablefish aquaculture in the specific manner that NOAA was doing. Essentially, instead of science for the sake of learning science, it was science for the sake of perfecting a process, with the goal of optimizing every step.

My work felt very meaningful. I was able to learn from people with a broad variety of backgrounds, working with both older aquaculture specialists who knew the ins and outs of the station and had been there when the net pens had been put in fifty years before, and new hires like me who were eager to use new technology to give rise to new learning. One colleague of mine taught me in depth about how fish do in fact make noise, and how she was excited to fill our net pens with acoustic sensors to determine fish feeding behaviors at different times of the day. I was put to work in a variety of ways, some of which were new to me and others I felt very prepared for by my Carleton learning. My boss and coworkers complimented my creativity and skill at experimental design; however, no class thus far has had me learn how to harness fish in a net quickly or tell what two kilograms of fish is by feeling.

I am very thankful to the Helen M. Golde ’85 Endowed Internship Fund for supporting me. My work this summer felt very meaningful; a revolution in aquaculture in the USA is underway, with more and more focus being devoted to efficient fish farming as traditional land farming steadily causes more and more climate change issues. Working with NOAA this summer gave me a chance to do meaningful work that gives us tools in the global fight against climate change, and helps people by developing and optimizing cheap and more eco-friendly sources of food.
Initiative for Service Internships in International Development

Making a Difference in My Community
Amelie Cook ’25
Economics
Newcomers Access Center | Claremont, California

This summer, I interned at Newcomers Access Center in my hometown of Claremont, California. NAC is a small nonprofit organization that supports refugees and immigrants in both Los Angeles and San Bernardino counties. I assisted the office administrator in maintaining the organization’s website and social media accounts. I helped plan, set up, run, and take down various events that the organization put on throughout the summer, including a Fourth of July celebration, a Family Day event, and a Back to School Drive.

The first skill I learned from this experience was patience. While I came in assuming that I would be able to take over the social media for the summer, I found I could not post on their social media or website blog as often as I had thought. NAC is a small organization with a small budget so they cannot afford to support more clients than they currently have, so I had to take a step back with the social media management. Until NAC gets more grant funding, they will not be able to amp up their social media.

The second important skill I learned from this experience was how to balance my wellness with my time in the office. Since I spent so much time sitting, I realized I needed to prioritize my time outside and moving around when I was out of the office. I started walking to and from work and found that it drastically improved my mental health and wellness. The key lesson that I have drawn about myself from this experience is that I would like to work at a job where I get to interact with new people every single day.

My best days at NAC were the days when I got to meet new client families and help them face-to-face. Most recently, I got to help a family of refugees move into new temporary housing provided by NAC and help them set up a Target registry that we sent to our volunteer and donor base. I also got to meet a ton of clients at the Family Day and help them fill out a survey that I helped create for the organization so that they can include data in their future grant applications. I really enjoyed working directly with the clients, and it helped me realize that for any job I have in the future, I want to feel like the work I am doing is meaningful.

I am grateful for all the relationships that I got to make with these people in my community because it has been especially impactful to get to know our clients as neighbors and friends. I am grateful for everything I got to learn throughout this experience, particularly because it has helped me towards my future career in social work. I would like to thank Stephen R. West ’53, Phyllis M. West, and the Initiative for Service Internships in International Development, for giving me the opportunity to serve my community this summer at Newcomers Access Center.
Initiative for Service Internships in International Development

Insights and Skills through Cross-Cultural Communication

Yeabsira Gebreegziabher ’25

*Computer Science*

Hope Ethiopia | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

This summer, I had the opportunity to go to my home country of Ethiopia, where I undertook a software developer internship with the remarkable organization, Hope Ethiopia. My primary responsibility during this internship was to develop a user-friendly and informative webpage for the organization. This experience would not only enhance my technical skills but also broaden my perspective on life. One of the most crucial skills I honed during my internship was adaptability. Ethiopia presented me with challenges I had never encountered before, such as poor internet connectivity and frequent electricity outages. Transportation was really hard to get and I always struggled trying to make it to work. These obstacles forced me to think on my feet, find creative solutions, and adapt my work style to the local conditions. This adaptability not only improved my problem-solving skills but also made me a more versatile and resilient developer.

Working closely with the diverse and talented team at Hope Ethiopia taught me the importance of effective cross-cultural communication. Our team comprised individuals from different ethnicities and languages. Through patience, active listening, and empathy, I learned how to bridge cultural gaps and foster a collaborative environment. This skill has been invaluable in both my personal and professional life. The internship demanded impeccable time management skills. Balancing the technical aspects of web development with the unpredictable interruptions caused by power outages required meticulous planning and organization. I quickly became proficient in managing my time effectively and efficiently, ensuring that I met project deadlines and delivered quality work despite the challenges.

My internship in Ethiopia provided profound insights into my own capabilities and aspirations. Firstly, I discovered a deep passion for using my technical skills to make a positive impact in underserved communities. Witnessing the difference our work made in the lives of the locals was profoundly rewarding and motivated me to pursue a career with a strong social purpose. Additionally, I learned that I thrive in dynamic and challenging environments. The hurdles I faced in Ethiopia, far from discouraging me, fueled my determination to excel. This experience taught me that I am not only a problem solver but also someone who relishes stepping out of their comfort zone to achieve meaningful goals.

My transformative experience with Hope Ethiopia has inspired me to seek a career that combines my technical skills with my passion for social impact. I plan to continue working with organizations that prioritize improving the lives of underserved communities through technology. Additionally, I intend to share my experiences with others, encouraging them to explore similar opportunities that foster personal growth while making a positive change in the world. One of the most surprising lessons I learned during my internship was the resilience and spirit of the Ethiopian people. The country was going through a civil war, hyperinflation, and various catastrophes. Despite facing daily challenges that many in more developed regions can hardly fathom, the locals displayed an unwavering sense of hope, kindness, and determination.
I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve as a data analyst for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). This experience has been a pivotal chapter in my journey, allowing me to contribute to humanitarian efforts while honing crucial skills and gaining invaluable insights. In my role as a data analyst, I was tasked with the responsibility of analyzing surgical and humanitarian data, a task that carried immense significance in the context of the ICRC’s mission. This role allowed me to witness firsthand the impact of data-driven decision-making in the realm of humanitarian aid.

One aspect of my work involved delving into surgical data collected by the ICRC in conflict zones. I used my expertise in R and Python to dissect and analyze this data, extracting meaningful insights that were vital for assessing the needs of patients, identifying trends in injuries, and optimizing the allocation of medical resources. Through this work, I developed a deeper appreciation for the intersection of healthcare and data analysis.

Beyond surgical data, I also had the privilege of working with broader humanitarian datasets. Here, I leveraged my knowledge of R and Python to clean, transform, and analyze data related to trends in displacement, access to clean water, nutrition, and other critical aspects of life in conflict-affected areas. These data-driven insights played a crucial role in identifying areas of urgent need and informing strategic humanitarian interventions. This experience underscored the profound impact that data analysis, powered by R and Python, can have on shaping humanitarian responses.

My experience with the ICRC reinforced the importance of data-driven decision-making. Analyzing data wasn’t merely about numbers; it was about making informed choices that could save lives and alleviate suffering. I learned to harness data as a powerful tool for humanitarian action. Working closely with medical professionals including Dr. Hassan, fieldworkers, and other experts within the ICRC emphasized the value of interdisciplinary collaboration. It taught me how diverse perspectives can lead to more comprehensive solutions. Dealing with sensitive data in conflict zones brought forth ethical considerations that I hadn’t previously encountered. I learned the significance of data privacy and responsible data handling, especially when working in challenging environments.

I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to work alongside dedicated individuals within the ICRC. The support, guidance, and mentorship I received from my colleagues were instrumental in my growth as a data analyst. Your commitment to the humanitarian cause and your willingness to share your expertise were truly inspiring.

In conclusion, my journey as a data analyst with the ICRC was a transformative experience that allowed me to merge my passion for data analysis with a profound sense of purpose. It has reaffirmed my commitment to a career at the intersection of data science and humanitarianism. As I move forward, I will carry the lessons learned, the skills honed, and the experiences shared with me by the incredible individuals at the ICRC.
Initiative for Service Internships in International Development

My Summer in the Village of Gold
Allison Penn ’25
Sociology and Anthropology
Unit for Reflection and Action of African Communities | Paris, France

My summer 2023 internship was a very meaningful academic and personal experience made possible by the Initiative for Service Internships in International Development. This initiative, established by Stephen R. West ’53 and Phyllis M. West, allowed me to spend this past June and July in Paris, France as an intern at URACA Basiliade. URACA is a French acronym for the name of the organization, which translates to the “Unit for Reflection and Action of the African Community.” URACA is deeply rooted in an African and Middle Eastern neighborhood in Paris, coined the “Village of Gold” by its residents. URACA functions as a public health and social network for community members. As an intern for URACA, I was able to dip my toes into the water of the nonprofit sector as well as become involved in a French-speaking work environment for the first time. While this internship had many ups and downs, I am incredibly grateful that I had the opportunity to intern in Paris and continue my Carleton education this summer.

URACA is a very small association, with only six full-time employees. That being said, there was not a defined role for my position as an intern. One of my goals was to experience both the on-the-ground and higher-level administrative sides of a nonprofit. To accomplish this, I split the days of the week between URACA’s two offices. One office was responsible for most of the on-the-ground work, such as HIV testing sites and sexual safety workshops. The second office managed URACA’s social programs, such as securing health insurance and housing for our members. I observed and aided in all of these areas. I accompanied the team to our HIV testing sites about twice a week, familiarized myself with the general bookkeeping and business practices of the association, and observed and participated in their community workshops.

This experience did not come without its challenges. The team at URACA was incredibly welcoming, but that did not erase our cultural differences. This was my first time working in a French-speaking environment, as well as with individuals from Africa. Both myself and the team enjoyed exploring our differing attitudes about work, humor, and food. I acquired many new skills alongside these explorations. My ability to connect with people across cultures was greatly expanded, as well as my ability to understand different approaches to work and office life. More tangibly, I now have a much clearer understanding of how nonprofits work.

On my last day of work, my coworkers surprised me with a gift they had bought from a local African jewelry store. As I put them on, they proclaimed that I am now “one of them.” Their gift was deeply touching, accompanied by their acceptance of me into their beloved community. I will treasure both the personal connections and the work experiences I gained from this internship for the rest of my life.
Initiative for Service Internships in International Development

My Eye-Opening Summer
Hermela Samuel ’26
Undeclared
Ethiopian Community Support and Advocacy Center | Alexandria, Virginia

This summer, I was an assistant program manager at the Ethiopian Community Support and Advocacy Center (ECSAC) in Alexandria, Virginia. ECSAC is a non-profit that provides Ethiopian immigrants, and first-generation individuals with the resources to succeed in the Washington, DC area. ECSAC aims to bridge the inequity through culturally aware support in health, education, and housing. I supported this mission with resources, especially for uninsured or Medicaid individuals.

I facilitated the 2nd annual “Starting the Conversation: Ethiopian and Eritrean Parental Panel Discussion,” I engaged with Habesha youth in closed-door discussions about their struggles experiencing life in America. Then, we delved into strategies for healthy self-expression. The program was a necessary step towards creating a stronger understanding within the Habesha community that would bring about holistic growth.

Paired with initiatives that focus on providing resources to help families and individuals navigate their complex situations, ECSAC designs programs to strengthen pride and understanding of Habesha heritage in the Ethiopian community. I personally was involved with the execution of an introduction to Amharic class for Habesha youth to increase knowledge about one of the most spoken languages in Ethiopia. This initiative began to inspire youth to understand a pillar of their heritage responsible for carrying significant meaning. I discussed and with youth (6-19 years old) in Amharic. It was deeply rewarding to help in the process of cultivating a knowledge of self within the youth that is so constructive to self-development. I personally witnessed young children get excited about improving and learning about where they come from in a way that boosted their self-esteem.

This educative experience improved my skills of critical thinking as I aimed to bridge individuals with differing perspectives with one another. Simultaneously, I improved my collaborative work and worked on integrating resources from many sources. I am grateful to have learned about a variety of support systems in the DC area and to connect with individuals both in need of resources and those working to provide them. I am surprised to have gained a lens into the DC Metro area’s support systems. I have learned that I am very interested in roles that will allow me to be constantly learning new things and approaching diverse issues. My main advice to students interested in an internship would be to remain open to advice and be suggestive and communicative with supervisors about ideas. I enjoyed the chance to partake in community development work this summer as I felt myself affecting the knowledge gap with supportive information.

I want to thank Mrs. Negussie at ECSAC who really made this experience possible. I am immensely grateful to the Initiative for Service Internships in International Development fund for offering all the support for me to realize such a meaningful opportunity. Thank you, Luke Klefstad, for all the guidance on approaching this internship. Finally, a big thanks to all the other supportive individuals I was able to connect with during the internship experience.
Initiative for Service Internships in International Development

MAM’s Mission to Assist CDM
Brayden Stark ’24
Political Science/International Relations
Mutual Aid Myanmar | Accord, New York

I interned with Mutual Aid Myanmar (MAM) this summer, working on various projects and research. MAM is a non-profit international aid organization dedicated to helping the people of Myanmar who are suffering under a military regime that overthrew the democratic government in February 2021. MAM offers vital financial assistance for food, water, and shelter to those most impacted by the effects of the military government and recent natural disasters that have hit Myanmar. Myanmar’s public workers and government officials began the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) because they refused to work for the military government. Since the start of CDM, MAM has helped support those who refused to work on behalf of the undemocratic government.

My specific responsibilities this summer for MAM were mainly policy research-based. I researched various avenues for grant funding from the US government to support MAM’s aid to the people of Myanmar. I helped write numerous policy briefs and summaries on bills in Congress regarding Myanmar, as well as Department of Defense documents detailing the situation on the ground and ways in which aid organizations and the US can help. The policy briefs I constructed were used internally to determine the most optimal ways to lobby effectively and pursue grants issued by the federal government.

In addition to policy research and writing, I also led a project on creating and compiling grant materials for MAM. I wrote numerous introductions and styles for various types of grants that MAM applies for, including USAID and DoD grants. I was also tasked with researching different types of grants and gathering the correct materials for the organization to be eligible to apply.

I also helped run the MAM social media channels, creating content for various platforms informing the public about MAM’s mission and the critical events taking place in Myanmar. After running the social media for over a month, I constructed a style guide for future interns and the organization to follow to achieve a wider audience online.

Lastly, I am incredibly grateful for this opportunity as I learned much about the non-profit world and the complex federal grant application process. It was truly a wonderful experience, and our efforts were able to help those in Myanmar. I want to thank the Initiative for Service Internships in International Development for making this internship financially possible for me. With funding through Carleton, I took this internship position, as MAM is run entirely by volunteers to ensure all donations help the people of Myanmar.
Jackson and Warren Endowed Internship Fund

Developmental Psychology Research Assistant
Ben Chamberlain Zivsak ’24
Psychology
Harvard University | Cambridge, Massachusetts

This summer, I worked as a full-time research assistant in the Harvard Lab for Developmental Studies in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The HLDS is broken into three primary labs that are each run by a Harvard faculty member. I worked in the Spelke Lab which focuses on understanding the development of human learning and reasoning as they relate to understanding objects, people, and social groups. Some of the current research in the lab includes studying how infants and children reason about abstract properties of goal-directed actions of agents, such as the costs and value of the goal states they achieve, how children develop the ability to reason about formal mathematics, and how social learning relates to academic performance.

Working under a postdoc, I was fortunate enough to be involved in all aspects of research design which allowed me to grow my capacity to think critically and problem-solve in human subjects research. As a passionate student of psychology and neuroscience, this was a pivotal opportunity to do research at a large university in preparation for an advanced degree.

The study I was responsible for conducting involved continuing the work of Sara Botto, a postdoc in the lab, regarding how gender stereotypes and self-perceptions related to academic performance and STEM engagement develop in young children. Gender stereotypes related to academic performance and cognitive abilities begin to develop as early as age 6 in both boys and girls. Across cultures, males, but not females, are associated with “brilliance,” or the high-level intellectual ability assumed necessary for STEM fields. This stereotype may influence women’s pursuit of and engagement with STEM-related careers and disciplines.

This study uses performance-based positive feedback to explore the underpinnings of the STEM gender gap in 5 and 7-year-olds while examining “brilliance” acquisition and self-efficacy by providing difficulty and interest choices for math and reading activities. We found preliminary evidence that acquisition of the “brilliance” stereotype develops between 6-7 years of age for girls, that difficult choices in academic activities are not entirely mediated by positive feedback, and that self-efficacy is dependent on age with a decrease in positive academic-related performance perceptions from 5 to 7 years of age. Our findings suggest an increasing role of social factors on academic-related self-concept as children get older and that, while positive feedback may be a powerful behavioral motivator, there are likely other mechanisms including parent-child interactions and stereotype integration by which the STEM gender gap develops and is perpetuated.

The experience of working on this study allowed me to build teamwork skills, while I also navigated having methodological autonomy. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Jackson and Warren Endowed Internship Fund, whose generous support, in addition to the Carleton Career Center, played an essential role in realizing my internship experience. I am incredibly grateful to have had such a meaningful experience, and I’m excited to continue research at Carleton and contribute to the field of psychology.
Jackson and Warren Endowed Internship Fund

Rescuing Resilience
Tasha Paez ’26
Undeclared
California Wildlife Center | Calabasas, California

Over the course of my ten-week internship at the California Wildlife Center in Calabasas, California, I was able to experience the incredible journey of rehabilitation through many of the native California wildlife species ranging from all different types of species of birds to mammals. I had the privilege of working alongside a team of dedicated veterinary technicians who strived for the potential release of injured and orphaned wildlife back into their habitats. I was able to complete the intake process which included many animals in distress along with providing their initial assessment to stabilize their conditions. I was also able to assist with the preparation of diets, cleaning enclosures, and administering medications. I was able to observe and assist in medical procedures with the guidance of the experienced staff.

I learned that teamwork, communication, compassion, and adaptability were essential to gaining the full experience at the center. Effective communication is vital for a successful environment in order to complete effective patient care. Caring for injured wildlife taught me patience most of all. Rehabilitation takes time and you might not get the results you desire along with major setbacks to see some of the wildlife be held back for longer periods of time which is a setback. Working with a wide variety of animals represented many challenges and adapting quickly to their specific needs to provide the best possible care taught me the importance of critical thinking.

In life, I find my purpose by making an impact on other’s lives. Working with animals has given me a purpose to advocate for those with no voices and in order to make a life thrive with the proper care. Working here has reinforced my purpose and my desire to become a veterinarian, not only for the animals but for the wellbeing of our planet. For my future goals, I plan to continue my education in the field of biology with a focus on pre-veterinary medicine. I will continue to seek opportunities to work with organizations dedicated to the well-being of animals. My time at CWC has solidified my commitment to becoming a veterinarian.

Something that wasn't necessarily a surprise to me but still shocked me was that there are a lot of human-induced issues when it comes to wildlife such as pollution and habitat destruction that put these animals at risk. Witnessing these problems up close was really eye-opening and again, motivated me to want to advocate for these animals who have no say. Overall, I am grateful to the California Wildlife Center, the rehabilitators, technicians, and veterinarians for the wonderful opportunity and lessons I learned for the animals that were cared for. A huge thank you to the Jackson and Warren Endowed Internship Fund for making my trip and dreams possible.
Chinua Achebe once said, “A functioning, robust democracy requires a healthy, educated, participatory followership, and an educated, morally grounded leadership.” This quote really resonated with me because this summer I had the opportunity to experience just that. An internship at The White House was something that I hoped for but never believed I could attain at this point in my life. However, I took a leap of faith and applied. Being that this was the only thing I applied for this summer, I was determined to get the internship despite all odds.

When I did receive the news that I had gotten the internship, I was very excited and felt a weight lifted off my shoulders. Even more excitement came when I received news that I would be working in the Office of the First Lady as her Senior Advisor’s intern. In my role as an intern, it looked very different on a day-to-day basis, which I loved. There were days that were very busy and days that were less busy, but there is never a dull moment when you’re at the forefront of where democracy lives. As the Senior Advisor’s intern, I did a multitude of things, such as writing memos, taking notes in meetings, handling correspondence, doing critical research, and much more. One of my favorite tasks was assisting in the planning and execution of high-profile events, ensuring seamless logistics, and providing on-site support to VIP attendees. It wasn’t my favorite because of the high profiles of people that I got to see on a daily basis, but really because it was breathtaking to see the magnitude of people who are committed to truly making the world a better place. One of my favorite events was helping out during the Juneteenth Concert on the South Lawn. It truly brought me to my knees to see my culture and people who look like me, celebrated in the highest levels of government. It showed me to never let go of my authenticity and to continue to lead with my beliefs, values, and humility.

Among the skills I learned and strengths I gained, I learned some key lessons such as: 1) Being a good follower will turn you into a good leader; 2) Choose impact over prestige; and 3) Invest in the things you believe in. These lessons were learned from other leaders within the experience, and I’d share them with future interns, no matter the field. Working with other leaders and interns inspired me to be a better leader for my community, especially within the Carleton community. This internship truly made me grateful for a place like Carleton and the Alumni network attached to it. Special thanks to the Career Center and the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund, which gave me the resources to have the experience of a lifetime. Knowing that Carleton has poured resources into, makes me want to pour back into this community for years to come.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

Shadowing a Judge: Implications

Victoria Bradjan ’25

English

Minnesota Judicial Branch, Fourth District Court | Minneapolis, Minnesota

This past summer, I had the immense honor and pleasure of shadowing District Judge Bruce Manning ’96, P’27, alongside three fellow Carleton interns. My internship was hybrid and entailed observing Native American and juvenile delinquency cases, with the added benefit of observing adjacent careers such as those of attorneys, social workers, and detectives.

I was able to apply what I’ve learned from a multitude of my humanities courses so far, including English (my declared major), sociology, religion, and psychology—but the very opportunity of witnessing how the dynamics and factors I learn about in academia play out in real people’s lives was unbeatable. I noticed that Judge Manning was particularly analytical of the implications of his decisions, as well as the impacts of social services and law enforcement. He was quick to cite research behind his approaches to different issues, such as that a child with changing guardianship will be negatively impacted by foster home placement, even if that placement is an exceedingly positive environment, and therefore he prioritizes placing a child with their immediate family, if it’s safe to do so. He also applied this long-term evaluation to cases involving delinquency, sexual assault, etc. It was exceptional to be able to observe the judge’s affect and thought process throughout the proceedings.

One of my favorite patterns in the way Judge Manning conducts hearings is that he often gives delinquent youth inspirational talks. He tends to congratulate the youth on how far they’ve come in treatment and encourages them to press on and to share their story of healing with other delinquent youth. He later explained to me that he perceives that many of these troubled youth were never given a solid narrative growing up (e.g., ‘You’ll go to college’), so his talk supplies them with a narrative arc, ergo, meaning. A positive projection.

Toward the end of the internship, my fellow interns and I got to observe a jury trial for strangulation in the neighboring government building. When the jury went into deliberation, the interns grabbed lunch with Judge Manning (uninvolved in the case) and discussed our impressions of the proceedings. Judge Manning, quizzes us on what our personal verdicts would be, tested our logic and judgment. It was appropriately intense, and heavily built my critical thinking skills, and I’ll never forget the conversation. Ultimately my fellow intern Matthias’ verdict and mine contradicted what the jury really decided, which added another layer of debriefing.

I learned many invaluable lessons during the internship, but what surprised and stuck with me the most is that judges really do have hearts. Many people don’t have the privilege of seeing judges behind the scenes, and I’m so indelibly grateful to have gotten to know how deeply Judge Manning truly cares about the people he serves. I’m truly indebted to the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund for supporting female students in politics like myself, and for fully enabling me to experience this unforgettable opportunity.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

Developmental Biology Research Experience in the Rosen Lab
Kate Burton ’24
Biology
Harvard School of Dental Medicine | Boston, Massachusetts

I want to begin by thanking the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund for supporting and encouraging this research opportunity. As a fund for female students to experience an internship in a potential career path, it helped me feel empowered to pursue my goals in the STEM fields. I am grateful for the manner in which this fund facilitated my research experience and allowed me to learn from and work with such a wonderful and successful lab and group of people.

I was fortunate enough this summer to return to the lab that I had interned at during the summer of 2022 as well. I was excited to return to projects that I had some familiarity with while also learning new lab techniques for the new tasks and experiments that I would be performing. For example, having done immunohistochemistry, genotyping, sectioning, and PCR last summer, I learned new and (often) more advanced techniques. I learned how to run western blots, mouse femur/tibia dissections at various ages, periosteal cell culture, RNA isolation, and real-time qPCR as well as the analysis that goes along with all of these experimental procedures.

At the same time as we were running these new studies, we were also in the review process of a paper that we submitted for publication based on work done last summer and over winter break. It was very interesting to observe how the paper review process works, especially the dialogue regarding suggested additions to the paper. It was a learning experience that will be important in potential future career paths as they relate to paper submission.

Finally, at the end of my time in the lab, I gave a presentation on the work I had done and the data I had collected. While I had previously presented a poster during a research symposium, I had never given a lab meeting presentation, especially one in which the audience was composed of people who had a more complex scientific understanding of that which I was speaking about. While I was certainly nervous, this presentation was great practice for my comps presentation this coming year and also was an important learning experience about the collaborative nature of scientific research. It helped me feel more confident that any critiques or suggestions were not a direct comment on me as a person, but rather efforts to make the science and projects the best they could be from a variety of perspectives.

I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to have all of these experiences with help from this fund and am excited that I was even offered a post-graduate job in the lab for next year. Thank you!
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

Working As a Judicial Intern
Ryan Cechini '25

Philosophy
Minnesota Judicial Branch, Fourth District Court | Minneapolis, Minnesota

This past summer I worked in Minnesota's 4th Judicial District Juvenile Court under Judge Bruce Manning '96, P'27. During that time, I witnessed court proceedings in Judge Manning's court and wrote the judge's orders for some. I also was able to sit in on other judges' courts where I was exposed to criminal trials, civil trials, first pleas, and housing court. In addition to my time spent in court, I also attended CLE-accredited presentations on civil litigation and one from the Hennepin County medical examiner.

Throughout the internship, I was exposed to different kinds of law and approaches by attorneys. In the juvenile court, the attorneys representing each side were much less combative than in other adult courts, speaking to the overarching mission to do what is best for the kids in question, rather than just to simply win. This didn't mean that the attorneys represented their clients any worse but rather changed the atmosphere of the courtroom. During my talks with the judge, he exemplified complex critical thinking in considering how to maintain fairness. One example that really opened my eyes to the considerations a judge has to make on top of simply deciding cases was during a trial when the alleged victim's attorney requested for him to be permitted a companion dog while testifying. The judge, one of his clerks, and I spent multiple lunches discussing what to do about it, considering the implications such a permit could have on the trial. Ultimately, due to the relevant facts of the request and case, the request was denied, which would not have been the outcome I would have assumed before working with the judge.

In watching different attorneys and their work styles, a few things stood out to me. First, I don't know if I could be a defense attorney. I gained a lot of respect for public defenders while watching them vigorously defend their clients as their work is all that is stopping the state from exerting total control over the legal process; they provide a check on prosecutorial power. However, this does mean they might have to represent people who have done some very bad things and would need to represent them to the best of their abilities. In two trials I watched, this meant questioning a juvenile alleged abuse victim on the stand to refute testimony. It was hard to watch and I don't think I would be able to do that. Overall, however, the internship strengthened my interest in pursuing law school in the future and gave me a first-hand look into different areas of law that might be of interest to me, particularly the public side of the legal process.

I am very grateful to Judge Manning '96, P'27 and his staff for making the opportunity possible as well as the other judges who welcomed me into their courtrooms. I am also grateful to the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund for providing funding to make my internship more accessible to me.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

A Workplace Where I Mattered

Anna Center ’25
Mathematics
Concussion Alliance | Seattle, Washington

This past summer I interned at Concussion Alliance, a non-profit that focuses on ending the stigma surrounding mild traumatic brain injuries and creating a structure for adequate prevention, response, and rehabilitation. I worked as a program manager on the administrative side of the internship. I worked directly with the Internship Program Director, two other Program Managers, and a science writing mentor.

On the administrative side, I determined what content in the curriculum we wanted to stick with, ordered the curriculum, created the weekly schedules, and organized thank-you notes for guest speakers. I lead a subcohort of interns to foster a sense of community, create a space for idea sharing, and gather feedback about the internship itself. I managed two project teams of interns by regularly meeting with them to ensure progress, address issues as they arose, schedule meetings with the group’s mentors, edit their projects, and personally assist other interns who were struggling with the workload.

I had never been in a situation where other people’s success was riding on me in this way. I was very nervous going in because I was unsure if I could do it all. I was able to achieve all of the baseline requirements and then some. I was constantly coming up with ideas for how to make things more effective or ways to benefit the Concussion Alliance as a whole. My supervisor was always upfront with me about feasibility and they recognized, encouraged, and implemented these ideas.

Some of the ideas I was most proud of were: creating stickers with a QR code that links to Concussion Alliance so that people can find out about the organization beyond direct word of mouth; creating a week-by-week guidebook for future Program Managers so that they could learn from our triumphs and pitfalls; and creating a week-long internship program for high school students so that they can learn about concussions and find joy in helping others. At the end of the internship, the director of operations asked if I would be comfortable continuing to share my ideas after the internship was over via a Google doc. I felt incredibly valued. This enforced the idea that I have a lot to bring to the table.

I would advise other students in future internships to write down their accomplishments. I wrote several down, but I am already aware that others are lost in my memory. It is important to remember your accomplishments to talk about in future job interviews, highlight them on your LinkedIn, and be proud of yourself.

I would like to thank the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund for making it possible for me to experience so much growth as a person. Thank you to the Career Center at Carleton College for the support they provided throughout the years. Finally, thank you to Conor Gormally ’20 and Malayka Gormally P’20 for seeing my potential and helping me flourish. You all allowed me to have confidence in myself in a professional setting and see how much potential I have and I could not be more grateful for that.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

Exploring Professional Robotics in Taiwan

Dorothy Chou ’25  
Biology  
Delta Technology Industries Ltd. | Taipei, Taiwan

This summer, I interned as an assistant coach at Delta Technology Industries Ltd., DRTM for short. As a Taiwanese educational engineering organization, DRTM is dedicated to training youth to compete in RoboCup Soccer through weekly classes and daily workshops. DRTM has four tiers sorted by age and experience. I worked with the competitive tier, designed for ages 14 to 19, and the middle school tier. Throughout the summer, I assisted in teaching conventional designs, C/C++, and Java while overseeing the competitors’ progress for RoboCup Junior Soccer 2023 and IYRC Soccer 2023.

I also had the opportunity to volunteer at RoboCup 2023 in Bordeaux, France. As my first time seeing the competition from a non-competitor perspective, I spent most of my time watching the committee members and other volunteers. Many were willing to share their knowledge, but it was not enough to handle the random scenarios. Conveniently placed in the Junior Soccer League, I had to utilize my personal robotics experience to referee matches and help with preparation, security measures, and robot inspections.

One of the most essential skills I strengthened was communication. DRTM’s competitive teams have multiple coaches, making it critical to pass along vital information. I had to get used to having my phone on sound mode nearly 24/7, which was unusual. Moreover, at RoboCup 2023, hundreds of matches happened, which forced communication to become the highest priority between volunteers, the Organizing Committee, and the participants.

Another skill I gained was my coaching abilities. Here, I realized a key lesson regarding my perspective on robotics. When I first taught the middle school classes, I had unjustly assumed the extent of their knowledge. Although I have been in robotics for many years, I did not link my experience to my students when I was their age, resulting in underestimations of their abilities. It helped me to ask what the kids could do before I confirmed my lesson plans, as my initial ones were much too easy for them. Although the kids may have liked the easy assignments, I wonder if they would have appreciated the leisure in the long run.

Ultimately, this internship expanded my perspective on the professional robotics world. I came into the internship thinking that I would struggle, and I did. Luckily, at DRTM, everyone wants to do robotics and seek knowledge continuously. Supported by this shared value, I am grateful for my supervisor, Austin Su, and the other coaches. They taught me much about robotics coaching and many life lessons about careers, lifestyles, and balance. Even after the internship has ended, we are still in touch, and DRTM has informed me that I can go back in the future if I so desire. My gratitude extends further to Carleton Career Center and the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund for making this experience possible. Without them, I would not have been able to grow so much in robotics and as a person.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

Teaching at Breakthrough Minneapolis

Sigrid Edstrom ’24

Religion

BreakThrough Minneapolis at Blake | Minneapolis, Minnesota

I would like to thank the Jean Phillips Memorial Fund for the generous financial support to allow me to be able to work at Breakthrough Minneapolis this summer. Through their support, I was able to teach 8th-grade science this summer for 10 weeks.

At Breakthrough Minneapolis, I was a teaching fellow. In this position, I received two weeks of orientation and training prior to the arrival of students. During orientation I learned about the developmental ages of the students I would be teaching, how to write a lesson plan, how to teach, and also how to teach in an inclusive way. This includes learning about culturally relevant teaching and racial inequity among public schools in Minnesota which ranks 49th among U.S. States for racial inequity in public education. The lesson plan model that I learned at Breakthrough is specific to Breakthrough, but I hope that if I ever find myself in a teaching position again I will be able to utilize some of the lesson planning skills that I learned about during orientation and continued to use throughout the summer.

After two weeks of orientation, the students arrived for summer programming. This was six weeks long. I taught 8th-grade science with course material of my own choosing. I decided to teach a course of my own creation titled “Agriculture, Sustainability, and Local Food Sources” which ended up teaching kids about how agriculture affects and impacts the environment, how they can shop and eat differently to positively affect the environment, and what local foods in Minnesota are doing to positively affect the environment. Though I do not consider myself particularly interested nor passionate about science, I found that being responsible for the education of children made me feel more confident in my own abilities to teach students about something that I myself was not that confident in.

I am grateful to have had my first teaching experience. As a senior, I have been reflecting on my future and what I would potentially like to pursue in a career. Teaching is something that I feel passionately about and believe is very important. With this experience I had this summer, I now feel more equipped to decide what path forward I should take for my career. Thank you to all who supported me through this experience.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

Tech Support and Learning in a Nonprofit
Katelyn Hemmer ’24
Political Science/International Relations
Partnership for Public Service | Washington, D.C.

This summer I worked for nine weeks at the Partnership for Public Service in Washington, D.C. The Partnership is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that is building a better government and a stronger democracy. The organization has a wide array of programs that work with federal agencies and presidential transition. My internship was with the Public Service Leadership Institute (PSLI) team, which provides several different leadership development courses to federal employees at the GS1-G15 and SES levels. I worked on four programs: Excellence in Government, Foundations of Public Service, The 21st Century Government Innovation Program (Gov21), and the AI Federal Leadership Program. Most of these programs run about once a month for 4-10 sessions. Some are just an afternoon, and some are four full days each month. My role was mostly tech support for both virtual and in-person programs, and I produced sessions of these programs roughly twice a week, depending on scheduling. The rest of my time was spent preparing for these sessions through calls with my managers, program coordinators, guest speakers, and other producers. I also helped organize information for the sessions in spreadsheets and other virtual platforms such as Miro.

One of the greatest lessons I took away from this experience was how important it is to standardize and streamline document organization. The Partnership was incredibly organized, and even then different programs had different ways of organizing their materials. Learning my way around Microsoft products and other useful technologies was also very helpful. Now, when I enter the workforce, I won't be trying to learn new tech at the same time as learning a new job. This experience also allowed me to build relationship management skills, or rather to translate my previous customer service experience into the government and nonprofit world. I also was surprised by how many people I met who had jobs I didn't know existed, and it opened my eyes to many different career paths I had not considered before.

This experience allowed me to have many “firsts.” It was my first time living in a city, my first time living alone, my first time living completely independently, and my first time working a full-time office job. I’m grateful that I was able to have these important first experiences before I graduate from Carleton because now I am more aware of what I want out of a career and out of life. I would suggest that other students with similar aspirations should try to find an internship that would allow them to try out the lifestyle they will be living after graduation to see if they enjoy it.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

A Dive Inside the Legal System: Immigration Law
Emma Henry ’24
Psychology
Streefland Law Firm | Minneapolis, Minnesota

This summer I worked as a paralegal Intern for an Immigration Lawyer in solo practice at Streefland Law Firm in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I was responsible for a wide range of tasks and projects throughout the course of my internship. These included assisting in preparing, organizing, and filing immigration cases, which involved completing immigration forms, obtaining supportive evidence, drafting cover letters, and copying and filing. I reviewed and prepared responses for government correspondence, and contacted and communicated with or interviewed potential clients, current clients, and witnesses. I drafted letters and affidavits to support client cases. I maintained client files and participated in hearings and client meetings. The hearings I was able to observe and partake in spanned several different fields of law, including immigration law and both the prosecution and defense sides of criminal law. I also conducted research to support client cases. For example, I researched various countries and their living conditions, as well as the larger societal topics of domestic violence, mental health, and trauma. Finally, I was given various administrative duties: answering and returning phone calls, responding to emails, running office errands, maintaining client files and file systems, and contacting USCIS and EOIR customer service for clients. Although the majority of my work this summer was in the field of immigration law, I was also able to experience the daily duties of and network with criminal law attorneys, employment law attorneys, civil law attorneys, law clerks, judges, and a lobbyist.

Through my work in immigration law, I was most able to strengthen my ability to communicate and work with people from different cultural backgrounds. I was regularly exposed to interactions where this skill was being used, often with required interpretation and translation. This also improved my ability to communicate both in person and through writing (both in English and Spanish). I was drafting cover letters, arguments, and briefs on a daily basis, while also translating documents, such as birth and marriage certificates, divorce decrees, and witness affidavits. Finally, I was able to apply my knowledge and skills in real-world settings. I felt as if my degrees in psychology and cognitive science, as well as my high school and Carleton education, were huge factors in my ability to succeed this summer. I loved that I was able to apply topics in psychology regarding domestic abuse, trauma response, and various forms of mental health crises to my work.

Overall, this summer helped me to become extremely excited about my future career and solidified that I want to go to law school. It helped me to start thinking about what types of law interest me, build connections, obtain future offers, and gain knowledge about the next steps in my path. I am grateful to my employer, Elizabeth Streefland, and all of the other connections I made this summer. I am grateful to the Carleton Career Center and the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund, who funded my internship experience and ultimately allowed for all of it to be possible. I am proud to have represented young women pursuing a career in law.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

Kids, Law, and Advocacy: Summer at the Fourth Judicial District

Mattias Hoz ’25

Philosophy

Minnesota Judicial Branch, Fourth District Court | Minneapolis, Minnesota

This summer, I interned with Minnesota’s Fourth Judicial District assisting in Judge Bruce Manning’s ’96, P’27 courtroom. This internship was offered as a Carl Connection internship, in partnership with the Career Center. Judge Manning sees several types of cases for the state of Minnesota: child in need of protective services (CHIPS), juvenile delinquency, juvenile records expurgations, and adoption. The vast majority of Judge Manning’s cases have to do with the Indian Child Welfare Act, where the children involved are from Native American families.

I had several responsibilities in the courtroom, all of which exposed me to unfamiliar aspects of the law and helped me apply my skills. I sat in on all hearings and trials, taking notes on demands made by parties, arguments advanced by attorneys, and case background provided by DHS. I shadowed Judge Manning in and out of the courtroom, helping him break down court proceedings through conversations in chambers. To help me learn and gain an extra perspective on a case, Judge Manning would ask for my analysis on how he should rule, how he should weigh certain information, and how to order DHS. Using my notes and conversations with Judge Manning, I drafted multiple court orders each week. A court order is a legal document (filed with the court and sent out to involved parties) that summarizes the information presented at a given hearing or trial, as well as the Judge’s orders (the actions he requests from DHS or parties) going forward. I also helped out the court’s clerks, setting up between hearings and taking on their duties when they were absent. By drafting court orders, I was able to build my writing skills while getting a feel for the legal style and its conventions. By the end of my internship, Judge Manning had virtually no revisions to my order drafts; I had come a long way. Carleton has given me plenty of opportunities to grow as a writer, but this internship allowed me to apply these skills to a practical, real-world setting where I could see the direct impact of my work in progressing child welfare.

As someone who is strongly considering law school as a next step, this internship showed me that the courtroom, and juvenile law in particular, is a fascinating and complex place. Before this experience, I thought of the courtroom as a combative, adversarial space where different interests (the state, plaintiff, or defendant) fight it out. This summer showed me that the courtroom can also be a collaborative space, as juvenile justice involves many different stakeholders (parents, relatives, foster providers, children, tribal representatives, DHS) working together towards a common goal: finding a safe and loving environment for kids in need.

This internship was made possible by the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund. I am incredibly grateful to the Career Center, the fund’s donors, the alumni network, and Judge Bruce Manning ’96, P’27 for allowing me to engage in this valuable learning experience.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

Working at Loyola University Medical Center
Amanda Khouw ’24
Chemistry
Loyola University Medical Center | Maywood, Illinois

This summer, I worked closely with Dr. Slade at Loyola University Medical Center as a Summer Visiting Research Scholar with the key focus of researching effective ways to control and prevent the emerging fungus Candida auris from affecting patients. Coming out of this opportunity, there were three important skills that I have learned and will continue to develop. One of the skills that I gained was decision-making. During my time at Loyola, Dr. Slade encouraged me to decide my daily tasks and goals. This allowed me to enhance my decision-making skills in a research setting. Another skill that I developed was the ability to communicate through writing. By putting the collected data into the context of the research paper, I was able to convey the significance of these findings and their implications for the Candida auris study. The last skill that I would like to highlight is problem-solving. When undergoing data collection, I faced a few challenges that required quick problem-solving skills. With Dr. Slade’s advice and my problem-solving skills, I overcame these obstacles and cultivated new ways to navigate through the data collection process.

In addition to learning and developing professional skills, I grasped several key lessons about myself from this experience. I learned that it is all right to make mistakes and that failure is part of the process of professional development. Without failure, there would be no opportunity to learn. Being a perfectionist, navigating through errors can be a challenge. Nevertheless, I gradually discovered that it is perfectly acceptable to seek clarification and not possess all of the answers. I honed these skills while working alongside Dr. Slade and have grown more at ease with inquiring about topics that piqued my curiosity and whether there were any issues when analyzing the data.

This summer has allowed me to continue developing my professional skills and gain more experience in working with healthcare professionals from an infectious disease control and prevention perspective. An unexpected discovery that I learned about is how medical professionals share a variety of ideas when finding an accurate diagnosis and developing a treatment plan for a patient. It was truly captivating to witness healthcare professionals collaborate to optimize a patient’s care plan.

Thank you Dr. Slade for providing me with this opportunity as I would never have been able to gain such valuable insights and experiences without his support, motivation, and mentorship. I would also like to thank my advisors, professors, and peers who have played a crucial role in supporting me throughout my academic endeavors. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge and thank Carleton for being able to financially support me to experience this opportunity through the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund.

One piece of advice that I would like to share with students about internships is that it is all right to make mistakes and ask questions to your colleagues! Part of being a well-developed professional is acknowledging that asking questions will contribute to your continuous growth and improvement in your field.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

Learning Flexibility, Leadership, and Communication through Concussion Alliance
Kira Kunzman ’24
Psychology
Concussion Alliance | Seattle, Washington

I am incredibly grateful to the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund for allowing me to work administratively as a science writing mentor for Concussion Alliance. Having interned previously for this organization, this year, I worked in an administrative role. The mission of Concussion Alliance is to educate and provide free resources to patients navigating their recovery from concussions and to healthcare providers striving to stay up-to-date on the most current information regarding concussions. During the internship, I taught first-year interns how to write for the weekly newsletter, providing feedback and editing/revisions for their synopses; I helped create the curriculum and managed the scheduling of the program; I facilitated weekly group discussions; and I mentored, organized, and provided feedback/sources for multiple groups of science writers as they work on their projects (building resources for website). My role was a newly adapted position, and my supervisor said I changed the program’s organization, which would benefit the future of this internship.

Over eight weeks, I strengthened three important skills: flexibility, leadership, and communication. Because this was a new role for the organization, I was constantly altering my daily tasks to be most helpful to my supervisor. I learned a lot of new computer web design skills, took charge of some project check-ins, and wrote for an intern’s webpage that needed extra assistance. Being willing to work in different ways allowed me to contribute best to the program and kept me excited to learn new things.

Initially, I was apprehensive about teaching a large audience and leading discussions. I've had experience presenting to groups for academic purposes, but teaching a group of interns (some older than me) how to read dense research papers and write for a general audience was much more intimidating. During the first week of the internship, I gave an hour-long presentation on writing for the science newsletter. After the presentation, I received a lot of positive feedback and kind words from the interns. It was an encouraging experience, and I was proud of myself for overcoming my fear of public speaking. For the rest of the internship, it became second nature to facilitate weekly discussions with the entire group and meet with small groups to discuss their work.

Another skill I worked to improve was my ability to communicate efficiently and effectively. The entirety of the internship was remote, so communication was done primarily through a business messaging app and Zoom meetings. Different interns preferred different methods of communicating. I had to learn and remember the best way to communicate with each intern in order to hear back from them as quickly as possible. I also had to practice giving feedback on their writing, finding the balance between providing clear, constructive feedback and allowing the intern's writing style to remain intact.

I highly recommend this internship to other Carls interested in nonprofit research who want to improve their writing and research skills and are looking for a supportive, community-oriented environment.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

A Summer at the Rice County Historical Society
Marjorie Mitalski ’24
History
Rice County Historical Society | Faribault, Minnesota

Something I learned that surprised me is the role and importance of local historical societies. My assumption going into the internship was that the primary focus would be on exhibits in the museum; that was incorrect. The mission of the RCHS is to preserve the history of a community; exhibits are ways of showing snippets of history, but the bulk of the collection is stored in the back archives. Additionally, paper artifacts such as municipal ledgers are important for preserving history even if they are not the flashiest items to display. Many people came to the archives to do genealogical research. It was important to have those resources for people wanting to explore their family history.

The most important skills that I gained and strengthened at the RCHS are the ability to work with volunteers, the ability to evaluate exhibits and archival collections, and hands-on skills related to database management and cataloging. Based on this experience, I know that I want to pursue some type of curation. I am undecided if that will be in a museum, art museum, or archive, but I know that there are similar skills needed for each.

The key lessons I have drawn from this experience are that to work with what you have, sometimes you need to look at it from a different perspective; and that historical societies act as stewards of the community and it is their responsibility to preserve and make history accessible.

I am most grateful for the opportunity to dip my toe into the world of museums. I was able to try my hand at almost everything I wanted as well as some things I didn’t know I wanted. This includes book repair, rust removal, and exhibit evaluations. I think it was a very accessible way to get a very good experience. I was grateful that this opportunity was so close to Carleton.

I would advise other students looking for internships to reach out to organizations if you support their mission statement. The RCHS did not post an opening for an intern, but through a connection with a professor, I was able to reach out and see if they had the need or desire for an intern. They were more than happy to have me on board. If there is a non-profit you support, reach out and ask how you can help or if they would like an intern.

I would like to thank the Carleton College Career Center and the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund for the ability to sustain myself financially over the summer during my unpaid internship.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

Museum Remodeling Intern: The Reworking of the Bing Crosby House Museum
Sophie Rast ‘24
Studio Art & Psychology
Gonzaga University | Spokane, Washington

Over the summer I had the opportunity to assist the history department at Gonzaga University in developing an interpretive plan for the remodeling of the Bing Crosby House Museum. I primarily read, analyzed, and took notes on material that was relevant to the development of the interpretive plan. In large part, the readings I had were essays and research from Gonzaga students who took a class on community involvement and public history. Many of these students wrote essays on the Bing Crosby House, its history, and its flaws. I was also given examples of other interpretive plans that professors in the department had developed for museums and exhibits. I learned that an interpretive plan helps to give a museum a reason for its existence. It essentially outlines the significance of objects, events, historical figures, buildings, or other resources in a museum’s care or purview. It ‘makes meaning’ of a collection or exhibit and explores the educational purpose of what is shown to the public. In this case, the interpretive plan expands on the capability of the museum to not only teach about Bing Crosby, but also his community’s local history, his impact on music and film, and his connections to the modern-day community. The end goal of the class is: to remodel the museum and make it wholistically accessible and educational.

During the internship, I was able to strengthen my skills in reading, analyzing, and connecting material. I took the perspectives of the students and community members; people who are going to be accessing the museum even after my work on it is done, and I made it so their thoughts and voices would be heard by those making the final decisions on the remodeling process. I was made to feel that my perspective as a current student was valuable, and my insight was appreciated. I was able to spend time in the museum primarily taking photos to submit to the interpretive plan and of some of the flaws in the museum, such as cases that display objects in such a way that they are not visible to children or people using a wheelchair.

I also learned how to take care of myself and relax in my own space in a way I am normally unable to. I really enjoy getting to be independent and I’m excited to continue it when I arrive at my single on campus in the fall. It is experiences like this that make me look forward to life after graduation.

I want to thank the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund for supporting me. My summer internship was a transformative experience that wouldn’t have been possible without the Career Center, my award, my wonderful career coach Jessica Castellanos, and the Gonzaga University history department. I want to thank associate professor of history and my internship supervisor, Veta Schlimgen, for being so supportive, accommodating, and insightful.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

My Communications Internship at the Office of Governor Tim Walz
Adam Rothman ’25
Physics
Office of Governor Walz | Saint Paul, Minnesota

In early May, elation flooded me when I learned I had been offered a communications internship at the Office of Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. I couldn’t wait to work at the State Capitol, engage face-to-face with busy staffers, and intern for an office making incredible strides for all Minnesotans. Although my internship turned out to be mostly remote, I had an amazing time working for the Governor’s communications team on all sorts of projects. Made possible by the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund, my summer internship introduced me to and prepared me for a life of public service.

For this internship, I supported the communications team by drafting press releases and social media posts, researching other Democratic Governors throughout the country, and assisting on a myriad of other projects. I had many opportunities to draft official quotes for the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor, but I struggled to write in their voices, not my own. Learning how to internalize and convey their speech patterns in writing is one of my biggest takeaways from this internship. Furthermore, drafting social media posts - an arena in which I’m pretty unfamiliar - exposed me to the challenge of compacting complex policies into their essence so that the average person internalizes their impact. I realized that I enjoy the challenge of distilling complicated topics to their most fundamental form, and I will continue to seek experiences that further develop this skill. Through this internship, I got a taste of the political communications world, preparing me for a career in this type of public service.

I also had the opportunity to attend events alongside communications staff. I got to listen to the Governor give three exclusive interviews with reporters and see how he and his staff make personal connections to build good media relations. After observing a press conference, staff members taught me the logistics of organizing a large media event. When I visited the State Fair with the Lieutenant Governor, I got to connect with a larger team and learn how all pieces of the office work together to achieve their goals. Although I mostly worked within a small team of four, I’m so glad I could attend communications team meetings, get to know the other Governor’s Office staff and learn about running a public office. I’m grateful to those who made these extraordinary in-person experiences possible.

Thank you to the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund for providing me with the means to have this incredible internship. These funds enabled me to focus on my work, reflect on my experiences, and explore a potential future career without the financial anxiety of supporting my life. Working with the communications team of the Office of Governor Walz and Lieutenant Governor Flanagan was an experience I’ll never forget.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

Change Starts Locally
Annanya Sinha ’25
Psychology
Smithsonian’s Office of Government Relations | Washington, D.C.

I am deeply grateful to Carleton College’s Career Center for providing excellent guidance and financial assistance that enabled me to embark on a transformative summer internship experience at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. The Jean Philips Memorial Internship Fund has been instrumental in making this internship possible, and I cannot express my gratitude enough.

During my internship, I had the privilege of working alongside a team of 20 experienced public government relations officers in a dynamic setting. Working with such a robust team required spontaneity and flexibility to coordinate alongside members of the 118th Congress at Capitol Hill. As a Government Relations intern, I operationalized my commitment to promoting public service and civic engagement. As a federal liaison, I organized community events researching congresspeople and critical socio-political issues. Working closely with Government Relations officers, I assisted them in talks with congresspeople and their staff, brokering deals that dealt with planning and navigating the challenges of ethically dealing with stolen art, repatriation, and creation of new museums such as the Smithsonian American Women’s History Museum and National Museum of the American Latino. My daily tasks involved engaging with museum educators, curators, and congressional staff to facilitate various projects and events, such as the Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C., congressional staff picnics, and museum events for children. Additionally, I curated and maintained an online, accessible virtual educational presentation on LGBTQ+ history at the Smithsonian Learning Lab.

One of the most inspiring aspects of my internship was interacting with individuals from different backgrounds and listening to their stories. Collaborating with a diverse community was a surprising yet fulfilling experience, and I discovered the power of grassroots and community-driven initiatives. Being a part of a large, nationally recognized institution while contributing to small-scale efforts alongside passionate individuals was genuinely inspiring. It reinforced my belief that change starts locally and can ripple out to influence broader policy and societal shifts.

Through my internship, I developed a more profound sense of empathy, which I believe, is vital when working with large groups of people who differ in age, politics, culture, and values. I learned to embody a sense of professionalism and empathy to succeed in my role, both as an office intern and as a human being. This experience has been a profound journey of self-discovery, and I realized that I am passionate about creating positive change in my community and thrive in roles involving collaboration and social impact. Finally, I learned I possess the resilience to navigate complex issues and find innovative solutions. I am eager to continue working towards positive change by pursuing a double major in psychology and gender, women’s, and sexuality studies and attending law school in the future.
Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund

Learning Humans: Middle School Summer STEAM Program
Faith Williams ’26
Undeclared
Faribault Public School | Faribault, Minnesota

This summer I interned at the Faribault Public Middle School in Rice County Minnesota. My workday started and ended about 20 minutes away from campus at the Faribault Transportation Company. I along with another facilitator would be bus monitors. I worked at Faribault Middle School. When we got to the school, I helped monitor students as they ate breakfast in the cafeteria. Most mornings I’d eat with them and talk to them about the past weekend or the day ahead. They’d often ask what we were going to do in our camp that day. Camps are the afternoon section of the program that focuses on fun crafts, sports, and science-based activities, and I helped run the ‘Craft It’. Those questions made my day and made me feel like a part of the community.

After breakfast the children would be separated by grade level, the grade they were going into that upcoming year. I was a co-facilitator in a 6th-grade classroom, which was managed by an actual 6th-grade teacher. As a co-facilitator, I helped monitor the classroom, aided in transitions from different locations and subject areas, and helped lead them out of the classroom when they needed to take breaks. Working in this setting, it was really important for me to rely on the other adults in the classroom when I didn’t understand something. Especially because this was my first time working with middle school-aged children, I always asked when I was unsure of an action to take and I always communicated what action I took to address a situation in order to maintain consistency in the child’s life.

It was never important to me to be the “cool” facilitator. There was no way I could endear myself to these children in the same way a lot of my coworkers would. Many of my coworkers grew up participating in the same exact program they were now working in. This community was their family and it just seemed like everyone knew everyone there. I knew that even though I could rely on my coworkers to help perform my duties, the level of care I could provide each student was limited to whatever knowledge I’d learned during the program. It surprised me that I was still able to connect with students in a way that they would want to remain in the classroom environment, even with all its issues. Something as simple as paying attention and treating them like they were human beings made a really big difference in how much they felt like they belonged in a place. Seeing this from another perspective validated my learning experience here at Carleton, as I was struggling with classes the previous spring.

I want to thank the Jean Phillips Memorial Internship Fund for providing me with this opportunity to learn about the value of human connection within the learning environment.
John ’55 and Bonnie Raines Endowed Internship Fund

My Summer as a Policy Analyst Intern
Nate Bauer ’24
Political Science/International Relations
Mutual Aid Myanmar | Accord, New York

This summer I was an intern for Mutual Aid Myanmar, a non-profit promoting democracy in Myanmar. It was founded by Tun Myint, chair of the political science department at Carleton College. The organization works to assist the democratic movement in Myanmar. In 2021, the country's democratically elected government was overthrown by a military coup. Since then, Myanmar has been plunged into an intense conflict for the soul of the nation. MAM clearly does impactful work, and I wanted to get involved. Southeast Asia also tends to be understudied in Political Science, and being able to dive deep into Asian affairs was a joy.

Some important skills I gained from this internship experience were working in team environments, promoting civic engagement, and improving my writing. In coordination with my co-interns, I put together multiple policy briefs about current and pending congressional legislation about Asian foreign policy. These briefs were over ten pages long and directly helped Mutual Aid Myanmar better prepare for the future. I also created a one-page template for Americans to write to their representatives and senators about the situation in Myanmar, which can be used not only for their organizational purposes but also for anyone interested.

In terms of what I learned for my imminent job hunt, this experience was very helpful. This was fully remote and I think in the future I will want to avoid that as much as possible. I want to be in an office environment. That being said, dealing directly with policy was very interesting and I am definitely inclined to continue down that career path. I found the work to be challenging yet rewarding. I am most grateful for being able to self-guide a lot of my work. I set out on my own a lot, and that experience was great. This taught me self-advocacy in a professional setting, whereas most of my prior self-advocacy was purely in an educational context. Being able to propose and defend your own ideas for an assignment is a very valuable skill, and I was grateful to be able to develop it this summer.

I would like to acknowledge John ’55 and Bonnie Raines Endowed Internship Fund for helping fund my internship experience. I also want to thank Professor Tun Myint, the other staff at Mutual Aid Myanmar (who I will not name for security reasons), my co-interns, and my housemates this summer.
John ’55 and Bonnie Raines Endowed Internship Fund

My Activist Summer: Reflections on my Time with Colorado Jobs with Justice
Julia Dunn ’25
Political Science/International Relations
Colorado College Summer Activist Institute | Colorado Springs, Colorado

This summer, I participated in the Colorado College Summer Activist Institute, an internship program that enables students to engage in activist and/or advocacy work. Through this program, I worked with Colorado Jobs with Justice, a non-profit community organization that focuses on labor rights and union organizing. One of the major skills that I gained from this experience was communicating and working with people from different cultural backgrounds. In a literal sense, I spoke Spanish with the workers we met, many of whom were Hispanic and Spanish speakers. In a more figurative sense, I learned from my Hispanic coworkers and supervisors, hearing their stories, cultures, and why they were drawn to organizing. This helped me, especially as a community outsider (a non-native Spanish speaker who does not identify as Hispanic), as it provided me with a greater perspective on the work we were doing.

Congruent with this skill, I also strengthened my conversational Spanish. Though it was challenging due to my lack of confidence, this was the skill I developed most. The grace and support shown to me by my coworkers and supervisors pushed me to get out of my head and practice more. By the end of the program, I was very happy with my growth, my proudest accomplishment being soliciting the contact information of around 20 people at a local food bank with my fellow intern!

Additionally, I gained community organizing skills, including direct action organizing. When thinking through solutions to the problems faced by communities, we must directly speak to those affected and center their needs. With this new community organizing lens I have acquired, I am less inclined to approach social change work from an abstract perspective but from that of real people, which is an essential skill for folx interested in social justice work. This experience, above all, taught me how to build personal boundaries while pushing myself out of my comfort zone. My fellow interns, whom I am beyond grateful for and will forever cherish, were crucial in my learning process as they taught me how to take care of myself, both physically and emotionally.

Looking ahead, I am interested in social justice-based work and participated in this program because I was curious about what other careers were available in this field. Where I previously thought becoming an attorney was the only way to fight for justice, the hands-on experience I gained from this internship makes me excited to continue exploring my options!

Overall, working with COJWJ taught me so much about myself and the ins and outs of community organizing. I thank the Career Center and my donors Rolf ’86 and Sarah Peters without whom I simply could not have been able to enjoy and benefit from this wonderful experience. To other students thinking about internships, be prepared to step out of your comfort zone and jump at opportunities to challenge yourself. It might feel scary, but will be worth it in the long run. Remember the value and worth you bring to the organization you are placed at, and embrace your potential always! Good luck!
John ’55 and Bonnie Raines Endowed Internship Fund

Internship Experience at Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha
Alex Mazur ’24
Environmental Studies
Centro De Trabajadores Unidos En La Lucha | Minneapolis, Minnesota

For my summer internship, I worked at Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha (CTUL), which is a nonprofit worker’s center in Minneapolis. The organization works primarily with non-unionized construction workers experiencing various workplace abuses and connects them with legal resources, a member base of other workers, and other various support avenues depending on the abuse they’ve experienced. The organization also has worked with workers from other industries, but the work I did was for their construction campaign. We worked under the supervision of the CTUL solidarity coordinator, so the majority of our work was doing outreach, social media work, and event organizing. After the first month or so of work, we were given a lot of autonomy to work on projects.

One of the skills I most appreciate gaining this summer was the confidence to work on projects autonomously. I experienced a lot of imposter syndrome that hindered my ability to work at first, but I was forced to work through it to do my work. Out of that discomfort, I gained a lot of confidence in myself. I also greatly improved at professional communication as I was often representing the organization in outreach and at events. Lastly, I gained a lot of experience organizing across race and class as well as talking to others from varied backgrounds about the issues CTUL worked on. I feel more confident in my overall ability to communicate about issues I care about.

Going forward I hope to find work that allows me to work on issues I care about, and I have gained greater appreciation for nonprofit organizations from my internship this summer. I had never really considered working for a nonprofit, but I found a lot of value in the work CTUL does as well as the work I did personally. I am really grateful to all the employees at CTUL as well as the members and supporters I met. I will continue showing up to their events and supporting them however possible, and hopefully encourage others around me to support them as well!

If I was to offer advice to other students about internships I would say that finding a healthy work-life balance can be challenging. When there is lots of work to be done it is difficult to not work on projects at any free moment. However, when work seems overwhelming, it can be hard to motivate yourself to finish what is asked of you. I had to set strong personal boundaries in my work life to be able to avoid these pitfalls.

Overall, I had a wonderful experience working with CTUL. I’d like to thank Tre Tellor for being a fantastic mentor and supervisor in my work. I’d also like to thank Rolf and Sarah Peters for establishing the John ’55 and Bonnie Raines Endowed Internship Fund, which allowed me to have the opportunity to work and live in Minneapolis this summer. Finally, I’d like to thank Luke Klefstad and the Carleton Career Center for their endless support.
John ’55 and Bonnie Raines Endowed Internship Fund

My Summer in Denver

Dani Reynoso ’25

American Studies

Colorado College Summer Activist Institute | Denver, Colorado

This summer I interned at Colorado Jobs With Justice, a nonprofit organization based in Denver that works to advance workers’ rights by educating and empowering workers. At the beginning of the year, an ordinance was passed in the city of Denver that allows workers to file claims of wage theft, and COJWJ began working with the city’s auditor’s office to connect with victims of wage theft to help them file a claim. Helping to get this ordinance passed was a huge success for COJWJ because it meant that employers could be held accountable for paying back lost wages. An issue we learned about this summer was how undocumented people are taken advantage of at sites, often being promised a certain amount of money at the end of the day rather than an hourly wage. The ordinance ensures that all workers, regardless of status, are guaranteed the minimum wage. In addition, the ordinance allows the city to hold general contractors accountable for hiring subcontractors who don’t pay at least the Denver minimum wage.

One of the main tasks that I took on with the two other interns was looking for people who might be victims of wage theft to try and reach out to them and further inform them of their rights. In order to do this, we went out of the office a lot to different sites where we believed we’d be able to find affected individuals. For example, as a part of a nonprofit organization we collaborated with a local painters union in order to go out onto construction sites to speak with people. We also did flyering at a foodbank in Aurora and at a flea market. We tabled at different community events and even went on home visits to give “Know Your Rights” presentations in English and in Spanish. Additionally, we did some phone banking, filed grant applications, and helped to fill out wage theft intake forms. In total, at the end of our five weeks in Denver, the other interns and I were able to collect the contact information of over 120+ people who were either interested in learning more about their rights or who knew someone who might be.

I’d like to thank my sponsor for making this opportunity available to me. Without the aid provided by the John ’55 and Bonnie Raines Endowed Internship Fund, I would not have participated in such an eye-opening opportunity. Also, this was the first time that Carleton students participated in the host program, the Summer Activist Institute in Colorado College, and I’m glad that I was able to be a part of a group of other young people interested in work that truly makes a difference in the lives of hardworking people.
Karen Grove Feldt ’61 and William A. Feldt ’61
Endowed Internship Fund

Empowering Change Through Science Writing
Charley Draheim ’25
Psychology
Concussion Alliance | Seattle, Washington

During my internship as a science writer at Concussion Alliance, I had a unique opportunity to explore the world of concussions and their impact on individuals’ lives. I embarked on a transformative journey that opened new doors for personal and professional growth. My role as a science writer involved crafting multiple synopses to translate complex scientific research into accessible content for the public. This experience honed my ability to communicate technical information effectively and fostered my passion for science outreach. Collaborating with professionals in the field broadened my perspective and highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in addressing concussions.

I had the incredible opportunity to learn from educational speakers and professionals in the concussion field. They shared their personal stories, offering valuable insights into individuals’ challenges during their concussion journeys. These experts also taught us about various issues surrounding concussions, from the latest research to the importance of mental health support and therapies. Their impactful presentations left a lasting impression on me, inspiring a deeper understanding and a commitment to advocating for better support and care for those affected by concussions. Among many educational resources I received, the Stanford writing course was a game-changer, providing me with valuable insights into the art of storytelling and effective communication. The course allowed me to harness the power of narrative in science writing, making the content more engaging and relatable for readers.

The pinnacle of my internship was my final project - a webpage dedicated to high schoolers’ mental health following a concussion. Designing this resource for young minds underscored the significance of mental health during concussion recovery. It was rewarding to use my writing to address a critical issue and create a positive impact on the lives of young individuals. Through the internship, I gained three essential skills. Firstly, I have honed my ability to distill complex information into digestible content for a broader audience. Secondly, I have learned the importance of effective collaboration and communication in achieving shared goals. Collaborating with like-minded individuals dedicated to creating positive change through education and science communication was inspiring. Lastly, I have discovered the power of storytelling in science communication, bridging the gap between scientific research and the general public.

Reflecting on this experience, I realized my passion for science communication and how I can utilize these skills to effect meaningful change in society. I am immensely grateful to the Karen Grove Feldt ’61 and William A. Feldt ’61 Endowed Internship Fund for their support. Their belief in my potential has empowered me to strive for excellence and embrace opportunities that foster personal and professional growth. My time as a science writer intern at Concussion Alliance has been a transformative experience that has shaped my aspirations and career goals.
Karen Grove Feldt ’61 and William A. Feldt ’61
Endowed Internship Fund

Miles Apart but Virtually Coding Together
Khizar Qureshi ’25
Computer Science
SciQuel | Allston, Massachusetts

This summer, I remotely worked as a Web Developer Intern at SciQuel. SciQuel is a non-profit science media organization founded in July 2021. SciQuel creates original content such as articles, podcasts, and videos meant for a non-technical audience. Their main goal is to make science more accessible and understandable to the general public. As a computer science major, I was eager to learn more about the field of web development and implement my programming skills in a real-world project.

The main goal this summer was to begin developing SciQuel’s main web application. During my first couple weeks, the other interns and I developed wireframes and spent time brainstorming what functionality the web application should contain. Additionally, we utilized a website known as Figma to design mockups and interfaces of SciQuel’s main web application. I was surprised to learn how much attention to detail web development requires.

After 3 weeks, we were able to begin coding. My team utilized a front-end JavaScript library known as React to design SciQuel’s server-rendered application. With no prior experience with React, my supervisor provided me with tutorials and interactive sites for me to learn about the library. Furthermore, I spent a considerable amount of time brushing up my skills in programming languages such as HTML, CSS, and JavaScript since I have not programmed in those languages since last fall term. After a week of non-stop tutorials, I was able to begin programming. I utilized JavaScript to develop an image container component in React. This allowed users to upload an image container, adjust its size, and insert a caption, header, subheader, and credits.

This internship allowed me to enhance my programming skills, as I was able to expand my abilities to program in more languages. Additionally, this experience allowed me to improve my teamwork skills, as I often received feedback from my supervisor and peers and also gave feedback for improving designs. Finally, my communication skills improved tremendously, as working in a remote environment required us to meet daily and respond to messages promptly. One takeaway I have from this experience is that I enjoy working in a team-driven environment as I learn more efficiently.

This internship experience has taught me essential programming and creative skills that will allow me to succeed in the software industry. I am very grateful for my supervisor’s feedback and the resources he provided me to learn this summer. One tip of advice I would give to future interns is to not be afraid or hesitate to ask essential questions that you may have to complete your project successfully. This will help you to learn more and make the most of your internship experience. I am excited to enter the field of Software Development and Web Design in the future. I would like to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude to Karen Grove Feldt ’61 and William A. Feldt ’61 for making this summer experience possible.
Karen Grove Feldt ’61 and William A. Feldt ’61
Endowed Internship Fund

Composting Internship: Learning and Growing
Zack Shawn ’26
Undeclared
Curbside Compost Cooperative | Webster, Minnesota

Over this summer, I was an intern for Curbside Compost Co-op, which is a business that provides compost collection services to households in Northfield. I worked on a variety of tasks for the company, including research into many relevant topics, compost collection, and helping maintain a chicken farm also owned by the company. One key skill I strengthened was research and analysis, by researching topics such as compost-related laws in jurisdictions across the country. This experience helped me develop my research and analytical skills. Similarly, research into topics such as using electric bikes for compost collection and transportation helped me gain practical experience with problem-solving skills. I also strengthened my teamwork skills by working with other interns and staff members to collect compost and maintain the chicken farm.

One key lesson I learned from this experience was that I am capable of learning new skills and applying them in a practical way, which I learned from setting challenging goals for myself, such as learning how to research important information for the compost collection process. I would like to use this knowledge in the future by getting involved in my community by sharing my newly gained knowledge with others and helping to make a difference in my community.

While I learned a lot during this internship, there were a few things that surprised me. For example, I was surprised to learn how much food waste there is. There is a huge amount of food that could be used to feed people but ends up in landfills. Similarly, I was surprised to learn that it is easy to compost and that there are a variety of ways to do so. I am grateful for the opportunity to learn more about composting and sustainability, the chance to work with experienced professionals, and the opportunity to make a difference in my community.

Some advice I would give to new students who are interested in internships is to start early. The best internships are often competitive, so it's important to start searching for them early. I would also advise them to be flexible and willing to consider different options for internships, even if they're not in the student's ideal field. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge that the funding for this internship was made possible by the generosity of Karen Grove Feldt ’61 and William A. Feldt ’61, who created an internship program to provide financial assistance for students looking for internships.
Kathryn Christen Ramstad ’79 Endowed Internship Fund


Cece Che Tita ’25

Computer Science

J.P. Morgan Chase & Co | Plano, Texas

This summer of 2023, I had the opportunity of working at JP Morgan Chase & Co, one of the largest financial firms in the world as an Advancing Black Pathways Fellow in Software Engineering. This program was over a 6 week period where I spent the first 3 weeks in Columbus, Ohio for orientation and the last 3 weeks in Plano, Texas for a deep dive into technology at the firm. Throughout my time I was given a range of projects that relied on both my soft skills like communication, and teamwork, and technical abilities like programming and code manipulation. The goal of the Advancing Black Pathways program was to be a pipeline for sophomore students. By the end of the summer, they would inform you if you were fit to come back the following summer for a full 10-week internship and consequently a full-time role after graduating.

When it was time to start the program I was filled with excitement but even more than that, I was nervous. I was worried about meeting new people, and I was scared of not being enough and anxious that I couldn’t fulfill “Rule #1” (Rule #1 - Get a return offer, commonly said by one of the project managers leads). However, over these 6 weeks, not only did I make some of the best friends, but I also grew my networking social skills by setting up talks with full-time employees at the firm. My skills in presenting to an audience, leadership, and thinking efficiently grew greatly over this summer. This was really big for me because not only can I administer these skills in my professional life, but I watched myself use them in my personal life as well.

None of this would have been possible without the Kathyn Christen Ramstad ’79 Endowed Internship Fund from the Career Center which helped ease the process when moving to a different state on my own and gave me one less thing to think about. I also am very grateful for being at Carleton College, a space that pushes students to these great opportunities that set them up for success. From the people to the resources, it is truly a blessing to have the continuous encouragement to keep moving forward.

The confidence and growth I’ve seen in myself after this rewarding experience is really a testament to how important it is to seek these opportunities. For those looking into applying to internships, externships, fellowships, or any sort of program, don’t feel intimidated even when it gets overwhelming or doesn’t go your way. Seek help whenever you need it and lastly, always remember that you just like anyone else are deserving of such an opportunity.
Kathryn Christen Ramstad ’79 Endowed Internship Fund

Launching into Consulting
Eden Bergene ’25
Economics
Boston Consulting Group | Minneapolis, Minnesota

During my internship, I got a chance to work in multiple cases as a summer consulting associate. My first project was developing a proposal to adopt GenAI functions into the services of an insurance data provider company. During this project, I was able to complete vast research about the rising functions of generative AI in different companies and work functions and determine how genAI can simplify underwriting and claims processes. My next case was a growth acceleration and market analysis work for a lab informatics service provider. In this project, my contribution was doing vast desk research and participating in expert interviews to determine the competitive landscape in the industry and the positioning of the company. In addition, I worked on organizational structure analysis to determine the future steps of the company among other things. My third case was working with a breast cancer support organization in helping them determine ways to boost their fundraising practices and guide them to support seeker matches.

During the time of my internship, I have developed significant PowerPoint and Excel skills, research skills, problem-solving, effective communication, and working in a team. Before the start of my projects, I was able to participate in in-depth training in using PowerPoint as an effective tool to communicate insights and present deliverables. Throughout my internship, I got more comfortable with using different PowerPoint tools increasing my speed to output and producing client-ready slides. Excel has also been a significant part of my internship. In addition to the robust training I did during the first week of my internship, I had a chance to utilize some of the skills and learn more by doing. Problem solving was an essential part of all my projects and I have learned how to face roadblocks and get past them. In addition, I learned how to derive relevant insights from the research I conduct and think about the ‘so what’ at every stage of problem-solving. While working in a team, I was able to learn how to communicate effectively with my teammates, ask for help, offer help and suggestions, and understand everyone’s workflow to be able to plug in where I am needed.

One thing I am grateful for during my internship was the space I was given to be able to learn before being required to produce outputs. Since most of the cases I have worked on are industries I didn’t have much experience, I needed time to learn about the companies, the market, and processes in the industry in general. During the ramp-up stages of every case, I was provided with robust documents and resources I could refer to. This helped me be able to learn about a bunch of different practice areas and inductors while also being able to contribute to the projects in a meaningful way.

All in all, I am grateful for getting this opportunity and support from the Kathryn Christen Ramstad ’79 Endowed Internship Fund to be able to navigate my internship starting from the early application phases up until the funding.
Ki Ki Gore Endowed Internship Fund

Longitudinal Medical Image Analysis of Osteoarthritis Progression

Justin Crawmer ’24
Biology
Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Harvard Medical School | Boston, Massachusetts

This summer I was a research assistant in the radiology department at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts. I first want to thank the Ki Ki Gore Endowed Internship Fund for supporting me in this endeavor. My experience greatly enriched my understanding of the medical and scientific field and introduced me to numerous mentors who have further elevated my experience and career development. With the support I received from the fund, I pursued an experience that has reaffirmed my passion to pursue medical school.

My primary role this summer consisted of making longitudinal anatomical measurements on radiographs of the medial and lateral compartments of the tibiofemoral joint to evaluate osteoarthritis (OA) progression and risk factors. Our metric of assessment for OA progression is the minimum joint space width (mJSW) between the articular cortices of the femur and tibial plateau. The measurements I make contribute to training an automated software, enhancing its reproducibility to delineate the edge of the femoral condyle, identify the tibial plateau, and calculate the mJSW.

I also work with MRI images, editing the software’s delineation of the femoral and tibial cartilage on each slice. This enables estimation of the total cartilage volume at a given point in time for a patient, allowing us to conduct longitudinal comparisons of knee cartilage volume and effectively assess the development of OA. Working with the different imaging modalities to assess OA has deepened my understanding of knee anatomy and the epidemiology of musculoskeletal diseases.

While at Brigham, I shadowed many physicians from various specialties. In particular, I shadowed emergency medicine, pediatric oncology, sports medicine, surgical oncology, and rheumatology physicians. Each experience connected me to highly successful professionals and immersed me in the daily realities of their profession. I have reflected on those I have shadowed, analyzing the different work schedules and patient populations they deal with which has given me a better idea of the medical practice I want to pursue in the future.

Overall, my internship has taught me I enjoy hands-on and interactive work. Although the majority of my job tasks were on a computer, I jumped at any opportunity to interact with patients and other colleagues. I found working collaboratively with others is something I enjoy and strive to continue. I also learned through my shadowing experiences that my future profession needs to have patient interactions. After working in an ER last summer, I missed having significant interactions with patients every day.

Looking ahead, I have been invited by my supervisor to continue to work remotely this fall and potentially work again full-time once I graduate in November. I look forward to continuing my work and helping contribute to the data analysis and manuscript preparation based on the data I have been collecting. I am grateful for the opportunity to live on the East Coast specifically in Boston. I have experienced many things I would have never imagined and will definitely be visiting Boston again soon!
I interned with Curbside Compost Cooperative in Northfield Minnesota for the summer of 2023. Curbside Compost is a small for-profit local composting business. They provide a curbside organic waste collection service for Northfield and Dundas residents who subscribe to their operation. Curbside Compost has big expansion plans. They are in the process of expanding their services to Faribault and building their own organic waste processing site in Northfield. The previous name of Curbside Compost Cooperative was Northfield Curbside Compost. In the rise of the name change the business has been working to rebrand its buckets and other representations around town (signs, stickers, etc.).

My responsibilities were in all areas of business. Two days a week I helped with compost collection. This entailed long, laborious days of unloading every subscriber’s compost into a truck bed and bringing it to dumpsters to be taken to a processing site in Shakopee. I also worked with my fellow interns to rebrand subscriber buckets. In addition to the more obvious work of a compost collector, I was also involved in the behind-the-scenes work. A small business does not run itself and I learned that through the bi-weekly meetings I attended. These meetings involved routine schedules and financial check-ins, as well as task check-ins. We also met about upcoming grant proposal deadlines and progress on the expansion. I learned how much goes into running a functional business and I helped write grant proposals and newsletters, and I researched various different things needed to start a processing site.

Throughout the summer I found myself excited to share my internship with my family and friends. I chatted with them about the challenges the business and I encountered and brainstormed solutions. For example, The progressing site that they plan to build is a very expensive and difficult project. It is riddled with construction limitations and environmental regulations. The challenges that come with this project excited me and I grew more and more curious to think of solutions and bring ease to this lofty initiative. After chatting with one of my friends, who is also a geology major, she suggested the idea that I use their processing site for my geology comps project. I would do something with hydrology and groundwater contamination from the composting site. I really liked this idea and even more, liked the fact that I was able to connect the work I was doing with my major.

This of course was just an idea and I don’t even know if it is even within the realms of a possibility but the idea alone was exciting. Going forward I will take what I learned at Curbside Compost with me. I will harbor my excitement, curiosity, and critical thinking in my future careers. I am most grateful for my own growth during this internship, and my enthusiasm for major and career opportunities.
M. Leith Shackel Internship Endowment Fund

My Summer as a Developmental Biologist: Lessons Learned in a Zebrafish Lab

Nick Lattal '24
Biology
Oregon Health & Science University | Portland, Oregon

This summer I interned in Dr. Alex Nechiporuk’s P’25 zebrafish lab at the Oregon Health and Science University. In the lab, I worked closely with a graduate student, Lauren Miller, who thoroughly supported my growth as a scientist. I helped Lauren with two projects that sought to investigate signaling pathways involved in the development of the zebrafish nervous system. For the first project, I cloned DNA that would later be inserted into an embryo to over-express specific genes. The second project focused on imaging zebrafish embryos at different time points after their fertilization to understand the role of specific proteins as zebrafish develop. The imaging experiment was really fun because Lauren trained me to use the lab’s confocal microscope. I took hundreds of images and learned to analyze them with software provided by OHSU.

The hands-on work required for the two projects was great for the development of my bench work skills. At the beginning of the summer, I felt overwhelmed and was worried that I would not be able to live up to Lauren’s high expectations. However, after putting in long days of practice, I began to see results. I became well-versed in all the techniques needed for my research. This was a really important accomplishment because I now feel like I can step into any biology lab and hit the ground running. By the end of the summer, Lauren was not treating me like a wide-eyed undergraduate that she had to babysit. She trusted me to work independently and accurately.

I was also given the opportunity to attend classes at OHSU’s Vollum Institute. These classes were taught by graduate students and postdocs who did neuroscience research. Each class was on a different topic ranging from teaching lab techniques to supporting the development of professional skills necessary for graduate school. The classes also gave me the opportunity to engage with current graduate students and solicit their advice about applying to graduate school outside of class time.

The combination of intensive lab work, classes, and daily interactions with professionals helped me develop a thorough understanding of what life as a graduate student would be like. I developed many hard skills (like completing specific protocols in the lab) and also developed soft skills that will help me go far as I pursue a career in science. I left a strong impression on the members of the lab and I know that I can turn to them for advice and any support I need going forward. I am extremely grateful for the support that the Nechiporuk Lab, Alex, and Lauren gave me.

I am also very grateful for the support of the M. Leith Shackel Internship Endowment Fund and the support of the Carleton Career Center. Without financial support, I would not have been able to pursue a summer experience that supported my career growth. This summer helped me discover what I want to do after college - thank you so much to all who made it possible.
M. Leith Shackel Internship Endowment Fund

My Questioning Skills Refined by the Court

Brian Thevenot ’26
Undeclared
Minnesota Judicial Branch, Fourth District Court | Minneapolis, Minnesota

For my 2023 summer internship, I had the honor and privilege to intern, along with three other Carleton students, with Carleton alumnus and Minnesota State Court Judge Bruce Manning ’96, P’27. Judge Manning works for the Minnesota State Courts 4th Judicial District (Juvenile Division) located in downtown Minneapolis. A small part of Judge Manning’s work involves juvenile delinquency, juvenile expungements, and adoptions. The remainder involves families with children in need of protective services, where he works exclusively with the Indian Child Welfare Act and Native American families. Over the course of the six-week internship, we were able to work very closely with Judge Manning. Whether it be via Zoom, or inside the courtroom, we were able to follow Judge Manning every step of the way. For every hearing, Judge Manning would explain to all of us the background information as to the case, like who everyone was, the history of the case, etc. Then after each hearing, the judge would sit us down and explain everything that had been said during the hearing. Judge Manning would explain why one lawyer said one thing or why one social worker said another. Next, he would explain his own thoughts about the hearing and how he believes it will proceed. Finally, he would give each of us adequate time to ask our own questions, whether it be about what we just witnessed or just life in general.

During the internship, we also assisted in writing court orders, which are summaries of each court hearing. The orders would include who was present (or not present) during the hearing, what each individual said, and when the next hearing would be. The language used for the court orders had to be in past tense and very formal, however, the judge took very good notes and would share them with us, and he offered feedback after we wrote each order on how to improve it next time. I improved on a multitude of skills during the course of the internship, however, I believe the skill that I strengthened the most was knowing the correct questions to ask. I say I improved my questioning skills because to get the most out of the internship, you have to know what type of questions to ask that you believe will help you the most, either in regards to the internship itself or questions about life after Carleton.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the M. Leith Shackel Internship Endowment Fund and the Carleton Career Center for making this internship possible with their very generous funding. I would also like to thank Judge Manning ’96, P’27 for taking the time out of his very busy summer to host myself and the other three Carleton students for the internship. I would absolutely recommend this internship to anyone who is thinking about applying.
Marrella Endowed Internship Fund

Researching Dark Matter in the Early Universe at UCLA
Malachy Bloom ’24
Mathematics & Physics
University of California, Los Angeles | Los Angeles, California

This summer I worked on theoretical cosmology with Professor Steven Furlanetto ’98 and a PhD student Sahil Hegde at the University of California Los Angeles. I spent 10 weeks in California working mostly in person and I will continue the work into the academic year. Ultimately, this will likely culminate into a paper in a few months.

My work consisted of theoretically modeling how different models of dark matter impact the formation of stars and galaxies in the early universe (when the universe is 300 million to 1 billion years old). This meant performing mathematical calculations and putting these calculations into a computer simulation. From here we get predictions for what JWST might see in very distant stars as well as predictions for other telescopes. This work will help with the goals of learning how the universe evolved in the distant past and finding the correct model for dark matter.

This research experience helped in a wide variety of ways. Practically, I’ll have a first-author paper in theoretical cosmology which will be extremely helpful as I apply to PhD programs this fall. I gained experience in theoretical physics and learned more about how scientists think and tackle problems. Professor Furlanetto also gave excellent career advice for academia and physics in our reflection meetings. I certainly took it to heart. He’ll also be an amazing connection as I apply to graduate school. Overall, I gained a lot of skills in working independently, communicating results via writing, and self-studying relevant concepts and methods.

One thing I learned about myself from this work is that I work best alone or in very small groups. In the past, I’ve been involved in slightly larger groups, but here I had a chance to be on my own and make my own decisions about work. I found this incredibly freeing, and it helped me stay motivated. As I apply to graduate school, I’ll keep an eye out for possible advisors who are more on the “hands-free” side of the spectrum. One thing that surprised me was the living costs in LA. Not only was rent excruciatingly expensive, but so too was gas, food, and everything in between. This makes me extra thankful for the funding I received this summer and all who made it possible. It would have been completely impossible without funding from Carleton. So, thank you!

My advice for anyone who does something like this in the future is to reduce your living expenses! Living with $6000 in LA was a real shock for someone who’s lived in Minnesota their whole life. This will also impact my graduate school decisions if/when I get there.

I’d like to thank the Marrella Endowed Internship Fund for the funding I received. I’d also like to thank Professor Steven Furlanetto ’98 and Sahil Hegde for mentoring me through our work in physics and astronomy. Furthermore, I’d like to thank the UCLA department of physics and astronomy more broadly.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

A Summer Otorhinolaryngology Internship
Amira Aladetan ’24
Biology
Mayo Clinic | Rochester, Minnesota

As a part of the Mayo Clinic Otorhinolaryngology (ENT) Undergraduate Research Program, I worked under the mentorship of Dr. Santiago Romero Brufau on two projects during the duration of the SREP program. I worked on identifying any forms of bias within patient-provider messaging for the department of ENT and enhancing medical communication with Large Language Models (LLMs). During the ten weeks, I analyzed patient messages and created a research plan. I analyzed bias metrics in messages by patient demographics for race and/or ethnicity, sex, and financial class. I then categorized patient messages to help our prediction model have a sample to then auto-categorize patient messages and see if we got the same results. This was done to eventually automate a portion of patient communication and give patients automated responses based on their messages.

It was cool to conduct research in the clinical field. The skills that I gained from this experience, I learned how to advocate for myself and take the opportunity when presented. As an intern, I worked on data analysis in Excel and writing literature reviews. I had numerous professional development seminars for our research boot camp where I networked with physicians, statisticians, and scientists. It was exciting to learn more about the field of surgical and clinical care, especially to be working inside one of the biggest hospitals in the nation. I will use this experience to support my application to a dual degree program for medical school and a master’s in public health with a concentration in international health or child health.

What surprised me during this program was how extensive Artificial Intelligence (AI) and new technologies are continuing to support the advancement of healthcare. I learned how to use large language models as an application of natural language processing and how we can use advanced AI algorithms to generate believable human text and other text-based tasks. I was happy to be helping with research that can support the balance of the provider workload for optimal efficiency when it comes to being a physician and improving our systems to provide effective patient-provider communication.

During the ten weeks of this program, I am most grateful for the people and the connections I made! The support of my cohort, mentor, and our leaders Dr. Kathryn Van Abel and Dr. Semirra Bayan who offered me this opportunity and the rewarding experiences that came with it. For others navigating the internship process as a pre-health student, don’t be afraid to ask questions, network, and be your authentic self! I can’t wait to use this experience as I prepare myself for a future as a physician.

I would like to thank Dr. Santiago Romero Brufau, my mentor, and my ENT resident mentor Dr. Dante Merlino for helping with this research and mentorship throughout the program. I extend my gratitude to the rest of the patient messages team, Jessica O’Neill, and the rest of the SREP program. Lastly, I give thanks to MCAN Fellows Program & Intuitive for funding this internship experience.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

Marketing and Media Communication: STOP KILLING BLACK TRANS WOMEN

Star Alvarez-Zavala ’24
Politics Science/International Relations
Liola Studios | Austin, Texas

Thank you to the Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program for allowing me to realize this unparalleled opportunity in the field of social outreach. I would also like to thank my internship supervisor, Bethany Bobo ’20, the founder of Liola Studios, without her none of this would have been possible.

During my summer internship as a Marketing and Media Communications Intern, I was able to advance my professional skills in line with my career interests. This internship allowed me to focus on my organizational skills (oral and written), networking skills, and customer-focused interactions with an aim at effective communication. In addition to fostering growth for my creative development by way of shadowing my supervisor and assisting on various aspects of ongoing projects, including media research and cross-company communication. I helped update the company website.

I was able to assist with the execution of real media campaigns as well as my own personal social outreach project, STOP KILLING BLACK TRANS WOMEN. This project is based on a prior art installation that brought awareness to the murders of Black trans women in the country. I have learned that I must continue to stay motivated in high-stress and emotionally demanding situations, the outcome of which has allowed for my efforts to have a larger impact on our community.

Using the experience gained from my time at Liola Studios, I will confidently demonstrate my technical and professional skills in a capacity for social change. I am grateful for Carleton, and for the constant opportunities for career development, without them, I would not be able to imagine what life would be like after Carleton. Thank you.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

Learning the Methods of Economists
Aryan Arora ’24
Mathematics & Economics
Stony Brook University/Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta | Stony Brook, New York

The most exciting moment of my summer came when two lines did not connect - it showed me that unemployment insurance matters.

This past summer I worked as a Research Assistant at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta studying the effects of unemployment insurance on future earnings. I spent much of the summer proving something that common sense will tell us: people who receive unemployment insurance on average make more money at their next job than people who don’t. After all, if you receive some money from the government each month, it will take a higher-paying job to convince you to return to work. Yet, when those lines finally (didn’t) connect, telling me what I already (didn’t) know - it felt like fireworks were going off around me.

Economics is filled with interesting questions, but even more interesting are the methods that economists use to find answers to those questions. For instance, when trying to measure the effect that unemployment insurance has on future earnings, we had to account for differences in education, work experience, sex, race, and much more. That made it all the more challenging to find the result that we all intuitively knew: unemployment insurance does increase future earnings. So, we employed a novel econometric tool: regression discontinuity. Because there is a minimum income threshold for unemployment insurance we ran one regression from no earnings to that threshold and another from that threshold up. Then, given a large enough dataset, at the exact income threshold, we could assume that there were no significant differences in education, work experience, sex, race, etc. between those who received unemployment insurance and those who did not. The difference between the two lines was strictly the effect of unemployment insurance. It is one thing to know something by common knowledge, it is another to systematically uncover the truth amidst a noisy and complicated world. I find joy in the latter.

Through working with Dr. Wiczer ’06 on this incredible project, I not only got to see the incredible nuances of econometrics, but I also got exposure to how economists think beginning with conceptualizing a project through working with data to analyze it. I learned and was pushed to the limits of my understanding. Through it all I grew as a student, an RA, and a scholar. I am incredibly grateful to everyone at Carleton who supported me and continues to support me.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

My Experience as a Financial Representative Intern
Miriam Chasnov ’25
Economics
Northwestern Mutual Edina | Edina, Minnesota

Over the last 13 weeks, I was a Financial Representative (FR) Intern at Northwestern Mutual. As an economics major, I applied to this posting to gain exposure to the financial industry and increase my knowledge of tax-conscious planning. Though I did not know what to expect, I figured I would at least learn about managing my personal financial life. Ultimately, I’ve gained more from this experience than I predicted.

The premise of the internship is to work towards building your book of business by starting with your existing network and getting referrals from there. Through having meetings and interacting with other FRs in the office, interns can increase their knowledge of offensive and defensive planning strategies while interacting with increasingly complex cases.

When I began the internship, I quickly found that I did not particularly enjoy the sales aspect of the job but that I found the problem-solving and communication required very fulfilling. FRs must find their own clients, understand their clients’ needs, and make appropriate recommendations to improve their financial lives. Then, FRs must adapt and update their clients’ financial plans as they enter different stages of life to prepare them for all the changes life brings. As an intern, we were in charge of identifying and setting meetings with potential clients. When it came to hosting the meetings, we had access to “joint work partners,” which are senior FRs who help run the conversation, develop plans, make recommendations, and ensure we are fulfilling our fiduciary responsibility.

The time I spent in the office asking the other FRs questions about Disability Income Insurance, Life Insurance, Retirement Accounts, Tax-Sheltered Accounts, their personal careers, and their perspectives on money is invaluable. I also thoroughly enjoyed the 70+ meetings I hosted (after the first couple weeks, I hosted the majority of the virtual calls alone) with individuals who shared details of their financial lives with me and were able to receive education where appropriate.

Near the end of my internship, I began talking with one of the successful FRs about possible future positions on his team. I worked with some of his team members to learn about their roles and also had a few meaningful conversations with the FR about his career and what my career as a financial planner could look like. I did not expect future career opportunities to arise from the summer, so that was a pleasant and welcome surprise!

I’m thankful to the Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program for funding my experience and making it possible for me to prioritize my learning over my production. I’m also grateful to all the people I met during the internship who gave me advice and wisdom. I want to highlight the FRs who talked to me about the cultural diversity in the industry and were very candid about their successes and struggles. Overall, this summer, I have learned so much about financial planning, witnessed the value of networking, and better appreciate workplace culture as something I will value in my future career.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

Supply Chain Data Analysis and Supplying My Well-Being
Jasmine Choi '24
Statistics
Daikin Applied | Faribault, Minnesota

I completed my first summer internship and a lot of learning and growth took place. I interned with Daikin Applied in Faribault, Minnesota. I stayed in a place near campus and it was my first time living away from home during the summer. My internship's main focus was dedicated to a project named Plan for Every Part (PFEP), which can be used as a tool for supply chain and inventory optimization. The gathered data allows the company to find the most efficient way every part is used, stored, and ordered. It can also help maximize profits with a thorough and extensive view of the inventory.

My supervisor wanted me and my co-intern to look specifically at the fans and furnaces in our warehouse because we had excess inventory problems and these items are extremely high in their price and usage. It took time for us to start this project (late June) because we needed instructions from other offices located in Minnesota to give us more direction since this was our location's first time trying this database. It was also hard to email people who were tied to this project and have to wait to set up meetings or for their responses. This was a difficult thing to navigate because I wanted to start right when the internship began but there was nothing my team and I could do. From this experience, I learned a lot of patience and acknowledged that my frustrations were valid.

Luckily when the project began, the days were busier and I was able to work with a lot of different data. I became more comfortable with Excel and Access and believe that my skills with data have improved. The last important skill I gained from this internship was learning different perspectives and experiences from several mentors on my team. I was able to work with many departments and their insight of work and life helped give me more clarity of things in my own life.

This internship also really helped me learn how to be more of an independent adult as I transition to my senior year of college and figure out what's next after college. During the school year at Carleton, I didn't really notice that I was an independent adult because of my peers and how busy my schedule was. But during the summer, it was lonely being in Northfield away from my friends and family. There were times when I missed the comfort of my family being in the same house, the homemade food of my mom, and the closeness to the friends and things near me. However, this new experience gave me a new sense of freedom, I learned how to enjoy my own company, and began journaling, exercising, and reading. I am grateful for the internship funding program, specifically the MCAN Fellows Program, for giving me additional aid to live on my own and be able to try a new opportunity I never imagined I would try.
Cultivating Creativity: Reflections on a Graphic Design Internship

Seven Delgado ’24

Studio Art

Periscope/The BrandLab | Minneapolis, Minnesota

For this summer I was able to work as a full-time graphic design intern and art director at a marketing agency. I was able to land this role thanks to The Brandlab, a non-profit organization that focuses on helping high school and college students from marginalized backgrounds land roles in the advertising industry. My placement as was at Periscope, a mid-sized marketing agency, was nothing short of transformative. As I reflect on this experience, I can't help but feel a profound sense of growth and accomplishment.

During my time at Periscope, I was responsible for a wide range of tasks. From the very first week, I was thrust into the heart of creative projects. I worked closely with the design team to create visually captivating content for various clients. This included designing logos, brochures, social media graphics, and even entire campaigns. One of the highlights of my internship was collaborating on a livestreaming project for a prominent client. I had the chance to contribute and take the lead in the development of the visual identity, brainstorming concepts, and creating mockups for the final designs. It was a challenging yet immensely rewarding experience.

Out of the many skills I was able to practice during my time at Periscope, I was able to focus on three major skills. The first was adaptability. The fast-paced environment of Periscope taught me to adapt quickly to changing client needs and project requirements. I learned to stay flexible and open to new ideas, even if it meant revising my work repeatedly. Another skill I was able to really practice was time management. Juggling multiple projects and deadlines demanded impeccable time management. I became skilled at prioritizing tasks, setting realistic schedules, and delivering high-quality work under pressure. Lastly, effective communication was crucial for success in a team-driven agency. I improved my ability to convey ideas, provide constructive feedback, and collaborate seamlessly with designers, copywriters, and clients.

I am grateful for the people I had the privilege to work with during this internship. My colleagues were not just coworkers; they were mentors and friends who supported my growth. I’m also thankful for the trust and responsibility the agency placed in me. I am also very grateful for the MCAN Fellows Program, which was able to provide me with financial support throughout my time at Periscope. It allowed me to stretch my abilities and prove my worth. This internship was not just about professional growth; it was a journey of self-discovery. I learned that I thrive in dynamic, creative environments. The pressure and challenges fueled my passion for design. I also discovered that I have a knack for problem-solving, especially when it comes to finding innovative design solutions within tight constraints. Moreover, I realized the importance of seeking feedback and continuous improvement. Initially, I was hesitant to share my work for fear of criticism, but I quickly learned that constructive feedback was an essential part of the creative process. Embracing critique and using it to refine my work made me a better designer and artist.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

My Internship in Human Resources
Kyra Landry ’24
English
Northwestern University | Evanston, Illinois

During my time as a Human Resources Intern, I was responsible for several projects where I had to both work collaboratively and independently. For the first portion of my internship, I was trained and did things such as helping with onboarding and assisting with campus tours for new hires. I also helped them upload their talent portrait profiles to their new database. The profiles are from surveys from employees within the organization, and they help the Human Capital team select people for promotions and manage overall employee retention and contentment with their management.

I gained many skills during my internship, but the most important skills that I gained were related to building relationships and networking, managing my time, working within a deadline, and contributing to meetings. I learned the important aspects of Human Resources within a nonprofit organization, such as onboarding and offboarding. I also learned a lot of valuable information about the hiring process, and what hiring managers consider when they are selecting candidates.

This internship has allowed me to gain a lot of confidence regarding my place within the workplace. I feel much more confident in my communication, time management, and networking abilities after completing this internship. Going forward, I am considering entering into Human Resources post-graduation, and am really grateful for the connections that I was able to make. Many of my supervisors offered to write me letters of recommendation for future positions, which will be incredibly helpful for me post-graduation. For future students, I would recommend they not be afraid to put themselves out there and try something new during their internships. Even if you don't think you'll love it, learning what you don't like is just as important.

Thank you to MCAN and Northwestern University for making this opportunity possible.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

U.S. Foreign Policy and Climate Change
Sadhana Mandala ‘24

Africana Studies & Political Science/International Relations
Center for American Progress | Washington, D.C.

As a National Security and International Policy Intern at the Center for American Progress, I worked closely with the Senior Fellow on African policy. Our primary project centered on examining the national security ramifications of critical minerals in the EV battery industry which are essential to the worldwide shift towards green energy. I did this by researching and analyzing critical minerals within this sector and outlined optimal mining methodologies and industry best practices which will be featured in an upcoming report.

I honed my writing and research skills by analyzing government documents and international briefs for a cross-departmental critical minerals report. In the brief, I wrote about the five main minerals necessary for EV batteries: Lithium, Graphite, Manganese, Cobalt, and Nickel and the various countries involved in the production, refining, and processing supply chains of these critical minerals essential for the global energy transition. I analyzed data across numerous U.S. Geological survey reports to create informative graphics showcasing the increasing demand and limited supply of these minerals and provide recommendations on how to ethnically source and refine them as per the U.S. Inflation Reduction Act guidelines. I further conducted research on tracking and regulations mechanisms such as EV battery passports, an EU regulation used to provide relevant information on the battery's material origin, place of manufacture, human rights record, and carbon footprint among other information to ensure environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards.

I supported the senior fellow in setting up and conducting high-level meetings with the Brazilian, Argentinian, and Zimbabwean embassies and conducted interviews with international mining companies to deliver a set of best mining practices for the report. I meticulously researched & and fact-checked mining data to ensure ethical sourcing which was successfully included in the brief.

Collaboratively, I worked with senior policy analysts and directors on my team to publish three articles/columns, focusing on the Wagner group's exploitation of critical minerals in the African continent, democratic backsliding in India, and the global childhood vaccination decline. Through this experience, I developed stronger writing and research skills, worked collaboratively in a team, and incorporated constructive feedback, leading to polished content. Furthermore, I provided support to the senior fellow during her overseas trips to South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana and learned more about the important role of think tanks in the international arena. This experience has helped me cultivate a familiarity with U.S. foreign policy through valuable analytical, writing, and research projects, all of which will help me excel and grow in my future career.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

Generation Teach and Discovering My Passions

Kaysha Neville ’24
American Studies
AmeriCorps: Generation Teach | Dallas, Texas

This summer, I was awarded the opportunity by Generation Teach to be a fellow and teach an amazing group of sixth graders in Dallas, Texas. I firstly want to express my deepest gratitude to MCAN, Multicultural Alumni Network for providing me with the funding to pursue my passions. This took a huge stress off of me and allowed me to fully immerse myself into the internship and be fully present gaining the full experience of the internship.

Belonging is one of the core values of this organization, and therefore it was heavily intertwined in our day-to-day as teaching fellows. As fellows, we practiced facilitating belonging by ensuring that every student felt welcomed in our space to be their authentic selves without judgment. This meant catering specifically to every student that we came into contact with. Also, by ensuring that student voices were heard and validated during class discussions. Being flexible and forming genuine connections on a level that surpassed the surface-level interactions also played a huge part in fostering belonging within this setting.

As a teacher/educator working with students, there are so many different changes that happen throughout the day that are out of your control. Those things require you to be flexible. I had to learn how to cater specifically to every student within the classroom, aware that each of them comes from different backgrounds and environments. I had to learn how to grow and become comfortable with the unknown and the possibility of last-minute changes. You must be flexible and allow grace for not just the students, but for yourself as well.

This brings me to my next point of grace. As individuals, we can imagine and think about circumstances that others could possibly be presented with. However, in reality, we will never know exactly how it feels to be in that situation. This is why we must allow grace for every single person that we come across. As a teacher this summer, I recognized that although they are young and still developing themselves, they also have lives outside of the classroom and they have feelings and emotions as do we. Acknowledging and being aware of this made me more personable which in turn made the students feel more comfortable coming to me and expressing concerns they had inside and outside of the classroom.

Moving forward, I learned so many skills that I plan to use in my own classrooms once I am a teacher that could help me to engage the students more effectively. This program helped me realize how I can bring my own passion for education equity and conversations of cultural problems into the classroom, and make it a learning experience for myself and the students. An internship is a learning experience, and it's okay if you're not aware of some things or even have fear or are nervous about doing your internship. You are there to learn and grow, so keep that at the forefront of your mind and go in with a growth mindset and not a fixed one.
Seeing Myself as the Physician

Tiffany Nyamao ’25
Biology
Mayo Clinic | Rochester, Minnesota

I completed the Mayo Clinic Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery and Radiation Oncology Summer Research Education Program (SREP). I spent ten weeks demystifying what it means to be a physician while learning how the field of research helps provide care to patients. I did this by shadowing in the OR and clinic for over 80 hours in different departments like trauma, cardio, OBGYN, pediatrics, hematology, oncology, and many more. I also attended unique lectures to learn more about what is being done by providers at Mayo and in the field of medicine, like how Mayo Clinic is using AI in their care. Lastly, I participated in a research study looking at the impact of Reiki therapy among patients with Multiple Myeloma.

When I first arrived at Mayo Clinic, I was scared. I was among the youngest in my cohort, and I had not taken many of the needed classes to understand what was going on, so I felt like I did not belong. Yet, this changed when I met my lovely mentors, Dr. Rahma Warsame and Dr. Joselle Cook, both black women who knew what it was like to be in my shoes. They took the time to talk to me about their journey in medicine to encourage me to not give up even when it felt like the odds were against me. To also help with my fear, they took the time to provide resources and explain my research topic so that I could be successful this summer. These actions helped me to be more bold, ask questions, and find opportunities. I am grateful for this mentorship because it pushes me to have a more competitive application for when I apply to medical school.

After a month of doing research, I began to shadow different medical providers from first-hand experience, which reaffirmed my interest in medicine. This was the first time I had ever put on scrubs, so it felt like my inner Grey’s Anatomy child was complete. What I appreciated about each person I shadowed was how they took Mayo’s value of “putting the needs of the patient first” to heart. Some would take the time to explain each medical producer, or some would recommend ways to heal after surgery. As a future physician, I hope to imitate some of these characteristics.

At the end of my internship, I left feeling empowered and ready to take on my premed classes as I embarked on my medical journey. This would have not been possible without Dr. Katie Van Abel and Dr. Semirra Bayan who gave me this lifetime opportunity that truly has shifted the way I think about medicine. I also would like to thank my mentors, Carleton College, MCAN, and the Intuitive Foundation for supporting this experience. Lastly, I would not have survived if I did not have a supportive cohort who motivated me every day!
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

Therapeutic Interventions for Children and Families
Lindsay Okindo ’24
Psychology
Washburn Center for Children | Minneapolis, Minnesota

This summer I had the opportunity to intern at Washburn Center for Children. Based in Minneapolis, MN, Washburn is a nonprofit organization that provides mental health services for children and families. I worked in Washburn's Family-Focused Afternoon Group. The Family-Focused program provides therapeutic services for young children, ages 3-5, who are at risk for abuse or neglect due to high levels of family stress. As an intern, I assisted clinicians with providing classroom treatment to a small group of children in the program.

My days began with assisting with drop-off and helping kids get off their buses and to the playground for free play. After free play, we would bring the children in for “group time.” Here, I would assist in helping the children stay focused while clinicians would deliver lessons aligned with a weekly theme (e.g., friendship, summertime). These lessons often underscored the significance of adaptive behaviors such as sharing, trusting, or recognizing one's emotions. Next was snack time, providing the children with a brief break before transitioning to “Washburn work.” During this segment, children completed either two books or puzzles, which serve as valuable tools for enhancing cognitive and problem-solving skills. This was then followed by another bout of free play within the classroom. Our days concluded with art time, just before the arrival of buses and caregivers.

Having worked with children before, I anticipated building strong connections and initiating interactions with the children would pose a challenge. However, what I did not foresee was how quickly situations could escalate, leading to a child's emotional dysregulation. For example, in many interactions I had with the children I worked with, I noticed how quickly a small miscommunication or “hiccup” could lead to intense emotional dysregulation. I was very grateful for the guidance and support my supervisors offered throughout this experience; I felt they were genuinely committed to helping me develop skills that would prepare me for a career in this field. One aspect of this internship I particularly valued was the time dedicated at the end of each day to debrief and reflect. We would discuss what went well, any challenges I encountered or interventions I had tried, and any general questions or concerns.

Throughout my undergraduate career, my interests in psychology have centered around clinical psychology and psychopathology. This internship not only built upon my interests but also provided a chance to gain practical experience working directly with children and engaging in therapeutic interventions and language. I am very grateful that my first clinical experience in psychology was a successful one and would like to thank the Career Center and the Multicultural Alumni Network Fellows Program for making this possible. Additionally, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all the staff members. I had the privilege of meeting and working with at Washburn. Their kindness and generosity in guiding me through this internship made it an enjoyable and enriching experience.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

Facilitating Activities for All
Arthur Onwumere ’24
Gender, Women’s & Sexuality Studies
Waite Park and Audubon/Minneapolis Park and Rec | Minneapolis, Minnesota

I chose to work for Minneapolis Park and Rec because I felt that there was a need for me to expand my skills working with children on the autism spectrum. I had previous experiences working with children on the spectrum in a PreK-1st grade school setting, but I wanted the opportunity to work in a community setting for the summer. During my internship, I was responsible for a total of 10 children between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and during that time my job was to supervise and observe them and track their behaviors during their time at the therapeutic center. As an Inclusion Facilitator, my job was to create accessible and autism-friendly programming for my kids. We had a theme for every summer session, and I was responsible for creating activities and planning field trips for the kids during the week.

One field trip was to celebrate sports during the World Cup, so we took a handful of kids from other centers within the organization to the Target Center to watch the Minnesota Lynx play. This field trip was an opportunity to get the kids out into a new and unusual environment. We worked on social and emotional strategies towards advocating and expanding our exposure to social spaces that we aren’t used to. The most important part of my summer experiences was giving each child an opportunity to explore their own boundaries. Focusing on their safe, stretch, and panic zones when we did activities or field trips really gave me a new sense of accomplishment. Knowing that I was able to help some kids grow from being over-simulated and non-verbal in large social settings to advocating for their needs in those settings or practicing how to calm themselves if they became overwhelmed by such environments.

The biggest lesson that I took from my internship was to take everything with a grain of salt, some days my kids were having a bad day before I met them and other days the afternoon sessions were rough. Giving breaks to the kids and myself, when I felt overwhelmed, gave me the opportunity to be the best facilitator I could for them. I would give other members a push to keep their heads up and find a way to make a meaningful impact on one kid each day. You will have good and bad days during this job but make sure of your patience and adapt to change quickly.

I enjoyed the sessions because meeting other scholars were asking questions about management and job observation. I really didn’t expect to enjoy my internship the way I did. You will learn about how to communicate and advocate with the kids and create programming as a facilitator that can be useful for other positions in the future. Thank you to my supervisor Mike Pucci and my coworkers for working with me and allowing me to grow throughout the internship.
Exploring Wildlife Rehabilitation

Jose Ortega ’25
Biology
Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation, Inc. | Kendalia, Texas

Veterinary medicine encompasses multiple areas of study that each contain their own set of unique experiences. After searching through the limited amount of animal-related internships for the summer, I discovered Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Inc. As an intern, I was introduced to different species and how to care for them, from deers to opossums. Each week we were “trained” on a different animal and with each week our responsibility in the hospital increased. Within the hospital, there are rooms labeled, “RI-R6” which each contain a certain species. Therefore, after being trained in a specific species, we were assigned their room for our entire shift. Having this increased responsibility was intimidating at first because the workload was significantly increased from our normal day-to-day tasks but being the person who was allowed to care for such amazing animals was rewarding. However, the internship was not entirely animal care and learning. A majority of the time we were doing “Helping Hands” tasks which are chores. Laundry, dishes, and cleaning cages were very prominent parts of the program.

One of the most intimidating but also exciting aspects of this internship was that I was going into this experience alone. I would be completely surrounded by strangers and have to build new relationships. Even though I tend to be shy, I genuinely enjoy making new connections and starting from scratch. This internship really helped me build on skills that are important in my future career such as collaborating with others and communication. Having to complete the tasks for the opening crew during my morning shifts and the closing tasks for the night shifts required a breakdown of responsibility between my coworkers and me, sometimes resulting in me being responsible for multiple rooms. Even outside of work, my network was growing when we were invited to pool parties or to watch the staff play volleyball games. Also, during this experience, I learned how to approach my boss about a complaint in a respectful and non-confrontational manner. In order to possibly change our workload from a mainly chore-oriented role, we asked if we could be introduced to more animal care and thanks to that conversation we became more present in the animal care in the hospital.

Although the workload was immense and the shifts were long, the sense of reward and accomplishment counterbalanced the fatigue. Caring for and rehabilitating these animals was all worth it, especially seeing them run free back into the wild during releases. Patience and loving what you are doing are two of the most essential traits to thriving in the veterinary field. With the long hours, you will need some kind of passion to persevere through the shifts. I would recommend this internship to other scholars because it is a fantastic opportunity not only for animal care but also for networking.

Special thanks to the Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program and Grace Kelliher for making this opportunity possible.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

Becoming Part of a Community
Ayanna Rose '25

Sociology and Anthropology
City of Northfield | Northfield, Minnesota

I worked as a community development/planning intern at the Northfield City Hall this summer. This internship initially piqued my interest as it offered a way to continue building on my previous planning experiences for a longer time. Its location was also a benefit as it allowed me to experience the internship in person, which meant that I would be able to be face-to-face with people in the office and observe the integral concepts of community development that often occur outside the office - these moments outside of the office allowed me to connect more with the city and community that I have come to call home.

In my position, I worked under my supervisor, Revee Needham, the assistant city planner. As the assistant city planner, Revee had a variety of responsibilities, including overseeing particular development projects and being a staff liaison for the historic preservation committee and local nonprofit dedicated to the enhancement of Downtown Northfield. As an intern, I worked on projects within one of these positions alongside my responsibilities of attending staff meetings and city council meetings. The joint and staff department meetings quickly became a highlight of my experience because they allowed me to see how my work impacted city policy.

One moment that stood out to me was when I was tasked with compiling all the public comments we received about an upcoming development from a work session. I spent my time decoding handwritten letters, going through emails, and summarizing social media comments to create one complete document that expressed all the concerns and questions the community had developed. After making this one document, I saw it presented various meetings where it was used to guide conversations between departments, provide feedback for the developers, and create a communication strategy around the project. Then, it was presented with a City Council packet where the council and the mayor peered over and addressed the issues raised. It was incredible to see how this simple task allowed for voices to be heard and for the issues impacting community members to be accurately addressed. This was not the only task that allowed me to see the fruits of my labor; there were multiple instances, like completing a site plan review and then seeing the very construction plans I picked apart begin. Simultaneously, I was also very proud of my work that did not immediately merit results, like analyzing the city code for dated information and creating a checklist that allowed smoother processes for planning staff and residents.

This internship allowed me to explore various aspects of planning and community development. On top of experiencing some of the tasks that come along with being a planner, I was also able to work towards my career goals through interviews and networking in and outside the office. In the office, I interviewed the city planner and director of community development, where I learned more about the different pathways to becoming a city planner. Thank you to the Multicultural Alumni Network Fellows Program and the Center for Civic Engagement for making this opportunity possible.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

Legal and Social Impact Internship in the Twin Cities
Hala Shabaita ‘24
Political Science/International Relations
Ismuroon | Minneapolis, Minnesota

This year, thanks to the Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program, I spent my summer working with a non-profit organization in the Twin Cities called Ismuroon. This organization was founded by a Somali refugee who dedicated her life to bettering the experience of Somali women in the healthcare realm and has since expanded the organization to provide services for the entire Somali family with legal, housing, cultural orientation, and language programs. Since the organization is relatively small, I was able to explore most departments during the first week, however, I spent the remainder of the time working in the legal department.

Part of the organization’s mission is helping individuals with immigration cases. Many of the people they served had removal (deportation) hearings scheduled in court. Our clients would then reach out to us for help with seeking asylum in the United States. I got to conduct interviews with several clients where I documented their stories of why they were seeking refuge in order to build up their case to prevent removal by the government. When my legal supervisor noticed my strong interest in and passion for immigration law, she suggested I join her for immigration court observation. There, our job was to observe and fill out reports on court hearings in order to ensure they were conducted fairly and all resources were provided to the client (for instance, a language interpreter and a thorough explanation of the legal process).

In the same vein of advocacy, I also joined in on a major housing litigation project in Ismuroon. There were over 35 cases, turned into class action, in which tenants of color from immigrant communities were being wrongfully evicted and unlawfully overcharged by their landlords. This case was won by Ismuroon and was followed by another case in which we advocated for the same tenants who were facing negligence and continuous repair issues with no response from their landlords. My job in this project was to contact tenants and visit their homes to document repair issues through photos, videos, and written notes. I also got the opportunity to learn the legal process and explain it to our clients so that they are aware of the next steps. Maintaining contact with the clients for case updates and gathering the necessary information from them was needed as Ismuroon developed the case. This information was integral to my legal supervisor’s demand letter to the landlords.

Through this internship, I was finally able to put my passion for social service to work. It is incredibly meaningful to be involved on campus and provide honest representation of the student body to administrators while creating a community for underserved students. However, to engage in work where I witnessed concrete results of improving someone’s life as well as empowering the community with legal literacy is a purpose that will never fail to fuel my drive in the future. Additionally, the organization was women-led, highly collaborative, and non-hierarchical - all characteristics I hadn’t witnessed in a workplace before.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

Notes from the Apotheke: My Experience in Greece as an Archaeological Intern
Ellie Simon ’26
Undeclared
Pella Urban Dynamics Project | Pella, Greece

This summer, I went to Greece to work on two archaeological projects at the sites of Olynthos and Pella. At Olynthos, I worked alongside ceramics specialists, studying use-ware patterns on vessels, in hopes of determining the functions and contents of these ancient vessels. At Pella, I was on the excavation and survey teams. We were excavating a non-elite household, to study the social dynamics of daily household activities. On the survey team, I helped examine various topographical fields for surface-level findings to document changes in the city over time and its large-scale geographical layout. Smaller side projects that I helped with included faunal analysis and the translation of survey data to an online survey database.

Three skills that I developed during my time at Olynthos and Pella were the flexibility to adapt to dynamic environments, the application of prior knowledge from coursework to the workplace, and effective oral and written communication. Throughout my internship, I learned many things about myself. One helpful piece of feedback that my supervisor Dr. Lisa Nevett gave me was that I could benefit from more confidence in the professional setting. Thus, I became more aware of how I can become more direct and self-assured, despite my relative inexperience in the field of archaeology.

Many aspects of my time at Olynthos and Pella will help me significantly in my professional path. First, I met many graduate students, PhD candidates, and world-class professionals and specialists in the field of archaeology. When I asked them for advice, they shared personal experiences in higher education, research, and fieldwork, which gave me invaluable insight into my future career path. Second, the opportunity to engage in real-world research and fieldwork equipped me with skills that will translate to any career path that I may choose, such as adaptability, communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. Now that these characteristics are strengthened in me, I will be more ready to practice them in the context of my future career.

The most important advice I would give to students embarking on an internship would be to take advantage of their professional network. You can learn so much simply by asking questions and observing them in the workspace. Additionally, I would advise them to keep a daily journal about their daily experiences during the internship. They’ll be happy to have those firsthand reflections later on down the road!

Many people made my wonderful experience at my internship this summer possible. First and foremost are the members of the Multicultural Alumni Network. Without their generosity and empathy, I would not have been able to engage in one of the most meaningful experiences of my life. Second, I would like to thank the Carleton Career Center for continuing to sponsor the growth and betterment of Carleton students like myself in professional fields and beyond. Finally, I am immensely grateful to the classics and archaeology departments at Carleton for supplying me with the tools and resources necessary to embark on my internship journey this summer.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

Reflection and Insight from My First Public Health Experience

Bella Thomas ’25

Sociology and Anthropology

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health | Baltimore, Maryland

I participated in the eight-week research program, Diversity Summer Internship Program (DSIP) at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, conducting graduate-level research. At the program’s end, my peers and I had the opportunity to present an oral presentation and poster. I worked in the biostatistics department and paired with Dr. Abhi Datta as my mentor. Under Dr. Dattas’ supervision, I learned critical statistical subsetting methods and applied them to my project.

During this experience, I developed several skills. Notably, I sharpened my critical thinking skills, particularly in the context of biostatistics. This project challenged me to navigate statistical challenges and adopt the biostatistician’s mindset. Additionally, I improved my ability to work with numbers and statistics, despite having only taken an introductory statistics course at Carleton. While working in the biostatistics department was initially demanding, consistent collaboration with my mentor enabled me to overcome the challenges. Over time, these skills became more intuitive. Lastly, my proficiency in verbal communication and presentation was another skill I improved significantly. Having the opportunity to present in front of peers and scholars at Johns Hopkins was beneficial for my confidence and development. From this experience, I’ve learned that I can thrive in spaces that are challenging, even when my confidence is low initially. This experience shows I can reach seemingly unattainable goals and succeed. This internship reaffirms my resilience, growth mindset, and the importance of setting ambitious goals. It boosts my self-confidence and will guide my future choices.

I will utilize this experience and the networks I have established to further my journey in public health for next summer's internship and my future career in the field. Gaining insights from a top institution proved to be beneficial and broadened my perspectives on the various avenues of public health. In future years, I aim to maintain these connections and stay in touch with the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health faculty, given the excellent experience I have already had. From the insights I gained from the internship application process, I can offer advice to my fellow students at Carleton. One piece of advice I have is to start your search early. Exploring what interests you and getting ready for the internship prerequisites and the desired qualifications can be incredibly beneficial. Additionally, I suggest paying a visit to the Carleton Career Center; they provide valuable assistance throughout the application process.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Diversity Summer Internship Program at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health for providing me with my first experience in public health. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the dedicated DSIP team. I thank my mentor Dr. Abhi Datta and the postdoc Sandy Pramanik. I thank the Career Center for supporting my ambitions and the Multicultural Alumni Network Fellows Program for funding my internship.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

Unraveling Medical Interests: A Ten-Week Education Program at the Mayo Clinic

Amadou Toure ’25
Computer Science
Mayo Clinic | Rochester, Minnesota

My ten-week internship at Mayo Clinic’s Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Department, specifically under medical oncology, was a whirlwind of learning, exposure, and personal growth. The depth and breadth of experiences I was exposed to were staggering.

During my tenure, I dove deep into two major research projects. The first, ‘A Mixed Method Approach to Explore Successful Recruitment and Treatment of Minority Patients on Therapeutic Cancer Clinical Trials at Mayo Clinic,’ imparted to me the significance of inclusivity in medical research. The second, ‘Comparison of Qualitative and Quantitative Dual-Energy CT and Whole Body MRI Parameters for Longitudinal Monitoring Of Bone Involvement in Patients With Multiple Myeloma,’ refined my analytical acumen, teaching me the delicate balance between qualitative and quantitative data, and bolstered my understanding of medical imaging. With the expertise of Dr. Katharine Price, Dr. Rahma Warsame, Dr. Joselle Cook, and Dr. Gladys Asiedu guiding me, the learning curve was steep but immensely rewarding.

Three paramount skills I honed during this internship were critical thinking, communication, and adaptability. Critical thinking was crucial as I dissected intricate research data and shadowed diverse medical procedures. My communication skills were tested and improved as I liaised between multidisciplinary teams. Adaptability became essential with over 110 hours spent shadowing myriad departments (ENT, orthopedics, trauma, cardiology, etc.), each bringing its unique challenges and learning experiences. This internship has shown me the intricate tapestry of medicine. Every specialty, every procedure, and every patient is a testament to the collaborative effort of medical professionals. What surprised me most was the profound impact of research on direct patient care and its potential to revolutionize medical practices, which justified the billions of dollars spent each year on millions of projects, for just a couple of hundred of them to have immeasurable impacts.

I am immensely grateful for this experience. For fellow students, my advice is this: Absorb every moment, question the norm, and let your curiosity guide you. Looking ahead, this internship has fortified my commitment to the medical field. The skills I’ve acquired, the mentors I’ve had the privilege to work alongside, and the insights I’ve gained have all deeply influenced my future aspirations in medicine, and I truly hope to matriculate at a medical school in 2025 upon my graduation from Carleton.

With this in mind, my heartfelt gratitude goes out to Dr. Kathryn Van Abel, Dr. Katharine Price, Dr. Joselle Cook, Dr. Rahma Warsame, Dr. Semira Bayan, Dr. Gladys Asiedu, Jessica O’Neill, Dr. Dondré Douse, and Dr. Ronald Blocker. Their guidance, expertise, and unwavering support have been instrumental in making this experience both enlightening and transformative. I am deeply honored to have had the opportunity to learn and grow under their mentorship. Finally, I would also like to thank the MCAN Fellows Program for being generous with providing the funding that made my participation in this program possible.
Multicultural Alumni Network (MCAN) Fellows Program

Language Acquisition Lab at the University of Urbana-Champaign
Sofia Woodruff ’25
Psychology & Studio Art
University of Chicago Urbana-Champaign | Urbana-Champaign, Illinois

As a lab assistant in the Language Acquisition Lab, I had the opportunity to learn many skills through coding and running experiments. I learned how to build reliability as a coder, to build rapport with participants of all ages, and how to work well within research teams.

Before I had entered my internship I had no grasp of what it meant to code data. My experiences in the LA lab exposed me to a range of forms of coding as well as developing skills in pinpointing thresholds and rules that could alter how data is coded. In the lab, I worked with participants whose ages ranged from young adults to children 18 months old. During the first few experiments, the main constructive criticism that I received was that I had a nervous demeanor and speech that interfered with my ability to build trust with the participant. Over the course of my internship, I became much more aware of my own impact as an experimenter. The experience I had working with children in the lab also improved my ability to communicate and work with children. Finally, my time in the lab also made me realize the importance of communication with fellow team members. During experimental procedures there are many steps in order to set up the experiment setting, consistently provide instructions to participants, and finally document information such as experiment condition, trial number, and any inconsistencies that occurred within the experiment itself.

During my internship, I also had the opportunity to listen in on lab meetings, where lab supervisors gather and give updates on the progress of their experiments. What initially surprised me was how difficult it seems to procure participants for experiments. This difficulty made me work harder to be more conscious of possible errors that could be made during experiments. My experiences at the Language Acquisition Lab will help inform the future choices I make about my possible career in psychology and research. I found great interest in both coding and working with participants. The discussions I had with my main supervisor, Dr. Fisher brought up many questions about future research within the field of psychology and language, which I hope to explore more in the future.

I am most grateful for the support that I received from Dr. Fisher, who guided me throughout my experience, as well as the lab supervisors, who trained me in both coding and running experiments. Additionally, I am thankful to my fellow lab assistants who were open about their own experiences and gave support. I would advise other students to always check in with their supervisors when they have questions but also to think first before asking to see if they can solve the issue with the tools that they have been given.
Neil Isaacs and Frank Wright ’50 Fellowship in Investigative Journalism

Money and Politics in Washington State
Luna Schindler-Payne ’26
Undeclared
The Washington Observer | Vashon, Washington

Upon learning that I had secured an internship opportunity at the Washington Observer I was ecstatic. The Washington Observer is a small publication that covers the news in Washington State by following the money in politics. Going into my internship I hoped to better my investigative skills and to gain an understanding of daily life on the job. I was not disappointed.

Over the course of my internship, I wrote pieces on an array of topics—from reporting on the financial influence of national PACs on small city council primaries to covering an auditor’s report of the Seattle Police. I was also assigned deep dive investigations analyzing forms from the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC). The PDC upholds transparency on money in politics (in the state) by requiring all political actors to submit detailed reports of all money donated and spent. Among my long-term investigations was an assignment to track Paul Ferguson’s campaign money. Ferguson has been the Washington State Attorney General in office since the 2012 election and is campaigning for Governor in 2024. Due to his popularity among many Washingtonians, he has amassed considerable campaign donations. In Washington, there is a limit to money any donor can give to a candidate. From his 2012 campaign to the present day, the regulations have changed what donations are required to be reported to the name of the donor. This shift meant that over the years Ferguson had access to money that should have been attributed to donors but was not, therefore allowing Ferguson to receive more money from his most generous donors instead of being stopped due to the donation limit. My project was to look through the PDC files and re-trace donations to donors.

Coming into my internship my data analysis skills were very limited, so following the money trail proved to be time-consuming work—the number of donations I was working with was over 70,000 rows of data which was by far the most data I had ever worked with, but I managed to create a spreadsheet that showed many donors had exceeded limits. When Ferguson’s campaign got wind of our spreadsheet, they decided to quietly amend their PDC forms to disclose donors and donations and transferred the remaining $86,000 out of their main campaign account. From the perspective of Ferguson’s total campaign money, the $86,000 is fairly insignificant, yet I was thrilled to see my investigation make an impact. It reminded me of the importance of investigative journalism; the ways finding the truth can shift the political landscapes even in subtle ways that the public can’t see.

I am so grateful for the Neil Isaacs and Frank Wright ’50 Fellowship in Investigative Journalism for enabling me to pursue my passion for journalism and politics this summer and allowing me to learn more than I even dreamed of.
Neil Isaacs and Frank Wright ’50 Fellowship in Investigative Journalism

A Summer of Sweat and Skill-Building with WWCD 92.9 FM

Stella Thompson ’26
Undeclared
WWCD 92.9 | Columbus, Ohio

My summer internship was with a local, independent radio station in my hometown, Columbus, Ohio. Initially, I was told I would be doing tasks from two main categories. The first was in-office promotions work including social media posts, marketing campaign development, and advertisement script writing. The second was on-site event work where I would interact with community members and tell them about our radio station.

Although I did some office work, I did much more on-site event work than I was expecting. This was valuable because I got to practice my public speaking skills and do lots of hands-on work in my community. I helped set up and tear down our tent, table, prizes, etc. and worked together with my supervisors and fellow interns to get it done efficiently. When people came up to our tent, I learned to smile, be more outgoing than I usually am, and make the interaction unique, fun, and engaging for them.

In the office, I created a few marketing campaigns of my own. For these campaigns, I made social media posts, advertisement scripts for DJs to read on-air, and presentations that I gave to my supervisors. They especially loved one of my ideas, which was to create a music festival in one of our most low-income, diverse neighborhoods, and they were impressed with the amount of thought I had put into my campaign. I also helped out with live performances that occurred in our venue above the radio station. During these, I got to interact with artists and learn how to prepare the venue for crowds and bands.

Overall, I learned a lot about myself and the marketing side of the music industry. The work was a lot more hands-on and physically intensive than I thought it would be. Anything that needed to be done for an event was the responsibility of the marketing team. This was especially true because of how small the station is. Everyone had to pitch in for everything. I learned that working with social media is definitely not my thing, I’m too creative and like to go over the top when something simple is actually more effective. On the other hand, I really enjoyed working on the marketing campaigns and had fun brainstorming ideas for reaching out to different audiences.

Moving forward, I’m still interested in a career in the music industry. I know that I want a collaborative, fun, tight-knit work environment like the one at my internship. I could see myself doing some sort of promotions/marketing work in the future, although I still want to explore other facets of the industry. I loved being surrounded by people who love music and had a great summer at 92.9. I want to thank Ian Isaacs ’77 and Cliff Wright ’78 for making this experience possible. I would not have gotten nearly as much out of this internship without the financial support I received and I am so grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow this summer.
Nini's Endowed Internship Fund

Investigating and Preserving Cultural Heritage in Mississippi
Taia Bush ‘24
Sociology and Anthropology & Africana Studies
Mississippi State University | Starkville, Mississippi

I spent the 2023 summer attending a field school with the Mississippi State University Department of Anthropology and Middle Eastern Cultures. The Brush Arbor Community Engaged Field Program “examine(s) the use of Brush Arbor Cemetery in Starkville, MS through archival, archaeological, historical, and anthropological work.” With my cohort members, research on the site was conducted with a focus on community engagement, decolonial praxes, and cultural heritage preservation as the grounding of our work. This included two rounds of GIS mapping, oral history conduction, archival research, and excursions and sessions. The latter were dedicated to network expansion and skill development.

As I complete my first reflections on this time, I am reminded of the importance that passion and interest played in this selection. I need not spend more time on this sentiment than to say that this experience was an absolute blessing. My understanding of liberation and “enfranchisement” had everything to do with my enrollment in the program. Black/African American funeral homes and cemeteries were major developments in African American communities following abolition; they marked the onslaught of development for Black Americans exploring newfound freedom. This is to say, death (in its many forms) begins my history and acts to revive communal passions. In this experience, I got to show my reverence for older generations of Black leaders, educators, activists, politicians, and more.

Upon completing my six-week research process, I found myself curious about other ways I had seen academia used for community development or insinuated as being for such purposes. What did community engagement really look like when it came to Black, African, African American, and African studies? What did a “decolonial approach” mean in a discipline that was already considered to be opposed to academia through its very nature in decentering the Anglo? These are questions I’m working through even a month afterward with a wealth of information available at my fingertips. I’m expanding my worldview day by day and taking the time to consider what it means to “give back” in an academic context.

I felt drawn to practice diligence and patience in my work, though I am still quick to temper. More so, it pushed me to recognize that the limits I had encountered in my academic and professional life were never impossible to overcome. As students at an institution as prestigious as Carleton, we are fortunate to have numerous pathways to access things we once imagined. The funding I received was invaluable. As scholars with a cause and a network to work through, there is no end to the sorts of questions we can ask and the impacts we can have.

I extend the utmost gratitude to my advisors and cohort, our community partners, the city of Starkville, and the wonderful Department of Anthropology and Middle Eastern Cultures at Mississippi State University. Without them, and the gracious funding from Nini’s Endowed Internship Fund, none of this would be possible. Thank you.
Nini's Endowed Internship Fund

Promoting the Well-being of Community Members

Chrinovic Kabelu ’26
Undeclared
Simple Charity | Durham, North Carolina

Over the summer, I worked as an intern at a Christian-centered non-profit organization called Simple Charity in Durham, North Carolina. Amongst the many things that I wanted to happen over the summer and the things that did actually happen, I couldn’t be happier to have spent my summer any other way than volunteering at open table ministries in Durham.

Every Tuesday, Simple Charity interns spent the day working at the open table ministries thrift store to provide people experiencing poverty and injustice with basic necessities such as food, clothes, bedding, mailboxes, sanitary products, and more. Volunteering at open table ministries allowed interns to meet and interact with the most neglected population in Durham and be impactful in promoting their well-being as well as broadening their own perspectives on what humans could do better to support their society members. For instance, I learned that most homeless people in Durham spend every one in three nights in jail due to charges for trespassing or "illegal begging," or sleeping on a park bench and as a result, are charged with court fees which leads to accumulation of debt with every charge. Another example is one of my most memorable encounters with a homeless man in a Durham community center who stood up during a service that was being held at the center and eloquently recited a poem he had written and then went on to explain how he found himself homeless. In brief, the man had encountered a tragedy that cost him his job and led him to the streets of Durham. This made me think about the misconception that every homeless person found themselves in their situation because of irresponsible decisions, drugs, or living a life of crime. It is false. In fact, I encountered some people who chose to be homeless as a lifestyle.

Besides learning about homelessness in Durham and volunteering at open table ministries, I spent a lot of time working in groups with interning colleagues to put together a short course exploring the overlaps between themes like health, education, safety, capital, and theology. Over the course of the internship, I spent a lot of time doing research and reading books to educate myself on the subject of health in relation to theology. I also learned a lot about health systems in different countries and had some really enlightening conversations about the effectiveness of health insurance in America. Finally, working in collaboration with other interns emphasized the importance of reliability within a workgroup as most of the work could not be done unless everyone had done their part. This forced me to be more prompt in delivering my work, which is certainly a skill I plan to keep in my student and work life. I feel really grateful to have been part of this internship and I would definitely recommend it to anyone who is interested in volunteering community service.
Nini's Endowed Internship Fund

SayKid: Conversational Design in Early Youth Development
AJ LeSure ’24
Computer Science
SayKid | Mound, Minnesota

For my summer internship, I worked for a tech startup called SayKid. Based in the Twin Cities, SayKid’s main goal is to help kids learn and develop while reducing screen time. Their philosophy is vested in a lot of research about how increased screen time has harmed early development, and thus SayKid aims to steer away from screen-based interfaces.

SayKid’s main product, the ToyBot, is a plushie robot that is compatible with the Amazon Echo line of products. SayKid develops educational and mentally stimulating games that are entirely voice-interactive. Through such an interface, kids are meant to listen and speak in order to complete tasks and play games.

My job over the summer was to develop games to add to SayKid’s game library. I worked in a small team with two other interns. While SayKid’s CEO and our internship supervisor, DeLonn Crosby, offered guidance and gave us suggestions, my team and I were ultimately responsible for and had authority over our own project. To aid in the development process, DeLonn introduced essential concepts about voice-interactive learning. The most important concept is Conversational Design.

Conversational Design (C.D.) in this context is a framework meant to ensure that information is communicated seamlessly to the user through an audio output. In essence, C.D. places importance on making sure that the computer talks “naturally” to the user. Within the context of early youth development, C.D. is especially important as we have to consider how to say things in a way that young children can understand.

One of the more challenging aspects of my experience was the combination of a self-directed work structure and it being entirely remote. It was difficult at times to schedule meeting times with my team members. Motivation was also an issue since I wasn’t able to be in a physical workspace and often was working from my bedroom. I really appreciate concrete structure in my work, so not having that was difficult to adjust to.

Thank you to Nini’s Endowed Internship Fund for providing me with funding for the summer. Thank you to DeLonn Crosby for the opportunity to work in a professional environment, as well as for his resume workshops that have helped me better understand how to network and market myself.
Nini's Endowed Internship Fund

Journey of Growth and Leadership with Rally Camps

Bryanna Schaffer ’25

Mathematics

Rally Camps | San Francisco, California

Interning with Rally Camps has been a transformative experience significantly enriching my personal and professional growth. From the moment I stepped into the office on the first day of my internship to the final farewell, I have been on a remarkable journey of discovery, learning, and self-improvement. As a fresh intern, I was unsure of what to expect. The office environment was buzzing with activity, and I was introduced to a diverse group of colleagues who were passionate about their work.

One of the first lessons I learned during my internship was the importance of adaptability. Rally Camps operates in a dynamic and ever-changing industry, and I quickly realized that flexibility and the ability to adapt to new situations were essential. Whether it was adjusting to shifting project priorities or learning how to handle situations in a different manner, adaptability became a valuable skill that I honed throughout my internship. Working closely with my colleagues at Rally Camps taught me the significance of teamwork and collaboration. I was fortunate to be part of a team that fostered open communication and encouraged the sharing of ideas. I learned that effective teamwork not only enhances productivity but also fosters a sense of belonging and support within the workplace.

During my internship, I was given opportunities to take on additional responsibilities. These experiences challenged me to step out of my comfort zone and assume a leadership role. Rally Camps provided me with a supportive environment to develop and showcase my leadership skills. I was given the task of constructing a camp curriculum for campers and coaches to follow on a weekly basis. Although this responsibility was stressful and sometimes made me question if I was doing a good job, it was relieving to see my curriculum being used. To briefly summarize this curriculum, each day of the week (Monday to Friday), a new word was used to describe the takeaway of camp, more specifically a goal not just involving the game of baseball. This curriculum included the words accountability, teamwork, attitude, respect, and family. Each day the coaches would take 10-15 minutes away from physical activity and do activities with their campers to emphasize the importance of those words.

Another valuable aspect of my internship was the opportunity to network and build professional relationships. I attended business meetings and met influential individuals who shared their insights and experiences. These interactions expanded my network and exposed me to different perspectives, broadening my horizons and enhancing my understanding of the sports industry. I even got to travel with my intern host to San Francisco where I sat in on HQ meetings and talked one-on-one with the owner of Rally Camps.

As I move forward in my professional journey, I am grateful for the experience Rally Camps has provided me. I will carry the lessons I’ve learned and the relationships I’ve built with me throughout my career, knowing that they will continue to guide and inspire me. I want to thank the Nini’s Endowed Internship Fund for making this summer internship experience possible.
Pommerenke Endowed Internship Fund

A Closer Look Within the Criminal Justice System
Sam Isaacman ’24
Political Science/International Relations
Hennepin County Public Defender’s Office | Minneapolis, Minnesota

With special thanks to the Pommerenke Endowed Internship Fund.

This summer I worked at the Hennepin County Public Defender's Office, working as an Investigative Intern alongside experienced lawyers in the office. The majority of the cases I worked on were murder cases, most of them second degree murder which carry jail time of up to 40 years in Minnesota. I did a wide variety of tasks for the lawyers, as I helped with brainstorming sessions on some cases, did social media scrapes on potential jurors, watched police body cam footage to try and determine whether police gathered evidence illegally, and served subpoenas to witnesses.

I had to work on a wide range of skills during my time at the office, which really helped me not only set up for my remaining years at Carleton, but also for potential future work opportunities. A skill that was heavily used over the summer was my writing skills, as I was needed to write reports for a range of topics for the lawyers I was working alongside, whether it be a summary of a meeting I had with a client in jail or summaries of bodycam footage from police, or meeting with witnesses. In addition to the writing skills that were necessary, I also needed strong communication skills in order to not only work with other lawyers but to communicate well with witnesses and make sure I ask the right questions the right way, in order to get answers that are helpful with the questions that we have about what had happened, to help paint a clearer picture on the events of the alleged incident. I also strengthened my teamwork skills, as the brainstorming session required strong communication and necessitated teamwork in order to lay out the plan for the defense that we thought would best suit the case. I am very grateful for the openness that some of the lawyers and judges had with me, with some judges agreeing to be interviewed for my comps project, as well as one of the judges offering to meet with me after a case was finished to discuss any questions or wonders that I had from watching the case.

Advice that I would give for interns going forward, both in this internship and other internships, is to try and absorb as much information and knowledge as you can in the limited time that you have. I was lucky enough to be given the opportunity to participate in a program called Know Your Courts, where every Friday a different part of the Hennepin County court system would come and explain the different aspects of how the courts worked, and having this added opportunity was incredibly valuable to expand my knowledge gained over the summer. In addition, having the ability to form connections and gain experience for a potential future occupation is pivotal, and something that internships like this can be really valuable for.
Pommerenke Endowed Internship Fund

My Summer With Concussion Alliance
Ike Smalley ’25
Psychology
Concussion Alliance | Seattle, Washington

This summer I was a science writer for Concussion Alliance, a nonprofit that maintains a website of resources for people with concussions and sends out a biweekly newsletter summarizing recent concussion-related research. The tangible work the interns did for the organization was over two areas; the first was the newsletter. Over the summer, I wrote three synopses for the Concussion Alliance newsletter. The first was on the symptomatic differences between motor vehicle concussions and sports concussions, the second was about the psychological causes of chronic concussion symptoms, and the final was about using auditory processing evaluations to look for subconcussive head impacts. The other work I produced over the summer, which definitely took up most of my time, was creating a new page on workers and workplaces for Concussion Alliance’s website. My partner and I did extensive research, met with an expert in the area, and created graphics for the page. Beyond just concussions that happen while on the job, there are also numerous considerations workers with a concussion should think about, including a return to work schedule and how to manage their symptoms on the job.

During the beginning weeks of the internship, there was also a curriculum to give the interns a background on concussion science and experiences. Throughout the internship, there were many guest speakers that came in, generally at least once a week, which was a great opportunity to learn about the new developments in concussion research and to ask questions about anything from help on our projects to career advice.

I learned a lot from this experience. Most importantly I think, throughout the meetings with guest speakers and through getting experience doing non-academic work in a psychology-related area, I was able to think about my future plans beyond schooling. For instance, I’m much more set now on doing graduate school, but also more certain I’m going to take a gap year. This also gave me experience communicating with coworkers in a way that is very different from communicating with partners for group projects, for example. I learned the importance of clearly communicating what work I’m doing and what I need support with. Finally, my writing skills improved a lot. By the end of the internship, I was able to much more efficiently and effectively read a complex academic paper and be able to write about it in a way that was understandable.

The internship overall was a great experience. I was able to connect with the other interns much more than I thought I would be able to over Zoom, and I was even more interested in learning about concussions than I thought I would be. I’m grateful to Brenda Pommerenke ’78 and Larry George and the Pommerenke Endowed Internship Fund for making this possible – I wouldn’t have been able to have this experience without their support.
Pommerenke Endowed Internship Fund

Gratitude for the Opportunity to Intern at ETS South Metro
Bella Zerwas ’25
Biology
ETS South Metro | Lakeville, Minnesota

Over the Summer, I had the privilege of being a Sports Performance Coaching intern with ETS South Metro, a sports performance facility whose goal is to improve the strength and speed of young athletes. Daily, we greeted athletes, led warmups, and coached about 25 athletes per session through their workouts. Each athlete has a program designed specifically for them, to enhance their abilities in their sports. During each session, I was able to walk through new workouts with athletes, spot athletes, and answer any questions they might have had. I was also able to connect with each athlete on a personal level.

During my internship, a key lesson I learned about myself was discovering how I’m a hands-on learner. I have always known that I learn best with hands-on experience, but this internship proved to me that I thrive best in an environment where I jump right in, even if it’s uncomfortable for a bit. Something I learned that took me by surprise was that I really enjoyed working with kids. I had never seen myself as someone who would enjoy a career working/teaching kids, but I discovered that building relationships with these kids and watching them grow and improve was extremely rewarding. Moving forward, this newfound love of working with kids may eventually lead to a career that is adolescent-focused, whether it be physical therapy, or a not yet discovered career path.

The three most important skills I gained from this experience are relationship building, leadership, and teamwork. I am most grateful for the relationships I built during my internship. Between the relationships with my coworkers as well as my supervisor, I have made lifelong friends that I am so very grateful for. Beyond those aforementioned, the relationships with the young athletes have changed my life. Getting to know each of the athletes and their passions, goals, and dreams, I feel like I actually made an impact in their lives, and they, in return, made an impact on mine.

If I had the opportunity to speak with other students about internships, I would tell them that the experience is so worth it! I was extremely lucky to have a hands-on experience, where I was immediately immersed in the facility, leading warmups, learning names, etc. I am so beyond thankful that I was not looked at as lesser than anyone else in the facility and was not pushed aside because I was just an “intern.” Finding a company that makes you feel influential and needed is what can make or break your internship.

I would like to thank Brenda Pommerenke ’78 and Larry George for their generous contribution through the Pommerenke Endowed Internship Fund. This opportunity has allowed me to gain practical experience and insights in my field of interest, and I am truly grateful for their investment in my education and professional growth. Their commitment to fostering learning and hands-on experience will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on my career journey.
Project ’60 Endowed Internship Fund

My Summer at Neighborhood Health: Health Equity and Diabetes Outreach
Anna Horton ’24
Psychology
Neighborhood Health | Alexandria, Virginia

As I finish my summer internship experience, I feel incredibly fortunate for the opportunity and proud of the work that I was able to do this summer for Neighborhood Health. Receiving money from the Project ’60 Endowed Internship Fund allowed me to work in an unpaid position and learn so much about myself and my professional goals. For some context, Neighborhood Health is a federally qualified health center (FQHC) located in Northern Virginia. This means that they receive most of their funding through the federal government and grants to provide care to underserved populations. For Neighborhood Health, this care includes everything from medical and dental to therapy and applying for Medicaid.

I began my summer working on a Needs Assessment report. This exercise was meant to emulate the typical report that FQHCs are required to complete for the government every year. I learned how to use the PLACES dataset from the CDC to understand population health at state, county, and census tract levels. I compiled this information into a presentation and described the different pockets of the area that are prime candidates for Neighborhood Health services.

After my presentation, I was assigned to work on the diabetes outreach project. Diabetes disproportionately impacts low-income communities, and about a fifth of patients in the system have diabetes. For about thirty percent of the patient population, their diabetes is uncontrolled as indicated by their A1C levels. Uncontrolled diabetes essentially means that their blood sugar is extremely variable, and medication or lifestyle is not optimal. Over time, this increases the risk of developing eye and foot problems, kidney and nerve damage, and cardiovascular disease. Doctors recommend patients come in to meet and get bloodwork done every three months. This is where I came in. I would receive a list of patients who had not been to the doctor recently and needed to be called and scheduled. By the end of the summer, I made around 500 calls and scheduled 150 patients for follow-up appointments.

I found this work to be extremely rewarding and fulfilling. There were certainly challenges. As one might expect, people can become frustrated or confused with someone cold-calling them from their doctor’s office. These interactions, while uncomfortable at times, taught me the importance of patience and clarity. Most other patients were relieved to hear from the doctor. Some patients lived alone and hadn’t talked with anyone for a while and would ask me about my day and tell me a story about their health. Other patients would ask me about moles or pain in their body that I would carefully dodge and redirect their inquiry to the nurse’s line. Each interaction was different, but they all reinforced how much I love interacting with people. By the end of the summer, I felt more sure about the type of environment and work that I would like to work at after Carleton – a true mark of a successful internship!
Project ’60 Endowed Internship Fund

Database Cleanup at Breadcoin

Susanna Kisker ’24

Physics

Breadcoin | Washington, D.C.

This summer has been an incredibly informative and fulfilling experience supported by the Project ’60 Endowed Internship Fund. My remote internship with Breadcoin allowed me to contribute to a noble cause while honing my skills in database management and donor outreach. Breadcoin is a company dedicated to alleviating food insecurity in the Washington, D.C. area by providing communities in need the dignity of choice. My role involved improving the efficiency of their database systems and expanding donor communities through outreach emails.

One of the primary responsibilities of my internship was to engage in database cleanup. This essential task involved the meticulous organization and management of Breadcoin’s vast database of beneficiaries, donors, and partners. By improving the accuracy and accessibility of this data, we could better target our efforts and resources toward those who needed them most and more easily get in contact with those willing to help. The database cleanup process taught me the importance of organization and accuracy in nonprofit organizations. I learned to identify and rectify inconsistencies, duplicates, and errors in the database, ensuring that the organization’s resources were allocated effectively. This experience not only enhanced my attention to detail but also underscored the critical role technology plays in modern philanthropy.

Another integral aspect of my internship was outreach. I had the privilege of communicating with Breadcoin’s stakeholders, ranging from donors and partners to the food-insecure individuals and families they serve. Outreach allowed me to witness the direct impact of our efforts and provided a human face to the organization’s mission. Engaging in outreach activities, such as sending newsletters, organizing virtual events, and fostering partnerships, helped me develop crucial communication and networking skills. Moreover, it reinforced the idea that connecting with the community is paramount in the nonprofit sector. I gained a deeper understanding of the multifaceted challenges faced by those experiencing food insecurity and how Breadcoin’s work was making a meaningful difference in their lives.

My remote internship experience with Breadcoin was not only about professional development but also personal growth. Working on a cause as important as addressing food insecurity in the D.C. area instilled in me a sense of purpose and responsibility. Witnessing the positive impact of our efforts on the lives of individuals and families in need was truly inspiring.

In conclusion, my internship with Breadcoin provided me with an invaluable opportunity to contribute to a cause I am passionate about while honing my skills. Through meticulous data management and impactful outreach efforts, I was able to witness the organization’s mission in action and play a part in making a difference in the lives of those facing food insecurity in the Washington, D.C. area. This experience not only enriched my professional skill set but also left a lasting impact on my perspective on the power of technology, community engagement, and the profound change that dedicated individuals and organizations can bring about in the world.
Project ’60 Endowed Internship Fund

South-East Asian Refugees in Milwaukee: Barriers and Solutions to Effective Healthcare

Ellis Kondrashov ’25
Sociology and Anthropology
Milwaukee Consortium for Hmong Health | Milwaukee, Wisconsin

I worked with the Milwaukee Consortium for Hmong Health this summer to complete an impact report. Since the organization’s start in the mid-2000s, it has grown immensely. Starting with just two people working in their free time to educate the community about cervical and breast cancer, it now has a full-time staff of 7 people alongside a heavily involved board, that works with eight Southeast Asian ethnicities on countless health and social issues.

They wanted me to capture what their organization is doing to show the impact they have beyond just the data and also to provide an external perspective. Because they do so many things, it’s hard to know exactly how much they’ve done. For example, in one phone call, a Community Health Worker organized a client’s transportation to an appointment, ensured there would be a translator from the consortium there, and told them where to get help with utilities. It’s hard to see the full impact of this from the data, so they wanted me to use qualitative methods to be able to get the full picture.

I gained a lot of valuable skills from this internship: conducting interviews, working without a predefined structure or deadlines, and painting a picture by combining qualitative and quantitative data. The best way to learn to interview is to do interviews. And I did a lot of interviews. I learned how to do the simple stuff like asking the right questions, but also got the sense of when I need to let the silence draw out, versus jumping in to redirect. On top of these interviews, I looked over the Consortium’s databases, and compared them to what I’d been hearing, seeing how the data lined up with the experiences of my interviewees, connecting everything into one coherent whole that could be understood by the organization’s funding partners. However, the biggest challenge was the lack of constraints on my work schedule, forcing me to plan everything myself. It tested my limits at times, as people canceled or moved interviews, forcing me to adapt, but it ended in me being a lot more flexible.

This internship has shown me that whatever work I do, needs to involve people. I need human interaction at the center of my work. It gives me purpose, and a certain comradery and understanding about what’s happening that helps me keep moving forward. It’s something I could only have learned from an experience like this, surrounded by dedicated community members who share the drive to improve others’ lives.

I am incredibly grateful for the funding I received from the Project ’60 Endowed Internship Fund, a gift from members of the Class of 1960! It’s allowed me to see the value of these types of non-profits, showing me how I can do my part to help people in need and build organizations that can continue their missions for decades.
Project ’60 Endowed Internship Fund

South-East Asian
Emily Lanegraff ’24
Political Science/International Relations
Community Action Center of Northfield | Northfield, Minnesota

I spent eleven weeks this summer interning with the Food Access team at the Community Action Center (CAC) of Faribault. The organization offers a wide range of services for those who cannot afford such services, such as housing and job assistance, but my team focused specifically on the food shelf and food access realm. The food shelf was open four days a week, for 4-6 hours each, and we also did home deliveries once a week for those unable to come in and shop for themselves. While there were limits on certain items due to the high demand, we tried to offer as much as we could and always had lots of fresh produce available for shoppers. This was definitely the most impactful part of my experience since I was working directly with those in incredibly difficult situations. While it was occasionally overwhelming and challenging to be responsible for such an important service, it pushed me out of my comfort zone and forced me to confront the very real challenges that come with food insecurity in America. It was difficult to hear their stories and know that we could only offer so much, but knowing that we were able to help so many people was incredibly fulfilling.

Before this summer, I definitely held some preconceived notions about those who struggle with food insecurity and homelessness, and I would have never imagined that by the end of it, I would be so sad to say goodbye to everyone. Luckily, I had an amazing team to support me and help me through the entire process. They helped me feel comfortable working with so many different people and trusted me to work directly with participants and ensure the food shelf ran smoothly. Because of this experience, I am even more committed to pursuing my interest in social justice and equitable access to necessary resources. I’ve learned so much, not only about the importance of the work the CAC is doing but also about my own passions and capabilities and the role I can play in creating the change I want to see in the world.

Joining the CAC team was daunting, but everyone I worked with was so supportive and welcoming. I would encourage others seeking internship opportunities to challenge themselves and make the most of what they find. I doubted myself in the beginning, but by pushing myself outside of my comfort zone I was able to accomplish more and be a real asset to my team. I never would have grown so much without this experience, and for that, I am incredibly grateful.

I am so thankful for the chance to work with such amazing people and play even a small part in the incredible work they’re doing. It was made possible by the Center for Community and Civic Engagement and the Project ’60 Endowed Internship Fund. The Career Center was incredibly helpful in finding this opportunity, and I can’t recommend it enough for other students looking for extraordinary internships like mine.
Project ’60 Endowed Internship Fund

My Summer with the Chinese-American Planning Council in New York City

Daniel Yan ’26
Undeclared
Chinese-American Planning Council | New York, New York

During my internship with the Chinese-American Planning Council this summer, I was able to gain a lot of experience interacting with New York City’s diverse population and figuring out how we could engage with citizens to make sure they wanted to participate in the political process and think about the issues that are important to them. During June, I was tasked with performing traditional forms of election outreach, such as phone banking, text banking, and knocking on doors around the city, which allowed me to interact with people from a wide range of backgrounds and practice my Mandarin and Spanish speaking skills. I also did work traveling around different community centers to ensure that our staff within the organization understood the importance of voting and advocating for their communities. After the primary election, one of my main projects was to pilot the organization’s voter education program, in which I was instructed to choose a political issue to discuss with community members across the city in a series of 6-7 presentations. With crime being a top issue for residents in New York City, I chose to talk about how we can improve public safety by investing in our communities and how communities that are economically better off are ultimately safer communities.

Through these experiences, I was able to develop my skills to communicate effectively through speaking/presentation skills and my ability to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds. As almost all of my presentations were given to seniors who did not speak English as their first language and many who also had very strong opinions on the issue, I learned a lot from my more experienced colleagues about how to communicate complicated and controversial political and economic ideas in simple but effective terms. Throughout the process, I learned what type of language and words to use and avoid, how to keep an audience engaged in a conversation, and how to deal with differing opinions and hostile crowds. By the time I was finishing up my last couple of presentations, I felt a lot more confident in my ability to facilitate discussions with crowds of up to 120 people and get my points across effectively, which is something that I would have been very nervous about not too long ago.

I had an amazing experience working with the Chinese-American Planning Council and living in New York City for the summer, and none of it would have been possible without the support of the Career Center at Carleton for answering all my questions, the generous financial support I received from the Project ’60 Endowed Internship Fund, along with my supervisor Caroline Scown and everyone else on the Policy Team. Having been involved in this valuable experience, I hope to use the knowledge gained in a future involving public service and advocacy.
Ratner Fund for Aging and Geriatrics Internships

Becoming a Psychology Researcher

Sonia Shah ’24
Psychology
University of California San Francisco | San Francisco, California

During my internship at the Emotion, Health, & Psychophysiology Lab I learned more about the field of health psychology by being a research assistant on studies, attending tutorials, and having conversations with other lab members and postdoctoral researchers in the lab. I held alternating roles throughout the internship which helped build my understanding of a psychology researcher. I learned how to be an effective experimenter, operator, and scorer. As an experimenter, I executed the protocol with participants and ran them through various tasks according to the protocol. The experimenter was also responsible for applying several physiological sensors, taking blood pressure measurements, and collecting saliva cortisol samples. We applied ECG sensors, impedance (measures thoracic cavity blood flow), finger sensors, and a respiratory band. My role as an experimenter greatly helped improve my communication skills because of the doctor-patient relationship interns had with participants. Additionally, I strengthened my teamwork skills by working with other interns who held different roles which allowed the studies to run smoothly. As an operator, your role would be to measure the physiological sensors and determine if the signals are normal (no inverted heart rate, arrhythmia, signal interference, etc.). As a scorer, we would often do PPG scoring, HRV scoring, and calibrate heart rate data. My roles as operator and scorer greatly strengthened my analytical skills and my attention to detail. The specific studies I worked on were the two studies looking at the relationship between sleep and social experiences. I was on a study looking at the effects of ClVNS on physiology during gratitude and conflict interactions between couples and a study looking at the effect of learning critical black history as a way to increase a white person’s perspective-taking abilities when interacting with a black actor.

I am grateful that I had the opportunity to be heavily involved in the studies, hold various different roles and responsibilities, and directly work with postdoctoral faculty in this internship. Because of my experiences as a part of this internship, I have gained more clarity about my career goals and interests and have become more sure of my interest in clinical medicine. I learned about the research process but have decided that I was primarily interested in the creative aspect of research and not the funding, writing, and statistical aspects. Prior to this experience, I was unsure if I wanted to pursue a career in academia, as a practicing psychologist, or as a medical doctor, but now because of all the clinical interactions I had with various participants, I am more sure of wanting to pursue a clinical career. I would encourage other students to make the most out of internship experiences by trying whatever new things an internship offers and have conversations with as many people as possible (grad students, postdocs, psychologists, medical doctors) to understand what may be right for them.

Finally, I would like to thank the Ratner Fund for Aging and Geriatrics, Trustee Endowed Internship Fund, Dr. Wendy Berry Mendes, Lab Manager Julia O’Bryan, study coordinators, postdocs, and the summer 2023 intern cohort for making my experience possible!
Raymond Plank Chair in Incentive Economics Funding for Internships

Navigating Uncharted Waters: My Marketing Journey with Saturday Properties
James Bradle ’24
Economics
Saturday Properties | St. Louis Park, Minnesota

My summer internship with Saturday Properties was not just a journey into the world of marketing; it was a deep dive into an industry that was entirely new to me. As someone who had never ventured into marketing before, every day was a lesson, a challenge, and an opportunity to grow. At Saturday Properties, my daily tasks were diverse, and data driven. I gathered and analyzed lead, tour, and lease numbers to understand the sources of our marketing efforts. This data was crucial in strategizing building and tour paths, positioning the building within the market, and determining pricing strategies. I also had the chance to work on campaigns, deciding which parts of the building to highlight and sell. My responsibilities extended to maintaining our digital presence and understanding the intricacies of website management. One of my proudest achievements was discovering a company that could create 360° 3D renderings for units in new developments, a new approach in multifamily marketing for buildings being developed. I also took pride in developing systems to better collect and interpret data, positioning buildings effectively in the market, and setting successful tour strategies. My efforts in understanding and maintaining a digital presence in the multifamily world were also noteworthy.

This internship honed my problem-solving skills, especially when it came to building positioning and strategy. I delved deep into the multifamily marketing world, understanding the nuances of maintaining a digital presence. Moreover, I learned the importance of making informed decisions based on performance and financial data. My time at Saturday Properties was also a journey of self-discovery. I realized my passion for marketing and its intersection with my interests in economics and psychology. I loved building systems and strategies, and the joy of seeing them succeed was unparalleled. However, I also recognized a personal weakness: my tendency to overcommit in my eagerness to assist others and maximize my learning. The multifamily marketing sector surprised me with its unique challenges. Unlike other industries, targeting specific individuals is not feasible per fair housing restrictions, necessitating creative approaches to reach potential demographics.

I owe a significant part of my growth to my supervisor, Josh Wicklund. His guidance, knowledge, and encouragement were invaluable, inspiring me to continue learning and challenging myself. As I look forward, I am excited to further explore a career in marketing. The skills and insights I’ve gained will undoubtedly aid me in my entrepreneurial aspirations. I also plan to delve deeper into psychology and economics, areas that complement my marketing interests. For students considering internships, my advice is to immerse yourself in learning and think creatively. Such an approach can lead to innovative solutions that can revolutionize an industry.

Lastly, I’m immensely grateful to Raymond Plank Chair in Incentive Economics Funding for Internships for making this experience possible. Saturday Properties, recognized as one of Minnesota’s top workplaces in 2022, has been instrumental in shaping my career aspirations.
Changing Roles and Adapting at Aflac
Garrett Siff '25
Economics
Aflac | Minneapolis, Minnesota

This past summer, I interned at Aflac in their Minnesota and Iowa branch as an Actuarial Intern. Over the first couple weeks of the internship, I learned the ropes and responsibilities with my boss as we would either travel or do Zoom interviews with the company's employees in order to properly underwrite and make sure they were receiving the correct rates. We would also examine financial statements as well as our client's medical records in order for us to help them determine which insurance plans would be most beneficial for each individual's unique and personal situation.

During the third week of my internship, the branch was way behind quota for insurance sales. As a result of this combined with the fact that I was one of three people in the office that spoke Spanish, they moved me to the sales team as a translator. As a football player, you often have to change positions or roles in order to allow the team to be as successful as possible, so I knew why I was moved, but it was much less enjoyable. The biggest skill I gained all summer was a result of this and a neck injury I had sustained. Resilience and persistence were huge for making it through a summer where I found myself either cold-calling laborers in Spanish or rehabilitating my herniated disc and paralyzed arm. My communication skills were also greatly improved as a result of communication with all different types of people. Doing this work really allowed me to understand how to better communicate and make sure that those who are around me are happy and comfortable with the conversation as well.

In the future I hope to use what I learned during this internship and continue to develop my adaptability and discipline in the sense of being able to successfully complete tasks that I don't necessarily want to be doing. It is important at the same time to take pride in what I am doing and going about it like I love every second of it. I would like to thank the Raymond Plank Chair in Incentive Economics Funding for Internships for the opportunity to learn so much more about myself and grow as a person as well as a student. To future students who are completing internships in the coming summers, I would say to remain focused and complete your tasks at work while staying disciplined and communicating with those around you.
Raymond Plank Chair in Incentive Economics Funding for Internships

Hot Weather, Cool Fruit: Sweet Summer as a Farm Intern
Noel Wang ’25
Physics
Masumoto Family Farm | Del Rey, California

This summer, I had the extraordinary opportunity to intern on a small, fourth-generation family-owned organic farm located just south of Fresno, California. While the farm is famous for its peaches, it also produces nectarines, apricots, and raisin grapes. During my internship, I had the unique experience of both living and working on the farm, giving me a new perspective on how the agricultural industry of the Central Valley operates and a peek at the life of small-scale organic farmers. As an intern, I mainly helped in the fruit packing shed to stack, stamp, and organize boxes of fruit to be shipped out to distributors. I also helped hand out fruit to customers at drive-thru sales, picked fruit, and accompanied deliveries to a cold storage facility.

Throughout these experiences, I greatly strengthened my ability to work in a fast-paced and flexible work environment, communicate professionally with a new team of co-workers and supervisors, and connect small pieces of information over time to comprehend a bigger picture. A common theme to these skills that I developed over the summer was being able to remain focused on both my surroundings and my tasks in a setting where many things are happening at once. This allowed me to be more present and aware of what was going on around me. I slowly increased my comprehension of conversations happening in Spanish as my language skills sharpened, I kept better track of the needs of my supervisors and fellow workers when they needed my help or more supplies, and I gained a better understanding of how a small family business operates through observations over time.

My internship involved more physically demanding tasks than most of my previous positions, and I left every workday feeling exhausted but satisfied in a way I had not felt before. Having this experience, a key lesson I gained was that I enjoy work that involves both a field component and an office component. I also highly respected that the company I worked for prioritized the values of environmental stewardship and minimizing waste in their business practices. I felt fulfilled knowing I was contributing to work that preserved the earth, and this work inclined my professional interests as a physics major toward the earth sciences. In the future, I hope to use physics to investigate water resources, soil science, or agricultural science as it applies to food. Alternatively, I am still interested in owning a small business in the food industry myself.

I am incredibly grateful for this special learning opportunity I had as the first-ever intern on such a unique farm. Without the sponsorship of Raymond Plank Chair in Incentive Economics Funding for Internships, my experience would not have been possible. Through this internship, I have gained new knowledge, further discerned a career path, and developed valuable professional skills. I would encourage other interns to be unafraid of pursuing an unconventional internship that might not “match” their major if they can, as mine was a true opportunity for growth.
Richard T. Newman Family Endowed Fund for Language Study Internships

Summer with SOS Racisme
Anoushka Mallik ’25
Political Science/International Relations
SOS Racisme | Paris, France

I spent this past summer interning at an organization called SOS Racisme which is headquartered in Paris, France. SOS Racisme is the largest anti-racist non-profit in France and also holds chapters in Switzerland, Italy, Catalunya, Germany, Portugal, Denmark, and Austria. I worked within the legal department, focused on providing clients with legal aid and directing them to other resources. My work, additionally, included doing various research projects, notably including a comparative analysis of antisemitism in Europe and drafting a statement for the European Union’s Citizenship Report. I found the experience of working in a French office to be challenging, and I certainly developed my language skills. It was equally interesting, and somewhat inspiring, to see the faith in government that exists in France with people choosing to file complaints and take action because they felt it would truly make a difference. Though this framed my experience significantly, I would like to focus my essay on how this work impacted me and how it has shaped my future goals.

I found legal work in the nonprofit world to be both incredibly specific and incredibly tangible. I felt that I was truly able to provide help to individual people, and could track the impact of my work. If someone emailed asking how to file a complaint with the public prosecutor, I could provide that specific information and see tangible evidence of an impact. I find that the metaphor of a river works well to explain the system at play. Within my department, we were doing “downstream” work, meaning that we were dealing with people who had already experienced racism and were looking for help to get out of the water. This work is tangible and really helps individual people. What I consider “upstream” work would be working, potentially from the lens of policy or governmental work, to stop people from experiencing racism in the first place. SOS Racisme’s education and communication departments work heavily to eliminate biases within children and students as well as take public stands on issues. Having an understanding of these departments, and having now one example of what legal work at a non-profit looks like, I’ve begun to question where in the stream I want to be.

I don’t think that, before this internship, I could have clearly identified that there even was a stream in the first place, and this new understanding has provided me with both clarity and more questions to ask. I think, now, that I’d like to learn more about “upstream” work to determine whether being a part of the change-making process at that level is more or less important to me than the concrete tangibility of the work I did this summer, which may entail policy or government work, or another NGO. I would like to thank the Richard T. Newman Family Endowed Fund for Language Study Internships for providing me with the opportunity to conduct this internship, and I’m excited to keep learning.
Rob White ’85 Endowed Internship Fund

A Summer of Service
Kevin Tran ’25
Sociology and Anthropology
OCA-Greater Houston | Houston, Texas

This summer, I had the opportunity to return home to Houston, TX, and work with OCA-Greater Houston. I would like to deeply thank the Rob White ’85 Endowed Internship Fund, which provided the necessary funding to offset my internship expenses and allow me to solely focus on making an impact with my internship. Thank you for your generous support in making my internship possible – I wouldn't have been able to pay it forward through my advocacy work without your help.

My summer at OCA-Greater Houston was very eventful, as this summer was OCA's 50th anniversary, and the annual national convention was being held in D.C. One of my main roles as a Summer Programs Intern was providing event support at community-hosted festivals and conferences. This included creating and revising flyers about community programs beforehand, occasionally providing audio and video support, and providing logistical support. Toward the end of my internship, I had the opportunity to assist with a grant for my chapter by consolidating information and generating a database of cultural organizations across Houston. These experiences helped me improve upon my communication skills through writing/speaking, working effectively in teams, and my civic skills.

One particular experience that helped me improve upon these skills was when I created a flyer on a new federal program called the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). ACP would allow qualifying families to receive reduced rates from internet providers to make high-speed internet affordable. The idea of the flyer was simple, but the thought process behind it was multi-faceted. I had to research and reinterpret the information on ACP to make it understandable for families with limited English proficiency. I learned that the language barrier from the presentation of the information made it difficult for families looking to access government resources. Moreover, I remembered that most families who had limited English proficiency often relied on their children as interpreters, which I could relate to. Therefore, the poster needed to be understandable to somebody with a 5th/6th-grade level of reading, contain all crucial information on ACP and maintain proper graphic design principles. After much research and refinement, the flyer was forwarded to other organizations and OCA chapters looking to start their own initiatives to spread awareness of ACP.

In retrospect, while working on the ACP flyer was a small project, the final product had a greater impact than I had thought. It became a resource for others to use to connect families in need of high-speed internet. Plus, the experience reminded me of the translation challenges I helped my parents overcome when I was younger. It reminded me that there are still generations of families experiencing the same barriers my family once faced, and we need future leaders who have a multi-faceted understanding of the people they serve. I hope to continue civic engagement in the future as I consider career options with the U.S. government in my final years at Carleton. Moreover, I will continue learning and growing as a leader so I can serve my community and leave a positive impact on future generations.
The Role of Art in Medicine

Isabella Vazquez ‘24
Biology
Hennepin County Medical Center | Minneapolis, Minnesota

Healing runs much deeper than providing medications or performing procedures. I was able to witness this first-hand during my summer internship at Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC) in the Inspire Arts Program. I would like to thank the Rob White ’85 Endowed Internship Fund for providing me with the opportunity to engage in this experience.

When I entered HCMC at the beginning of the summer, I knew that I had two strong (and distinct) interests: medicine and art. For much of my education I never believed that these two fields could intersect or inform each other. However, through taking both STEM and art courses at Carleton, I began to see a way I could relate these two topics, and HCMC provided a program that did just that. It recognized the positive effects that non-medical interactions can have on patients—providing creative artistic outlets through trained artists-in-residence and licensed musical therapists.

During my three months at HCMC, I was able to learn from, and work with, these teams, helping a wide range of patients encompassing pediatric, oncology, and palliative departments. At times it was difficult to work with patients. Not only was it emotional, but there were often additional challenges such as language barriers, disabilities, or medical trauma that could make communication difficult. However, these challenges were also the largest areas of growth for me. I was able to understand a fundamental concept that I think can be so quickly forgotten in medicine; we’re all human, and everyone deserves compassion, patience, and empathy. Healthcare can be hard, and it is at times extremely necessary for providers to separate a person from their medical conditions. However, after witnessing hospitals from another perspective, I have learned how important it is to connect with patients and to accept that the person and their medical history are inseparable. Recognizing this has offered a completely new perspective on healthcare. I have watched patients who were initially closed off open up and divulge their love of the arts after five minutes of painting. I have seen patients who were unresponsive relearn how to write their names. I have witnessed patients and family members brought to tears over a song played for them. Overall, I have learned time and again that patients are people, and their souls require just as much treatment as their bodies.

Venturing forward into a career in medicine after Carleton, I know with certainty that I will take these experiences with me. My time at HCMC has changed the way I view patient interactions, in addition to the personal growth and career exploration I achieved. When I began as a Carleton student three years ago, I never could have imagined that my interests in healthcare and the arts could be combined in such a synergistic manner. Now, I could not imagine them ever being distinct. I encourage anyone interested in healthcare to explore the field from a new perspective and to understand that five minutes of connection with a patient can change their outcomes just as much as any prescription.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Navigating the Learning Curve: My Freshman Summer Internship Experience
Gideon Antwi ’26
Undeclared
SayKid | Mound, Minnesota

During my freshman summer, I had the privilege of landing an internship at SayKid, an educational technology company. At the outset, I must admit I was quite apprehensive. It was my very first internship, and I felt that my computer science skills were not quite up to par for the role. However, I approached this opportunity with an eagerness to learn and an open mind, ready to explore different facets of computer science. Although I encountered several challenges, particularly with mastering various software applications, my determination and dedication ultimately allowed me to overcome these obstacles and culminate the internship with a successful final project.

My initial day at the internship held a unique twist; I was traveling abroad at the time, and my first team meeting occurred in an airport. It was during this meeting that we learned about our respective roles and what was expected of us in the upcoming weeks. I was assigned the task of creating a game for one of their products. Initially, it felt like a daunting challenge, after all, I was just starting, and the prospect of developing a game within a limited timeframe seemed daunting. Doubts about my abilities crept in. However, as time progressed, I gained the confidence to tackle the project, largely thanks to the support of my fantastic teammates. Together, we successfully crafted an engaging safari game.

Subsequently, I decided to venture into web development, a whole new realm that presented a steep learning curve. The initial weeks were dedicated to acclimatizing myself to the software, while the remaining time was devoted to debugging the website. Web design posed an entirely different set of challenges compared to game development, as it demanded a comprehensive understanding of various factors to create a site that would resonate with the intended audience.

Through this internship, I am immensely grateful for the numerous opportunities it afforded me to explore my interests and gain self-awareness. I discovered my preferences, strengths, and areas I wish to pursue further. One significant revelation was that front-end development may not be my long-term career path, and I am eager to explore more opportunities in back-end development. To future interns, my advice is to soak up as much knowledge as possible and cultivate relationships with fellow interns because these are the people you will encounter in your chosen field.

Lastly, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship. Without their financial support, I wouldn’t have been able to fully focus on and make the most of this internship. Their generosity allowed me to gain invaluable experiences and insights during this internship, for which I am eternally thankful.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Transforming Mindsets: My Summer at Roote

Nic Berry ’24

Cognitive Science

Roote Foundation | San Francisco, California

This summer, I had the extraordinary experience of interning at Roote. Founded by a Carleton alum, Roote is an educational hub and startup studio with a compelling mission: accelerating personal and collective transformation for humanity’s transition to the Wisdom Age. My internship was unlike any other; it was an exploration, a deep dive into the realms of artificial intelligence, consciousness studies, and Buddhist philosophy. My role was hybrid between research, community engagement, and product development. By the end of the summer, I created a chatbot project that leveraged ChatGPT and was specifically tailored to the knowledge surrounding Buddhism and consciousness studies. I also left with a strong understanding of the current state of AI research and its applications to mental health and the business world.

By the end of my time at Roote, I sharpened the skills that are essential to the future of my career and learning. I honed my ability to weave threads between seemingly disparate disciplines—artificial intelligence, Buddhism, and consciousness studies—into a cohesive narrative. As a cognitive science major, the meshing of these disciplines is precisely what I am most fascinated by, and this opportunity allowed me to practice toying around with how the details of each discipline connect. Interacting with professionals and academics who are pioneers in their unique field of study allowed me to strengthen my communication skills and flex my intellectual curiosity. I ultimately learned to network effectively in this niche community, a skill I did not know I needed but am grateful to have acquired. Further, leading a personal project at Roote was another invaluable practice of managing time and resources, for which Roote’s leadership provided essential feedback. In my time at Roote, one key lesson I gained is the realization that I thrive in interdisciplinary environments. I also learned that I have a passion for ethical considerations in technology, which became apparent as I dove deeper into AI and consciousness studies. This summer has been a roadmap for the intellectual and professional journey I plan to undertake for the rest of my life, ideally in the form of eventually creating my own company with this in mind.

I am incredibly grateful for the community I found at Roote—open-minded individuals who dare to imagine a future where wisdom and technology coexist. I also owe a debt of gratitude to the mentors and experts I was introduced to. Finally, I’d like to extend my sincerest thanks to the funding from Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship, which allowed me to explore life opportunities in such a unique and enriching environment. This summer has been nothing short of life-changing, and I am profoundly grateful for that.

A word of advice to future students: embrace internships that offer you more than just a job title or a line on your CV. Look for experiences that will push your boundaries, challenge your perceptions, and enrich your understanding of the world. Sometimes, the most unconventional opportunities offer the most transformative experiences.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Transiport: Technical Tricks and Communication Skills
Kevin Bui ’24
Computer Science & Mathematics
Transiport | Minneapolis, Minnesota

From January 9th to March 10th, I worked as a software development intern at Transiport LLC, a startup initiative founded by Ammar Babar ’18. Right from the get-go, Ammar was extremely upfront about Transiport’s finances, and given that the company is still in its pre-seed stage it would not be possible for my work to be compensated. Though money wasn’t the driving factor behind my decision to intern at the company, I find the honesty and determination to not take advantage of students looking for experience from my soon-to-be boss extremely motivating. In our very first exchange, we both agreed that these next two months would be a learning opportunity for me and that there were no expectations from me to deliver any functional product. My development as a software engineer was all that mattered, but I also did get Ammar to a verbal 5 to 1 commitment: where for every five hours of work I put in, I would get “compensated” by one hour of his time. This felt fair to me because he was five times more productive than I was.

Needless to say, I spent the next couple of months working closely under Ammar’s tutelage. I implemented a chat system that enabled communication between Transiport’s chat portal and WhatsApp, and in addition, I got to work with Google’s SDK which was something I would’ve never been exposed to as part of my CS degree. One of my biggest takeaways from the experience is this: people weren’t exaggerating when they said that most of your day is spent writing and/or reading documentation. Coding for the computer is easy, but coding for the humans after you is extremely hard. All things considered, I didn’t write that many lines of code, but the few that I did write had a lot of thoughts behind them. Not only did my code have to work, but it also should not cause Ammar to have a random existential crisis as he goes through the review process. Honestly, the communication skills that I’ve gained, both written and verbal, were way more beneficial than the technical tricks I picked up.

Overall, I would say that this has been a very transformative experience for me. It really opened my eyes to the “adult world” of software development, which I’ve only gotten glimpses of over my winter break externship. I can not stress enough how much the donors’ gifts have meant to me as an individual, because I truly believe that these opportunities have all contributed to my tremendous growth since enrolling at Carleton.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Building Black Tech as a Tech BUILD Accelerator Intern at Plait
T'airra Champliss ’24
Computer Science
Wash Day Supply Co. | Chicago, Illinois

This past summer, I was a Tech BUILD Accelerator Intern at Plait, a small-yet-growing business founded by Makini Allwood ’12 that aims to make Black hair-care products more accessible while also empowering Black Owned Beauty Supply Retailers in the industry. The elements of my internship were both business-related and tech-related, though I spent the majority of the time as the tech lead in our small team environment. My entrepreneurial-related responsibilities included: conducting and analyzing a handful of customer discovery interviews; studying product innovation concepts and methods with the team; and participating in company branding and customer marketing brainstorming sessions. My tech-related responsibilities included: building out a PERN Full-Stack application; experimenting with UI/UX by creating several designs in Figma; structuring and managing project documentations; building out the Airtable bases for the inventory prototype and managing that data with Airtable API scripting; and meeting with our Tech Advisor bi-weekly to discuss project management, conflict resolution, and efficiency tips.

As the tech lead, I managed all of the technical elements that we utilized and experimented with; I then would discuss my processes with my supervisor and coworker for feedback; and lastly, I reached out to mentors and resources for help when I was stuck. With the experience I received from being a leader, I also learned that I seriously value mentorship, and now I want a career that also prioritizes that in some capacity. Learning from others who have already been through the process and/or can offer tips and resources takes a lot of stress off of leadership. I also prioritized this summer as a learning experience, so knowing when to pivot when something isn’t working helped me learn a ton of new things in ways I didn’t expect and it usually ends up working out in the end.

The biggest takeaway for me was that I learned to follow what I love; I have a special interest in empowering and being a part of Black Tech, so this opportunity truly solidified that this is what I want to continue to do. Working in this environment, with a supervisor who is very communicative, gives positive and constructive feedback, and is interested in my personhood (and not solely my working capacity) really helped me calm down my imposter syndrome and make mistakes without feeling like a failure. And lastly, I realized that I have new interests in being a designer in addition to being a developer!

The advice I have to give is: 1) Keep your options open! You never know what/who could come along and make things happen for you, and 2) Reach out to alumni! No, seriously. Had I not been encouraged by a friend to reach out to Makini ’12 on LinkedIn, I wouldn’t have had this amazing opportunity. So, as a friend, I’m also encouraging you to reach out to alumni and you may just be surprised by how well it turns out! Thank you to the Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship for this beautiful experience.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Working as a Marketing Data Analytics Intern at Slingwave, Inc.

Evan Christensen ’24

Statistics
Slingwave, Inc. | Minneapolis, Minnesota

My sincerest thanks to Eric Carlson ’66, P’97 and Marilyn Carlson ’66, P’97 and the Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship. Because of their generosity, I was able to spend 10 insightful weeks of my 2023 summer working for Slingwave, Inc. as a Marketing Analytics Intern under team lead Vince Scopino and CEO/Founder Paul Boruta. During my time at Slingwave, I primarily focused on working with Google’s BigQuery, Meta’s Robyn package for R, and visualizations in Looker Studio. While working to create and optimize database queries for datasets to be used in predictive market models, I learned about SQL and further developed my existing skills in R. Later, as I spent time performing exploratory and numerical analysis on the data of clients, I was introduced to some beginner concepts relating to time series within the field of statistics, which I hope to expand upon in my upcoming course on the topic.

Three of the most important skills I improved upon were digital literacy, the ability to analyze and interpret data, and most importantly the application of knowledge and skills in a real-world setting. Through working with provided data, I was allowed to hone my digital literacy in programs like GitHub and languages like SQL and R, and as I proceeded to explore that data graphically and create rough drafts of alternate models, I practiced the analysis and interpretation of said data, all while getting more familiar with the way an analytics company operates using real client data and procedures. One project that comes to mind is the dataset my fellow intern and I were tasked with anonymizing for future demonstration purposes. This project forced us into an appreciation for the importance of confidentiality.

I’m extremely grateful for the lunch and learn opportunities that were provided by Paul Boruta. By enabling the interns to meet with industry professionals and ask personalized questions about their journey, not only were we pushed to develop a greater understanding of how to create a successful career, but also to make meaningful connections that will serve us later in life. Hearing directly from business leaders that the path to success is usually more complex than it seems was encouraging.

If there was one thing I could tell future interns, I would highly recommend embracing flexibility regarding one’s roles and duties within the organization. While working for a start-up, it was made especially clear that some unexpected projects may take precedence over longer-term goals, and although it may seem unrelated to one’s originally assumed duties, it is important to always be available and eager to assist with anything. Though it may sound cliché, this is important: making a good impression on one’s employer is key, and there is always a chance that one may find a new passion in performing a niche task. For instance, I thoroughly enjoyed working with SQL—a language with which I had no experience upon beginning the internship. Once again, I greatly appreciate the opportunity, and wish Slingwave and future Carleton interns the best of luck!
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Community, Land Access, and Environmental Stewardship at Sharing Our Roots
Luisa Cichowski ’24

Philosophy
Sharing Our Roots Farm | Northfield, Minnesota

This summer I had the opportunity to intern at Sharing Our Roots, a nonprofit organization in Northfield. Sharing Our Roots owns over one hundred acres of farmland which they lease in parcels at a highly subsidized price to emerging and immigrant sustainable farmers hoping to build their businesses. Sharing Our Roots also connects these farmers to resources and educational materials. The farm itself operates as a site of community and learning for sustainable agriculture because Sharing Our Roots’ farmers work in such close proximity to one another. Eventually, Sharing Our Roots hopes to create a common land stewardship model fully run by the farmers working on the land.

As an intern, I spent most of my time assisting the Sharing Our Roots leadership team with tasks that had to happen on the farm. I spent a lot of time helping them manage the property: mowing shared spaces to keep the farm tidy and weeds out of the farmers’ fields, weeding and mulching the organization’s perennial crops like elderberry and hazelnut, fixing and organizing equipment, and mitigating thistle in their prairie restoration field. My favorite part about doing these practical, hands-on tasks was getting better at learning how to use tools and fix things. One challenge for me was that I worked lots on my own which made me lonely at times, and I wish I’d been more involved in the social side of Sharing Our Roots’ work. However, this helped me realize that once I am looking for jobs I’ll need to make sure my responsibilities entail working within a social environment, since I noticed this makes me feel more fulfilled.

Overall I really enjoyed my internship this summer and feel like I got a lot out of it. More than anything, I am grateful for the connections I made with Sharing Our Roots staff members, who are all such generous, caring, intelligent people and taught me so much. I felt very supported by the community and the conversations we had throughout the summer. I’m also excited to start a work-study job at Sharing Our Roots in the fall, and remain connected with these great people!

Thank you so much for the generous funding that made my work here possible this summer. Specifically, thanks to the Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship, which funded my internship. I really value this opportunity!
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Navigating the Corporate Landscape: Reflections on My Internship Journey

Norman Colindrez ’25
Mathematics
L.EAF.org, LLC | Rock Hill, South Carolina

I had the privilege of interning at L-EAF (Learning - Educational Agile Framework) over the summer. Looking back on this transformative experience, I am eager to share what I’ve learned and express my gratitude to the funding sponsor who made it all possible. During my internship, I worked on several projects at L-EAF. I began with an intensive onboarding and training program, which let me get to know the team, advisors, and the Kanban framework. We used this framework extensively to document our progress and skills. I was lucky enough to learn about Toyota’s efficient manufacturing program, marketing strategies, and the world of coding and software applications. I was genuinely excited about the exposure I got. As time progressed, I started focusing on organizing a conference. It helped me delve into marketing and promotion efforts, and I learned to optimize our social media presence and create compelling content using tools like Hootsuite. The internship also improved my email correspondence skills, helping me communicate professionally with potential attendees, collaborators, and sponsors.

One of the most challenging yet rewarding aspects of my internship was my involvement in another group of students for the NativityMiguel Coalition project. This project addressed the complex issue of financial literacy. Being entrusted with this task was a point of pride, providing me with a unique opportunity to learn and grow. The experience broadened my skill set and gave me essential insights about myself. While I value collaboration, I also prefer a focused, uninterrupted workflow. This newfound self-awareness has prompted me to consider career paths that align better with my strengths and preferences. While also considering how work management and team organization ensure a balanced workload. The skills I acquired during this internship, such as collaboration, effective communication, marketing, and project management, will help shape my career. These abilities will be valuable assets whether I pursue a path in marketing, project management, or another field.

One surprising aspect was the freedom to devise our marketing approach for the conference. This autonomy allowed me to leverage connections and generate interest successfully. Additionally, I had the privilege of being contacted by the CEO of Kanban, which provided me with invaluable insights and a remarkable opportunity. I am profoundly grateful to the funding sponsor for making this internship possible. Their support enabled me to gain practical experience and valuable skills, benefitting my future endeavors. To fellow students considering internships, embrace every opportunity to learn and grow. Be open to discovering your strengths and preferences, and use each experience to shape your future path. Networking, collaboration, and communication allow for success in any field. In summary, my time at L-EAF for my internship has been an astonishing experience that has completely transformed me. I have gained many skills, learned more about who I am, and have a clearer idea of what I want to achieve on my path to success. I am grateful for the support that made this opportunity and thank the sponsors who made all of this possible.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

A Developer at ACLIS
Paul Claudel Izabayo ’25
Computer Science
ACLIS | Bujumbura, Burundi

During this summer I was granted the opportunity to intern at ACLIS, a startup technology company that operates in Burundi. Going to the company as a full-stack developer, I expected to spend all my time writing lines of code. Instead, I spent most of my time identifying the problem I would like to solve, coming up with a technology solution for the problem, which turned out to be a mobile application, and designing the application. I spent a small portion of the time on the development part of the project.

As I worked on the project, there was a group of people I had to talk to about my progress. I believe that that has massively helped develop my ability to communicate technical information through presentations and in both formal and informal one-on-one conversations. As I progressed through the project, I was introduced to different tools that I need as a developer in these times of fast technical advancement. Not only did I learn to achieve tasks faster but also the results are clearer and more efficient.

The internship also helped me learn new things about myself. Not like I expected, the first stage of the internship was to come up with ideas. To my surprise, I discovered that my ideas flow a lot faster when I talk about them as they come to me. I discovered that I can actually enjoy brainstorming when I get an opportunity to talk to others about my thought process. I also noted that it is easier for me to get things done when I am doing things that I really care about. The strategy of the company which allowed me to identify a problem and develop a solution for it made me feel like I was at the center of the project and it really helped me navigate through it with more understanding and excitement.

This opportunity has helped me learn more about what I want to do versus what I would not like to do. It made me realize what contributions really make me happy, which basically are contributions that really matter. I am so grateful that I got to spend time in Burundi, one of the countries where technology is still not advanced enough. I learned a lot about the state of technology and I believe that it will help me on the journey to making change. I would like to warmly thank Eric Carlson ’66, P’97 and Marilyn Carlson ’66, P’97 for establishing the Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship, without which, all of this would not have been possible. I also thank my supervisor, Senior Sebarundi, as well as the rest of the ACLIS staff for having me and supporting me during this internship.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Elevating Few-shot NER and Thai NER Research: My Internship Journey at VISTEC

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My two-month internship at VISTEC, under the expert guidance of supervisors Weerayut (PhD candidate at VISTEC) and Can (postdoc at VISTEC), has been a remarkable learning experience. This essay sheds light on the pivotal tasks completed, the challenges faced, and the transformative impact of this internship.

Named Entities Recognition, or NER, is one of the crucial tasks in natural language processing. This assignment is to identify and categorize identified entities stated in unstructured text into pre-defined groups, such as person names, organizations, locations, events, time, quantities, dates, percentages, etc. In addition to learning how to complete the NER job in English, this NER research with VISTEC examines how to do it in Thai and other Southeast Asian languages with limited resources (less commonly used and have fewer resources compared to the English language). My internship journey commenced with the utilization of APIs in Visual Studio Code (VSCode) to automate the process of generating named entities into JSON files. Subsequently, I delved into an extensive literature review to understand the project's domain thoroughly. Hyperparameter tuning for a Decomposed-Meta learning model followed, where I systematically optimized parameters to enhance model performance. Moreover, I undertook the creation of a comprehensive dataset tailored for the CoNLL-2003 task, involving data preprocessing, annotation, and validation.

I honed my technical skills by seamlessly integrating APIs in VSCode and effectively utilizing Linux command-line tools for various tasks. These skills are invaluable for future research and development endeavors. Moreover, my internship allowed me to delve deep into the world of research. I learned how to conduct literature reviews, summarize related works, and discern the most relevant information—crucial skills for any researcher. In addition, experimental rigor, and hyperparameter tuning demanded meticulous planning and execution of experiments.

This experience strengthened my ability to design and conduct experiments effectively, a skill I will carry forward in my academic and professional journey. Through this internship, I discovered my capacity for tackling complex technical challenges. I realized that I thrive in environments where problem-solving and innovation are paramount. Moreover, I developed a deeper appreciation for interdisciplinary collaboration, as it was essential in navigating the intricate landscape of AI research.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Career Center and our funding sponsor, Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship, for making this invaluable internship experience possible. I also want to express my sincere appreciation to the VISTEC lab, where I had the privilege to work. I am profoundly grateful to my mentors.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Reaffirmed Interest in Neuroscience
Kat Kresse ’26
Undeclared
Concussion Alliance | Seattle, Washington

This summer, I had the opportunity to work as a Science Writer intern for Concussion Alliance over the course of 8 weeks. I wrote multiple newsletters briefly summarizing different scientific papers, created a page on the Concussion Alliance website on concussions and individuals with pre-existing disabilities, and had the chance to hear from different expert guest speakers on up-to-date concussion research.

One skill I have strengthened is my ability to be able to properly summarize and condense scientific papers and research so that it is easily and properly understood by the general public. This was a lot harder than I thought it would be, but I also feel like as I continue to pursue my interest in medicine and science, it will be very helpful in the years to come. Another skill I strengthened includes my communication, especially when my fellow interns were all in different time zones. Being on call when needed and checking Slack between the hours of 8-5 was very important throughout the internship, which was a new experience for me and an important skill I will use in the future. Finally, I believe I strengthened my technological skills when creating the website page. I had never had to create and format a webpage before, and really enjoyed learning how to use Squarespace to create a final product.

Having suffered from concussions in the past, this internship was very impactful for me to understand the biomechanics of what actually happens when I receive a concussion. The experience and knowledge I have gained from this experience have reaffirmed my interest in neuroscience and also have made me more open to other virtual internships in the future. I was a little bit wary that the entire internship was virtual because I was unsure of how much I would be able to connect with my fellow interns and feel a part of the community. I was pleasantly surprised that this wasn’t an issue at all, and I felt like I made genuine connections and friendships throughout the 8 weeks.

One piece of advice I would give to other students about internships is to try your best to meet other interns and get to know your supervisors as well. One of my favorite parts of the internship was getting the chance to meet students from across the country and hear their stories. Furthermore, I would recommend trying to make your experience your own, and research topics you are most passionate about within the boundaries of the internship. I tried to do this when writing summaries for the newsletters, which made it so much more interesting and fun.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Making a Place
Fiona Liberge ’25
Cognitive Science
Concussion Alliance | Seattle, Washington

My internship at Concussion Alliance was, simply put, a deeply meaningful and memorable experience that I could not recommend more highly. My weekly schedules were meticulously planned by peers and supervisors to make my learning as efficient as possible. I had the opportunity to listen to two guest speakers per week discuss their daily work. Fascinatingly, the material covered never seemed to overlap. Through their lectures, I gained a new appreciation for how many different people and occupations are involved in any given area, even as specific as concussions.

My greatest internship accomplishment was the webpage I created alongside Charley Draheim ’25. Our page addressed the intersection between mental health and concussions, breaking down stigmas about invisible injuries and illnesses. The resource targets high school students to help them deal with possible mental health repercussions due to their concussion and how to seek support from peers, family, school, and extracurricular activities. We included a story wall of videos so readers can understand that they are not alone in their feelings and circumstances. As one of the goals of the internship was to condense scientific literature into more readable material for the general public, I became better and more efficient at scanning articles for their most essential points. It is a specific skill that I am sure will serve me well as I become further entrenched in the neuroscientific field. Additionally, I was very pleasantly surprised by how well the social scene of the fully remote internship went. My supervisors are to credit for the incredible social hour planning, but it would not have been possible without the genuine investment from all of the interns into getting to know one another. I significantly improved my remote communication style, an art that is becoming increasingly necessary.

I once thought that the only way I could do science, make money, and help others was through health care. However, when I got to Carleton, I realized how wrong I was as I started taking more interdisciplinary cognitive science courses and fell in love. This internship called to me since I could interact with the brain in yet another way, this time through the lens of an educator. My first impressions were skeptical since the work was more technical than I had expected, but Concussion Alliance taught me there is no wrong way to be involved in your passions. Honestly, there is barely even the best fit. All that matters is trying new things and seeing what works. While I have unequivocally strengthened my writing and communication skills, I have also gained a greater appreciation for what is possible in my future. You can make a place for yourself anywhere.

I must thank the Carleton Career Center for their continued and valuable support throughout the summer. This would not have been without the generous contributions of Eric Carlson ’66, P97 and Marilyn Carlson ’66, P’97, who established the Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship. I am proud to represent their view of social entrepreneurship through the incredible non-profit organization Concussion Alliance.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Personal and Professional Learning
Keya Mookencherry ’25
Psychology
Concussion Alliance | Seattle, Washington

This summer, I interned as a Science Writer for Concussion Alliance, a "science-based concussion education and advocacy nonprofit." I initially pursued this internship because I have had several concussions from playing soccer. My focus areas for this internship were to improve my science writing skills, learn more about concussions, and work well with new peers. During this internship, we completed various daily activities, usually consisting of Zoom sessions, reading articles or book chapters, attending guest speaker presentations, a Stanford science writing course, writing synopses for the weekly Concussion Alliance newsletter, and more.

The Stanford science writing course and group writing workshops helped me improve my overall science writing capabilities. As I wrote more and more synopses for the weekly newsletter, I had the opportunity to use my expanded knowledge of effective scientific writing. I was able to analyze and translate complicated pathophysiological concepts into writing that a broad concussion patient audience could understand. The second skill I improved was collaborating well while working in a team. The largest project I completed during the internship was creating a whole page for use by athletic trainers for the Concussion Alliance website. I worked on the page with a partner. It required frequent communication and flexibility with work times as the internship was remote, and my partner lived in a state with a different time zone. We made sure to be very clear and concise in our communication to ensure quality work and timely completion. My other area of focus was delving deeper into the understanding of concussions, especially given my knowledge of them. I especially learned much more about neurological concepts and treatments. Before the internship, I knew little about traumatic brain injury (TBI) and chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE). Upon completing the internship, I was glad to have expanded my understanding of what they are and how they impact people worldwide.

On a personal level, this internship aided in a difficult decision I recently had to make. I have been a collegiate athlete and starter on the women's soccer team for two years. However, this year, I decided to step away because I have had several concussions with negative impacts. After all that I learned this summer with the Concussion Alliance, I decided that reducing my risk for another concussion was best for my health and future. This internship also impacted what I’d like to do in the future. I am more interested in pursuing neuropsychology graduate programs. Neuropsychologists work in various clinical settings, seeing patients with movement disorders and even those in concussion clinics.

I am grateful that I got the opportunity to meet so many intelligent individuals while doing research I am very interested in. If I were to advise students considering internships in the future, I’d recommend pursuing an internship that can provide new insight or inspire potential areas of interest. I also encourage frequent communication with supervisors so you can do the best possible work and take initiative. Lastly, I want to thank Conor ’20 and Malayka Gormally ’20 for being incredible mentors. I can’t wait to continue working with them!
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Working on Teamwork, Virtually
Leo Moran ’25
Computer Science
SayKid | Mound, Minnesota

During this summer I was an intern for SayKid, an organization that develops educational games that children can play through their ToyBot. A ToyBot is a stuffed robot with a speaker inside of it that can talk with kids and play games with them. These games are supposed to entertain and educate children without the need of a screen, while also providing the kids a chance to practice their conversational skills. The main goal behind this is to engage with the children in a way that keeps them away from screens that while keeping them distracted, doesn't do as well of a job teaching them. So, while working for SayKid, I helped with developing a few new games that will be integrated into their ToyBots after running a few tests.

One of the first things that I learned was the importance of communication when working in a team remotely. Since my team could not meet in person, we would have to schedule online meeting times where we could discuss the next steps. But we still had moments of misunderstandings where some of us would have different ideas of what we were supposed to be doing. To prevent us from repeating this mistake, I would sometimes write down summaries of what everyone should be doing and check in with them individually to make sure that we were on track. Through these steps, we were able to work together more effectively, and I realized that I don't need to be formal with everyone and that some informality allows for quick communication.

The next thing that I learned was how to write in a way that a kid would understand and the significance behind such writing when creating a story meant for kids. For my team's last project, we decided to create a choose-your-own-adventure story where the child would go around the forest befriending monsters. None of us thought much about the language we were using, and this led to us having issues when working on the content. Thankfully, our supervisor DeLonn Crosby was able to help us with this problem and we learned how to write in a way that a child would understand.

Throughout this experience I found myself relying on my supervisor Crosby who has not only pushed my team into being better game developers but has also been flexible with helping us with any issues that we had. He created a safe working space where we felt comfortable with experimenting with new things, and I am thankful for all he has done to support us. So, my advice to any future applicants to SayKid would be to not be afraid to try new things since Crosby wants this internship to be a chance for them to learn. But I would have never been able to take this chance if not for Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship which provided me with the necessary funds to afford the time spent working for SayKid.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Embracing Agility: Lessons from a Summer Internship at L-EAF

Narjis Nusaibah '26
Undeclared
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This summer, I embarked on an enriching journey as an intern at Learning - Educational Agile Framework (L-EAF), a K-12 educational company with a visionary mission: to infuse the principles of Agility and Agile Transformations into the educational sector. Their commitment extends to providing institutions, faculty, students, and parents with the tools and guidance needed to transition from traditional educational management models to a student-centered approach. In the course of this transformative experience, I delved deep into Agile principles and methodologies, immersing myself in a wealth of online resources, books, and relevant literature. Armed with this knowledge, I applied those Agile principles and methodologies to successfully manage and execute projects, demonstrating adaptability and proficiency in project management.

As I reflect on my journey, three vital skills have risen to the forefront. Firstly, I have honed my ability to embrace the possibility of my ideas not meeting the mark. This internship has taught me the value of exploring alternative approaches without being disheartened by initial setbacks. Secondly, I have actively sought and welcomed feedback from my colleagues and supervisors. This openness to critique has allowed me to pinpoint areas for improvement and fueled my personal growth. Lastly, I improved my digital literacy significantly, gaining expertise in social media marketing strategies using Hootsuite and honing my video editing skills. I became adept at fostering teamwork and effective collaboration, all while expanding my digital toolkit. These skills have opened up new avenues for creative expression and communication, which I believe will be invaluable in my future endeavors.

This internship experience has also unveiled key insights about myself. I’ve learned that I thrive in an environment that values continuous improvement and embraces change. It has become evident that I am most motivated and fulfilled when working on projects that align with my passion for educational innovation and transformation. Looking ahead, I am eager to utilize the wealth of experience gained during my internship to chart my future path. Armed with a deep understanding of Agile principles and methodologies, I aspire to contribute to the advancement of education, fostering a more dynamic and student-centric approach.

For all these opportunities and growth, I am immensely grateful to the Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship, generously established by Eric Carlson ’66, P’97 and Marilyn Carlson ’66, P’97. Their support enabled me to immerse myself in the world of entrepreneurship and educational transformation, an experience that has profoundly shaped my perspective and aspirations. In closing, if I were to offer advice to other students considering internships, it would be this: Embrace every challenge as an opportunity to learn and grow. Be open to feedback, seek diverse perspectives, and approach every setback as a stepping stone to success. Most importantly, never underestimate the power of the unexpected. It’s often in moments of uncertainty that we discover our true potential and passion.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Entering the World of Software Development
Ntense Obono ’25
Computer Science
SayKid | Mound, Minnesota

My summer internship has been an incredible journey of personal and professional growth, thanks to the support of DeLonn Crosby and SayKid. I embarked on this transformative experience in the world of software development, gaining insights into teamwork, time management, and personal development. At the beginning of my internship, I was filled with excitement and curiosity, not knowing what to expect. I joined a team of four to develop a voice-activated football game for young children, with the goal of both entertaining and educating them about the game. As the weeks passed, I encountered various challenges, each offering unique opportunities for growth.

One of the pivotal moments in my internship was when I was entrusted with the task of designing the entire game on my own. Initially, this task was daunting as I was fairly new to the development tools and struggled to navigate through them. This experience taught me the importance of collaboration. I had initially hesitated to ask for help due to fear of embarrassment, but I soon realized that seeking assistance is a sign of strength. My peers and mentors were eager to share their knowledge, creating a supportive environment that helped me improve my skills in critical thinking, user testing, and debugging. Eventually, I became comfortable with my abilities and no longer needed constant help. As I became more familiar with the development resources, I discovered my ability to work independently. With the knowledge I had gained, I tapped into my creativity and problem-solving skills to create an interactive football game that I am immensely proud of. This experience boosted my confidence and illuminated my potential to contribute to projects autonomously, making the game more realistic with in-depth calculations on pass completion, incomplete passes, fumbles, and crucial moments in a football game. Upon the conclusion of my internship, I reflect on the friendships I formed and the milestones I achieved. The virtual escape room experience highlighted the camaraderie among my co-interns, emphasizing the importance of building lasting relationships in the professional world. My contribution to the AI interactive game reaffirmed my dedication to software development and my commitment to continuous growth. Looking ahead, I am excited about the opportunities to expand my knowledge and skills in software development. My path is clear, and I am determined to become a proficient software developer.

In conclusion, my summer internship was a period of transformative growth, learning, and self-discovery. The challenges I faced, whether in teamwork, remote work, or independence, have shaped my perspective and honed my abilities. I am immensely grateful to SayKid for making this experience possible and to my peers, mentors, and colleagues who supported me throughout this journey. As I move forward, I carry with me the valuable lessons learned, the relationships formed, and the enthusiasm for what lies ahead in my career.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Software Developer at Virtual Viking Longship Project
Kritika Pandit ’26
Undeclared
Grinnell College | Grinnell, Iowa

During the summer, I had the chance to explore Virtual Reality (VR) development through the Virtual Viking Longship Project, supported by a Digital Humanities Advancement Grant. This collaboration between Carleton College and Grinnell College aimed to create an immersive VR experience showcasing Viking Age longships. I’m grateful to the Carleton Career Center for their support in securing funding from the Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship, established by Eric Carlson ’66, P’97 and Marilyn Carlson ’66, P’97, in honor of Bob Will ’50, P’82, P’85.

During the internship, I acquired a diverse skill set and learned about effective collaboration. At the core was my immersion in VR development using Unity and C# scripting. Starting from scratch, I transitioned from uncertainty to enthusiasm as I engaged with VR games and projects. This fueled my passion for crafting unique VR experiences and provided a solid foundation. With guidance from my supervisors and colleagues, I delved into immersive VR development tutorials using Unity with the goal of becoming proficient. The adaptable curriculum allowed me to learn at my own pace, focusing on building foundational skills. This journey included exploring VR software setup, events and interactions, and essential considerations like ergonomics, lighting, and optimization. Venturing into coding in C# marked a transformative phase.

Collaborating closely with my teammates, we crafted a Unity project centered on a Viking-inspired chest. Additionally, we introduced an engaging rowing mini-game, incorporating mixed reality elements. In this game, participants could physically row a Viking ship using a tangible stick, blurring the lines between the virtual and real worlds. Leveraging the skills we had acquired, we aimed to infuse cultural relevance and interactivity into our VR experience. This collaborative effort allowed us to apply our theoretical knowledge effectively, bridging the gap between learning and practical application. The four-day field trip to Moorhead, Minnesota, was a highlight of our project. At the Hjemkomst Center, we had the opportunity to observe an authentic Viking ship and engage in interviews with crew members who had firsthand experience sailing on it. This experience provided us with valuable insights and reference material essential for our ongoing VR model development. It was an educational and inspiring journey, and the knowledge gained from hearing the crew members’ real-life experiences added meaningful value to our project.

Aligning personal values like responsibility, patience, and connection with professional growth enriched my experience. Balancing my internship and personal time renewed my enthusiasm and energy, contributing to both well-being and productivity. This internship has given me a solid foundation for my future aspirations in computer science and digital arts. The knowledge gained, coupled with a deeper appreciation for collaboration and values alignment, will guide my endeavors in the ever-evolving landscape of VR development. Inspired by the Viking ship project, I look forward to exploring new avenues in this field.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Stepping Stones of Learning and Growth
Doug Pham ’25
Computer Science
Bim Designs | Rochester, Minnesota

Before I begin, I would like to take the time to thank Luke Lightning ’93, who was my supervisor during my time at Bim Designs. I had the pleasure of talking to him in person and he was very kind and already open to me working there. Once I had accepted the position, he was always communicating with me about my progress and helping me along the way even without any coding experience. I would also like to thank Luke Klefstad and everyone at the Career Center for allowing me to have the opportunity to work at this internship since it was unpaid and through the funding I was able to work without worrying about living away from home.

Over the course of my internship at Bim Designs, I was able to work on two different projects, learn some concepts about machine learning, and research the different aspects of Building Information Modeling (BIM) and how it is useful. I would say the three most important skills that I have strengthened from this experience are my ability to critically think, creative thinking, and communicating my work through speaking/presentation skills. One key lesson that I learned about myself from this internship was that, especially in a remote environment, it can be very easy to get distracted since I am not surrounded by a work environment. I dealt with this by putting myself in a more productive environment and that really helped me to focus on my work. I found places such as libraries or coffee shops to be very effective. This experience has definitely helped me learn how to talk about my past work. I felt in the past during interviews that I struggled to effectively talk about past projects I have worked on and having to present my work at Bim Designs, I now have more practice with this skill. One thing that I learned that I found surprising during the week I spent learning about machine learning, was how advanced training a machine learning model is and the variety of learning methods you can use to create the strongest model.

Overall I am extremely grateful for this opportunity and all the amazing people that I was able to meet this summer. I have always had a passion for learning new concepts and this internship has really helped me to learn a lot of new things that I have never had exposure to before. My advice to any students who are interested in getting an internship is to start early and ask questions. The Career Center is amazing at finding internship opportunities as well as any résumé or interview practice you need help with. I also recommend reaching out to alumni as they are always looking to help out fellow Carleton students. I connected with Luke ’93, my supervisor, who gave me this position late in the summer when I was scrambling to find another internship after the one I had previously had to cancel their internship program.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Carb Diem! Seize The Bagel: Reflecting on My Time at DoughCo Bagels
Aaron Rice ’25
Economics
DoughCo Bagels | Chappaqua, New York

During my time at DoughCo, I was entrusted with significant creative freedom in managing the company’s social media accounts, with a primary focus on Instagram and TikTok. Instagram, being our platform with the largest following, was managed with a structured approach in order to create an informative and recognizable feel, while TikTok allowed for more open and experimental content creation. Both outlets required the attention of my photography background to produce professional-level advertisements.

One key lesson I learned about myself was the value of seeking guidance when needed. Initially hesitant to ask questions, I quickly understood that seeking clarity is essential for achieving goals efficiently. As the internship progressed, I became more confident in my abilities and asked fewer questions. In turn, I was able to improve my communication skills with employees and customers.

I plan to use the experience gained during this internship to guide my future path by continuing to build my skills in digital marketing and content creation. I believe that my contributions to expanding DoughCo’s online presence will be valuable in my future career endeavors, as I learn how to target my audience in an efficient manner. Researching and understanding copyright laws also became a critical aspect of my role. I was surprised by the differences in audio rights between TikTok and Instagram. TikTok pays for many audio rights, whereas Instagram pays for a much more limited selection. This insight highlighted the importance of legality in marketing campaigns.

While in New York, I was fortunate enough to work with passionate colleagues and bagel enthusiasts in New York. Connecting with coworkers, engaging with customers at farmer’s markets, and even discussing investment opportunities with a small business owner provided me with invaluable insights into effective communication and the financial side of the business.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship. DoughCo is a startup so its resources are limited and paying an intern is difficult. However, I was able to gain valuable work experience through my travels to New York this summer that otherwise would not have been possible. Furthermore, this internship helped me learn lessons that every student seeking an internship should hear. I would now advise these students to embrace creative freedom, seek clarity through effective communication, and always be prepared to adapt and learn new skills. Additionally, don’t underestimate the value of social connections in marketing, as personal networks can significantly boost the reach of your content. Lastly, be proactive in researching relevant legal aspects, as understanding copyright and other regulations can prevent complications in marketing campaigns and expansion plans.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

An Enriching Journey: My Summer Internship at SayKid

Muno Siyakurima ’24
Computer Science
SayKid | Mound, Minnesota

Internships provide a unique opportunity for students to bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world application. This past summer, I embarked on a transformative journey as an intern at SayKid, a company specializing in voice interactive games for children. Over the course of ten weeks, I delved into the world of game development, honing new skills, and discovering valuable insights about myself. My role as an intern at SayKid was dynamic and multifaceted. From the very first week, I was introduced to cutting-edge tools such as Voiceflow and Airtable, which were instrumental in crafting immersive voice interactive games. I actively contributed to the development of two games: an “I Spy” game and a “Choose Your Own Adventure” game. The latter, in particular, became my primary focus starting in week four.

Collaboration was at the heart of our efforts. I worked closely with a talented team of interns. Weekly check-ins with my supervisor provided crucial guidance, ensuring my work aligned with the company’s vision. Throughout my internship, I acquired and strengthened several essential skills including gaining proficiency in using Voiceflow and Airtable, tools I had never encountered before. These technical skills are not only valuable for my future in software development but also for other technology-driven fields. Working within a creative team enhanced my collaboration and communication skills. It taught me the importance of leveraging diverse perspectives to create a more engaging end product. As the internship progressed, I learned to adapt to changing priorities and project requirements. This flexibility is a valuable skill that can be applied to any professional setting.

My internship experience also offered significant self-discovery. I realized that I am deeply passionate about merging creativity with technology to create interactive and engaging experiences for people. This experience also reinforced my belief in the importance of lifelong learning. I’m committed to staying updated with emerging technologies and industry trends.

I am most grateful for the incredible support and guidance I received from my colleagues and supervisor at SayKid. Their mentorship and camaraderie were invaluable in shaping my internship experience. Furthermore, I am more grateful to the Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship for providing me with the funding necessary for me to undertake this internship and continue developing my technical skills as I prepare to go into the job market.

In conclusion, my internship at SayKid was an enriching experience that provided me with valuable skills, self-discovery, and a clear direction for my future career. It reaffirmed my passion for creativity and technology and instilled in me the belief that with dedication and a thirst for knowledge, I can achieve my professional goals.
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Education For All
Brandon Szeto ’25
Computer Science
SayKid | Mound, Minnesota

During my time with SayKid, I was tasked to create a screenless basketball game that could be played by anyone. Throughout the journey of making the game, I strengthened three important skills which are creative thinking, critical thinking skills, and the ability to communicate through writing. I was able to do so simply by the projects I was assigned with. Furthermore, since my experience was primarily remote, communicating effectively through the web like Slack, has been enhanced greatly by this experience.

The key lesson that I learned about myself is that I cannot always push things off until the last minute. Although it did not come back to hurt me during this internship, it is not a good habit to maintain and is something that I will actively be trying to change. The next thing is how I need to find something that I am passionate about to work on. During my time with SayKid, the work never truly felt strenuous as I enjoyed every step of the way. There wasn’t a moment I did not enjoy, and it did not even feel like I was working, since I was heavily invested in the project.

Using the skills, I have learned from the internship, will help me work well in groups as well as communicate through text. These are all important skills that are necessary to be successful in the future, and now that they have become a habit, I will continue to build on them to improve. The thing that surprised me the most was how much work it takes to make a skeleton model of a game. I now have a greater appreciation for game developers and am in awe of their talent. Building my game was difficult, and took me almost the entire internship, but these developers create these games so consistently, which is amazing.

Knowing this was a big opportunity for me, I am grateful that I squeezed all that I could from the opportunity and am beyond satisfied with the knowledge I have gained. Simultaneously, I was able to work with some amazing people that I will connect with in the foreseeable future. For example, one key obstacle I faced that helped me grow was communication through text and being flexible. My team had three people in three time zones, which made it difficult to communicate and meet. However, we were able to effectively communicate our way through the problem, which is a skill I need to have in the future.

Some advice I would give would be to make the most out of your opportunity and to ask a lot of questions. The people there are a resource for you to learn from. There is a lot to learn as many people have different unique talents. I would like to thank SayKid, Delonn Crosby, Carleton College, and everyone who was a part of the Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship fund. Without all of you guys, none of this would’ve been possible and I cannot thank you guys enough!
Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship

Robot Arm Development
Yiming Xia ’24
Computer Science & Physics
VisionX | San Jose, California

My internship focuses on engineering, specifically the design and development of a bin-picking robot arm. The robot arm is divided into three main components: the arm itself, the hand, and the machine vision system. I am primarily responsible for the hand, but I also coordinate between the other two groups because for the hand to successfully grab something, it needs the spatial coordinates provided by the machine vision system and the arm has to deliver the hand to the right place with the right posture.

During my internship, I was involved in a wide range of tasks, including market research, 3D modeling, prototyping, testing, and programming. These activities allowed me to acquire valuable technical skills and gain hands-on experience. Furthermore, I gained a deeper insight into how each step contributes to the entire development process, providing me with invaluable information upon which to base my future career path. In addition to technical skills, my internship also provided an opportunity for me to enhance my soft skills. Teamwork, creative thinking, and problem-solving abilities have seen significant improvement as a result of this experience. For instance, I proposed the idea of creating a separate group for the people working on the robot arm project, separate from the larger group. This change enabled us to exchange ideas more efficiently, receive quicker feedback, and significantly enhance our group dynamics. Through brainstorming with my group members, I designed a novel gripper that is specifically suited for picking items on retail store shelves.

I’ve also gained valuable insights about myself during this internship. Because the company is located in California, I had to work remotely. I particularly enjoyed the flexibility in managing my work schedule. This allowed me to make the most of my summer, like shifting work time around so I could go camping with my dad who was coming to visit. However, remote work has its challenges. All my interactions with fellow engineers are online, which can make our relationships feel less personal. I initially thought I would enjoy working from home, but now I realize that I much prefer in-person work.

Lastly, I want to thank the Career Center, for all the help with applying, interviews, and financing my internship. And a word of advice for other students looking for internships: start as soon as possible and don’t fixate on getting the perfect internship, just having the experience will help you a lot.
Establishing My Career in Data Science
Hank Zhao ’24

Statistics
Slingwave, Inc. | Minneapolis, Minnesota

During my summer at Slingwave, I had the incredible opportunity to immerse myself in the world of marketing analytics. As a Data Analyst Intern, my primary responsibilities included managing and analyzing clients’ advertising data, which required extensive working with tools like R and BigQuery. This experience was not only enlightening but also transformative, shaping my perspective on my own skills and career aspirations.

From this internship, I honed three essential skills that I consider invaluable for my future endeavors. Firstly, I strengthened my data analysis skills, learning to extract meaningful insights from complex datasets. Secondly, I gained expertise in more complex regression modeling using R’s best package, enabling me to better discern user activity trends. Lastly, I learned more advanced theories and tools in the field of marketing analytics, through investigating a pilot project that implemented Meta’s Robyn package for Marketing Mix Modeling automation, enhancing my ability to drive innovation and efficiency. The most significant lesson I learned from this experience is the importance of the ability to embrace emerging technologies. The marketing analytics industry is rapidly evolving, and my research on competitors highlighted the transformative potential of generative AI methodologies. This insight has pushed me to stay updated with industry trends and continuously enhance my skill set to remain competitive in the field.

I am most grateful for the mentorship and guidance I received from my colleagues and supervisors at Slingwave, such as the CEO Paul, who offered me this internship opportunity and provided useful guidance along the way, and also my team manager Vince, who was always happy to help me both in terms of projects and career development. Their willingness to share their knowledge and provide continuous feedback was invaluable in my growth as a data analyst. To chart my path forward, I plan to leverage the experience gained during this internship to pursue a career in data analytics and marketing. I am excited to continue exploring emerging technologies and methodologies to remain at the forefront of the industry. Moreover, I aim to maintain the spirit of collaboration and innovation that I cultivated during this internship in all my future endeavors.

For other students considering internships, my advice is to approach each opportunity with an open mind and a willingness to learn. Don't be afraid to ask questions, seek guidance, and take on challenging projects. Every experience, no matter how small, can contribute to your personal and professional growth. Finally, stay curious and adaptable, as the world of data analytics is ever-evolving, and a thirst for knowledge will serve you well in your journey. In conclusion, my summer internship was a transformative experience that equipped me with essential skills, valuable lessons, and a deeper understanding of the evolving field of marketing analytics. I am excited to apply these learnings to shape my future career. Specifically, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the donors of the Robert E. Will ’50 Endowed Internship Fund in Social Entrepreneurship, whose generous support made my internship experience possible.
Unveiling the Layers of My Internship Journey

Liwei Weng ’25

Political Science/International Relations
City of Northfield | Northfield, Minnesota

As I embarked on my internship journey with my local city’s government, I had the privilege of working under the guidance of Risi Karim, the assistant to the city administrator. This experience has been nothing short of transformative, allowing me to gain a profound understanding of the inner workings of local government and the importance of resource allocation in implementing sustainable policies.

During my internship, I had the opportunity to delve into various aspects of local governance. My primary responsibility was to assist in the implementation of the city’s new recycling and composting policies. To support this initiative, I undertook the task of creating a comprehensive resource guide. This guide served as a communication thread for local businesses, nonprofit organizations, and community members, offering a roadmap to navigate the intricacies of the recycling policy. In addition to my role in resource guide creation, I participated in enlightening tours of the city’s energy and water treatment facilities. These excursions provided me with firsthand insights into the critical infrastructure that sustains our community. Understanding the inner workings of these facilities underscored the crucial role of responsible resource management in ensuring the well-being of our city’s residents. I gained critical research skills in this internship. Crafting the resource guide demanded extensive research, data collection, and synthesis. I honed my ability to gather relevant information efficiently and distill it into an easily digestible format, a skill I recognize as invaluable in various professional contexts. The internship also required clear and concise communication with diverse stakeholders, from city officials to community organizations. My ability to effectively convey information and document policies and procedures saw significant improvement, which will undoubtedly serve me well in future roles.

My internship experience has illuminated several key lessons about myself. I discovered a genuine passion for community engagement and sustainable development. Witnessing the positive impact of well-implemented policies on local residents inspired me to explore career avenues that align with this passion. I also realized my capacity to adapt to new environments and tasks. The internship presented diverse challenges, and my ability to remain flexible and learn quickly emerged as a valuable asset. Most importantly, the experience reinforced my commitment to continuous learning. It underscored the importance of seeking knowledge and experiences that expand my horizons.

Looking ahead, I plan to leverage the skills and insights gained during my internship to guide my future endeavors. I aspire to pursue a career that combines my newfound passion for community engagement and my honed skills in research, communication, and critical analysis. Whether in the public sector, nonprofit organizations, or private industry, I aim to contribute to initiatives that promote sustainable development and community well-being. I am most grateful for the guidance and mentorship provided by Risi Karim and the entire city administration team. Their support and willingness to share their knowledge enriched my internship experience immeasurably. Additionally, I am thankful for the opportunity to contribute to the betterment of my community, a privilege that has left an indelible mark on my personal and professional growth.
Sam ‘75 and Meg Woodside Endowed Fund for Career Exploration

A Recipe for Growth: One Summer, One Center, and Me

Ben More ‘24

Spanish

Community Action Center of Northfield | Northfield, Minnesota

My time as a Food Access Intern at the Northfield Community Action Center this past summer denoted numerous firsts for me: among others, my first full-time job, my first time in charge of a project, and my first time smelling rotten potatoes. I can assure the reader that this latter experience is the only one I would not repeat and that every moment at the CAC carried valuable lessons that I will not soon forget.

The Community Action Center operates two food shelves in Northfield, one on-site and one in the Northfield Community Education Center (NCEC). At the CAC location, the volunteers and I received incoming shipments from local businesses and stocked the shelves each morning. Then, I would spend the day working the “check-out” line (this meant weighing peoples’ carts). On Thursdays, I would work the check-in desk at NCEC.

I applied for the CAC position primarily to improve my Spanish. As it turned out, that was exactly what happened. Roughly half of our clients spoke Spanish as their primary language, which meant it was often my job to address Spanish-speaking clients. I had to be quick, confident, and coherent, a challenge that I sometimes avoided in the classroom. As I built up my communication skills, they aided me in ways I did not predict. Once, a Spanish-speaking man came through the checkout line; after I helped him with his things, he told me he didn’t have many American friends yet and asked if we could be friends. He ended up keeping me company during many of my shifts, and I credit this internship for giving me the confidence to carry on our conversations.

The CAC additionally made me more comfortable taking initiative and making myself part of the group. In the morning, when the volunteers were split off doing their tasks, I could not always wait to be told what to do, or I would not get a task. With my supervisor’s help, I soon realized that I was not helpless in these situations. I could go find volunteers who needed extra help, or I could look for undone tasks and do them myself. It was sobering to find myself working alongside people of vastly different ages and backgrounds, and the resulting feeling of responsibility was empowering.

Finally, I learned to be calm under pressure. At NCEC, the day begins with a large group of regular clients all clamoring to get in. The first few times I checked these people in, I became flustered, but I eventually devised a system for moving people through the line steadily. As I familiarized myself with the process, I noticed that the guests seemed more comfortable, too.

After working at the CAC, I have no doubt that food access work will be a part of my life forever, volunteer or otherwise. I am thankful for the warm welcome I received and the responsibilities I was allowed and, most of all, I am immensely grateful to Sam ‘75 and Meg Woodside for giving me the funding I needed for this internship.
This past summer I worked at the Loving Eyes Foundation (LEF) which is based out of the UCSF medical school. LEF is a non-profit organization co-founded by Dr. Frank Brodie ’05, whose main goal is to provide cost-effective custom-fit glasses to children with facial abnormalities. Traditional manufacturing of custom glasses is prohibitively expensive for many families due to the need for facial measuring by a professional and injection molding costs. What LEF does is utilize a proprietary iPhone application to scan the faces of patients; this scan is easy to take and does not require extensive training. Once the scan is taken a model is created in CAD which is then 3D printed. By simplifying the production process from injection molding to 3D printing, and streamlining the measurement process, LEF is able to bring costs down and make these glasses accessible to more patients.

I came to meet Dr. Brodie ’05 through a research position that I had two summers ago. My advisor during that time learned that I was attending Carleton and then introduced me to Dr. Brodie because we shared that connection. My primary work this summer was analyzing internal statistics within the glasses design and production process. I was looking at the time that each step of the process took: from the initial scan of a patient to when they received perfectly fitting glasses. I also worked on several fundraising projects during the summer, including preparing the annual LEF newsletter. During my time at LEF, I was fortunate enough to be able to attend several conferences where Dr. Brodie was speaking, including the 2023 Bay Area Opthalmology course held at Stanford University throughout the month of July.

I found these conferences to be especially valuable to me for two main reasons: 1) the content that was discussed and 2) the people I was able to meet. There were doctors from all over the country and it was fascinating to meet them and get the chance to discuss their journey to where they are today in their career path. The most surprising thing that I learned from these conversations was how varied the paths are to a medical career; there were many different degrees that people had and many different forms of training that they went through.

I am so grateful for this experience. It was valuable for me to see these varied paths because it helped me plan out my own journey toward my goal of becoming a doctor. Furthermore, the work that I did was rewarding to me because of how much it improved the lives of patients. I had the opportunity to speak with several parents whose children had received finalized glasses and it was striking how much their lives changed with the ability to see properly.

I would like to thank Dr. Brodie, Samantha Secrist, and Dr. de Alba for an amazing summer. I would also like to thank the Carleton Career Center and the Sam ’75 and Meg Woodside Endowed Fund for Career Exploration which made this entire experience possible.
For eight weeks, I worked as a research intern in the Loddenkemper Lab at Boston Children’s Hospital. Throughout my internship experience, I have gained valuable knowledge and skills that will undoubtedly shape my future career aspirations - being a clinical psychologist working in a hospital setting. Working in a hospital and shadowing my principal investigator, Dr. Loddenkemper, has provided me with a sense of purpose, allowing me to witness firsthand the impact research work can have on patients’ lives. From navigating complex research tools to collaborating with my intern teammates, this internship has been a transformative journey of learning and personal growth in my research skills.

One of the key skills I acquired during this internship was the ability to collect data using complicated research tools such as Redcap and PowerChart. Initially, the familiarization process of these tools seemed daunting, but with the guidance of my mentor, I quickly learned how to effectively and efficiently gather data from these tools. This has not only enhanced my technical abilities but has also instilled in me a sense of confidence in handling complex systems. Another significant aspect of my internship involved presenting my progress and presenting complex journal articles. These experiences fostered my communication skills and sharpened my ability to convey complex information concisely and effectively. Presenting my progress to my mentor and colleagues not only allowed me to showcase my accomplishments but also provided an opportunity for constructive feedback, which further fueled my growth. Summarizing and analyzing journal articles helped me strengthen my research skills and broaden my understanding of the field, giving me a solid foundation for future scholarly endeavors.

I am very grateful for my supervisor and principal investigator whose unwavering support and guidance have been instrumental in my growth throughout this internship. My supervisor’s willingness to always have an open door and answer my questions has been invaluable. I owe much of my progress and success to their mentorship, and I will always cherish the lessons I learned from them. I would also like to express my gratitude to my intern teammates. Our close collaboration and shared dedication to our projects have made this experience even more enriching. Working together, we fostered a supportive and collaborative environment, where we could rely on each other’s strengths and knowledge to accomplish our common projects - from collecting home medications from patients to checking/cleaning control groups’ data. The teamwork we developed will undoubtedly serve as a foundation for future professional relationships.

In conclusion, this internship has provided me with invaluable lessons, skills, and experiences that have shaped my personal and professional growth; it helped me lay a strong foundation for a successful career in the healthcare field. Thank you Sam Woodside ’75, Meg Woodside, and the Sam ’75 and Meg Woodside Endowed Fund for Career Exploration. Your unwavering generosity has made this internship a reality for me, and I cannot express enough how deeply grateful I am for your kind support.
As a kid, my favorite subject was always math. As I took more advanced classes, I realized I enjoyed applied math much more than theoretical. That’s why this past summer I applied and attended a Biostatistics internship through UTMB. This internship was seven weeks in Galveston, Texas. There were a total of 12 interns. Every morning at eight-thirty am, a shuttle came to take us to UTMB. Then, at four pm, another shuttle brought us back to our houses.

While we were at UTMB, the first half of the day was dedicated to lectures taught by the senior biostatisticians faculty there. We learned many skills in the programming language R such as how to find basic numbers such as mean, median, and mode by writing coding in R, learned regression analysis, and briefly touched on other ways to analyze and manipulate data given to us. We would then have a lunch break together. The last half of the day consisted of one-on-one meetings with our Principal Investigators and assigned Biostaticians so we could get data, ask questions, and much more.

In my specific project, I was partnered up with a girl I lived with and we selected to work with Dr. David Beasley. He gave us sets of data from his Flavivirus research and research papers so we could get familiar with what we were working with. He was very flexible and available to work with us and was helpful in answering questions related to his research. He even let us sit in on some experiments done by his lab technician in his BSL-3 Lab. This was located in the UTMB Galveston National Lab and we were the only group that had access to go in. This was a bizarre and rewarding experience to be able to see and learn from. After passing the background checks needed to go in, Dr. Beasley was kind enough to give us a tour of the building.

Through this internship, I learned and improved many important skills such as perseverance, critical thinking, and teamwork. All this was needed to be able to work effectively with our PI, Biostatistician, and partner. From this, I’ve learned that I am great at communicating and working together with others. Some key lessons that I’ve learned are that perseverance and a good work ethic combined with collaboration can solve many issues such as errors in code and miscommunication. Having this experience ignited a love for statistics and made me want to move forward on this path. For students doing internships, I recommend being open to getting to know others and making important connections. This is key to having a great time learning and having fun. I am grateful for this internship because I have made many personal connections with people and I had a great learning experience and time in Galveston. Thank you so much to Carleton and the funding I got from the Sam ’75 and Meg Woodside Endowed Fund for Career Exploration. I am eternally grateful because I have grown so much from this opportunity.
Social Justice Internships

Pro Bono Law Internship
Nayi Abdi ’25
Psychology
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota | Saint Paul, Minnesota

This summer I held a 10-week internship at the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota (ILCM) in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I was a pro bono intern to an immigration attorney named Tracy Roy. My main tasks were updating client lists, calling clients, reviewing their DACA cases, and planning and executing a “Driver’s License for All” event with the other interns. I did other things as well including inputting client information into the server used by the organization (Legal Server) and translation work with both clients and texts. This internship taught me more about immigration and the pro bono work that goes into helping those in need. As a non-profit, ILCM prides itself on assisting clients to the best of their abilities and referring those they can’t help to someone who can. I got to learn about the different laws and procedures that go into someone’s immigration journey. In addition to DACA cases, I got to work on some naturalization cases where green card holders were looking to become citizens. Going into this internship I always questioned whether or not I wanted to go into law school and having an in-depth scope into what law school entails and what practicing law looks like, I have learned that I do not intend to go to law school. Honestly, this experience allowed me to answer a lingering uncertainty and has put me on the path I want to go on for my career. It allowed me to see how much I enjoy helping people in turmoil and cemented my choice of major, psychology.

As stated before, this internship taught me a lot of valuable lessons, but one thing that surprised me was how flexible the schedule was. I went in thinking that the whole internship was in person, only to realize that it was hybrid and I could work from home most of the week. This helped a lot with my work-life balance and allowed me to enjoy my summer even though I was working. My advice on internships is to try it, even though you think an opportunity might not be a good fit for you, just try it out. It will teach you something about yourself you never knew or relieve your uncertainty about your future. Internships are there so you can test yourself in different careers, even better if it isn’t what you imagined doing in the future.

I would like to thank ILCM for this opportunity and Tracy Roy for being an amazing teacher and mentor. Thank you to all the ILCM staff whom I had an amazing time working alongside and the Pro Bono team for everything they helped me accomplish. Thank you to the Carleton College Chaplain’s Office and Career Center for this phenomenal opportunity.
Social Justice Internships

Learning to Help Others
Amelia Asfaw '25
Economics
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota | Saint Paul, Minnesota

This past summer, I had the privilege of serving as a policy intern at the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota. My role involved conducting research on pressing issues, participating in various events, and taking notes. My internship began shortly after the passage of the Driver’s Licenses for All bill, directing my focus toward researching the pragmatic aspects of its implementation and its implications for the immigrant community.

I gained and strengthened many skills throughout this internship. First, this internship strengthened my ability to help and better understand people from various backgrounds by putting me in situations where I had to try and best help immigrants from various countries, many of whom do not speak English, which involved adapting to different cultural norms and expectations that were different from those I am used to. Second, I strengthened my ability to research various topics and analyze which information is most useful, so I could best inform my supervisor. Third, I have gained the skill of collaborating in a workplace setting because I learned how to work effectively with my colleagues to best get work done.

The key lesson I have drawn from my internship is that although new things may seem overwhelming at first, there are so many positives from simply trying. Throughout my experience, I made some mistakes and was out of my comfort zone, but looking back, this was where I grew the most and learned to problem-solve.

This experience has greatly influenced my future career plan. I don't know if policy work is specifically what I want to do, but I know I want to use my career to help others. This experience has shown me how hard, overwhelming, and emotional this work can be. However, it also showed me how strong, resilient, and uplifting those who do the work are. Although difficult, their passion for helping others is inspiring to me and my future career path. I was surprised at the heartbreaking reality of immigrants so close to where I call home. This experience helped shatter the bubble that Carleton can sometimes feel like because I was able to see a lot of the struggles and needs of the immigrant community of Minnesota. It is easy to think of immigration issues as something beyond the borders of the United States, but I was surprised at how close to home this issue is.

I am profoundly grateful for this eye-opening opportunity, which has broadened my perspective and deepened my understanding of the challenges confronting the immigrant community. Additionally, this experience has awakened a sense of responsibility to leverage the privileges I have for the greater good. I would like to thank the Social Justice Internship Fund for affording me this invaluable growth opportunity.

To fellow students embarking on similar journeys, I would advise this: seize every chance to immerse yourself in the organization’s daily operations. I found the most profound learning experiences arise from mere observation. Although it may not seem immediately productive, this has greatly helped me develop problem-solving abilities, hone critical thinking, and cultivate a professional demeanor.
Social Justice Internships

People and Power: Community Organizing in Missoula, Montana

Andy Gorordo ‘23
Philosophy
Common Good Missoula | Missoula, Montana

This summer I was fortunate enough to intern for Common Good Missoula (CGM), an affiliate of IAF Northwest, learning about their community organizing process. My time was spent attending a variety of meetings and events that showcased the main stages of Common Good Missoula’s organizing cycle. These included “table talks,” where Missoulians were able to voice their felt concerns, strategy team meetings where tactical decisions were made by CGM leaders, “one-to-ones” where I met individually with the people I was working with in order to learn about their interests and motivations, a public event involving a public commitment from the mayor Missoula to undertake a project born from months of work from CGM and members of the community, and a number of additional meetings with specific partner institutions to learn about their own methods, structures, and solutions.

I was pleasantly surprised to learn early on that IAF (and by extension Common Good Missoula) have a long history of reading, teaching, and discussing the same sorts of social theories that engrossed me during my time at Carleton and that I was so eager to apply to real-world situations when I sought out this internship. That shared interest provided me with a crucial bridge between my theoretical knowledge and the fast-paced complicated world of community organizing. The schedule necessitated by community organizing, I quickly learned, was far less predictable than the academic calendar I had grown accustomed to. Even more of a difficulty for me, though, was the unexpected focus on developing relationships that feature prominently in the IAF’s organizing philosophy.

What I came to understand through the course of my internship, though, is that unpredictability and relationality are very near the heart of CGM’s work. Community organizing is a fundamentally human endeavor, and that means that it necessarily comes along with all the messiness, emotionality, and uncertainty that characterizes our lives. The hard part was rarely the technical or clerical tasks themselves, but rather the balancing of those tasks amidst the countless other jobs, responsibilities, challenges, and complications that people were already dealing with in their personal lives. When it comes to community organizing it is no less important to be attuned to the well-being (physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual) of your colleagues than it is to understand the political, social, philosophical, or statistical problems of the community as a whole. The purpose of community organizing is, after all, to give people more power over their own lives; sometimes that means restructuring public infrastructure or altering housing codes, but it just as frequently means teaching people how to work collaboratively with people who have different capacities, cooperate as people who care about different issues, and how to develop and manage healthy, long-term relationships.

I am extremely grateful to everyone at Common Good Missoula and the Carleton Social Justice Internship Funds for giving me the chance to learn about the amazing, important, and profound interpersonal work that is community organizing.
Social Justice Internships

Data Analysis and Fieldwork at TakeAction Minnesota

Trinity Hanif ’26
Undeclared
TakeAction Minnesota | Saint Paul, Minnesota

Throughout my internship with TakeAction Minnesota, I engaged in data analysis and fieldwork. I worked with different people at the organization to accomplish these varying tasks.

In June, I was tasked with doing an email analysis project. The organization has an email series called the News Digest. A few times a month they send a list of ten stories to their subscribers. Sometimes they also send information about organization-specific events, like fundraisers. The person in charge of communications wanted to gather information and assess the effectiveness of the series, so I pulled data and organized them into spreadsheets, charts, and tables. For one question, I was examining the article and link types that garnered the most engagement. I went through all the emails sent within the past year and tallied the topics covered and amount of clicks. Then, I calculated the average number of clicks per article for each topic and link type listed. I learned that subscribers engaged more with feel-good stories and information regarding state-wide politics and policies. My supervisor affirmed that my work would be helpful in making improvements to the email series.

Throughout the summer, I also participated in fieldwork, which mostly took the form of door-knocking. However, I also sat in on strategy meetings and endorsement interviews for the upcoming city council elections. We interviewed candidates and voted on whether or not they would receive an endorsement and support from the organization. It was interesting to see the inner workings of that process. While door-knocking, we employed the deep canvassing method. The goal of this strategy is to have real conversations at the doors as opposed to just throwing information at people. It gets people to buy into what we are saying by identifying the cognitive dissonance within their thinking. For example, “I hear you say the government should prioritize business. However, it seems like you have concerns regarding the exploitation of workers.” In the field, sometimes the script worked and other times it did not. Typically, it depended on how willing people were to converse. If they did take the time to talk, the conversations generally were successful. At the beginning of the summer, I was hesitant to door knock. I felt uncomfortable bothering people and interrupting their day. However, I realized that the conversations we were having benefited them. It is an advantage to the community if everyone is up-to-date and informed about the local political happenings.

Overall, I enjoyed my time at TakeAction Minnesota. It was a very supportive and educational internship, and I would recommend it to others seeking an opportunity in grassroots organizing. I want to thank TakeAction Minnesota for hosting me this summer and providing me with an educational and formative experience.
Social Justice Internships

Reshaping My Understanding of Legal Services

Fatima Koroma ’26
Undeclared
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota | Saint Paul, Minnesota

My summer internship at the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota (ILCM) was a transformative experience that confirmed my commitment to pursuing a legal career and made me contemplate whether I may be interested in immigration law. In this essay, I will reflect on the invaluable experience I gained at ILCM and explain its role in setting me on a clear path toward law school.

ILCM is a nonprofit organization that provides legal services to immigrants and refugees in Minnesota, advocates for their rights, and fosters a more inclusive and just society. Among other things, working directly with clients with their Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and a Naturalization case, I've been exposed to the sometimes complex challenges and struggles faced by immigrants and refugees in the United States. I am thankful to have worked with the Pro Bono and Intake teams, directly interacting with clients to work on applications. And though I didn't work too closely with the attorneys, my hands-on experience with the clients gave me a taste of something I've only just realized is more crucial.

Employing empathy to engage with clients who fled persecution, violence, or economic hardship in their home countries helped to hone my cultural competence. Opting to listen to understand their unique experiences, I witnessed how the staff put aside preconceived notions and instead worked to use custom-fit solutions to assist a person, a skill necessary for any attorney, particularly in immigration law.

A visually disabled client seeking naturalization after many years in the United States was one case that left a lasting impact on me. Without disclosing much, they've had multiple previous criminal offenses that are just unjust profiling. I was impressed with seeing their attorney whose relentless dedication to ensuring this individual had a fair chance at gaining the full benefits of citizenship made me realize the profound impact an attorney can have on the lives of vulnerable individuals easily cheated by the system. The wonderful mentors and colleagues I encountered at ILCM helped shape my legal career perspective. They generously shared their insights, experiences, and wisdom with me. Whether it was patiently discussing the intricacies of immigration law, providing guidance on career choices, or simply sharing stories of their journeys to becoming attorneys, their support was invaluable.

In conclusion, my internship at ILCM has given me a solid introductory foundation in immigration law, advocacy, and cultural competence that attorneys must demonstrate. Paired with the mentorship and guidance I received, I have the beginnings of a network of legal professionals who can offer support and advice as I embark on this journey. And though it has ignited an unlikely passion for immigration law and social justice, I know these skills will undoubtedly be assets as I navigate the rigorous demands of law school and, ultimately, a legal career where I can make a meaningful difference.
Social Justice Internships

My Summer at the Binger Center for New Americans
Olivia Lentz ’23
Philosophy
James H. Binger Center for New Americans | Minneapolis, Minnesota

Over the course of 10 weeks, I had the opportunity to serve as an intern at the Binger Center for New Americans (BCNA), a legal clinic at the University of Minnesota Law School. My role at the BCNA included a multitude of valuable experiences, from completing administrative tasks to conducting research for legal cases, all of which furthered my understanding of immigration law in substantial ways.

The administrative tasks I engaged in this summer were mainly communications-based. I was tasked with using LinkedIn to connect with former students of the BCNA. I was involved in collecting information for the 2023 annual report. I was invited to partner meetings, strategic planning meetings, and weekly administrative meetings. Cumulatively, these experiences revealed three aspects of the immigration field, to which I would have otherwise been oblivious: 1) The community of people working in immigration is small, and people are often interconnected. 2) There has been immense change in the landscape of Minnesotan immigration law over the past 30 years. 3) Future changes are necessary to continue to progress and improve the landscape for immigrants in the state, and these changes will require an even higher level of interconnectedness between legal, social, and governmental service providers in the immigration field.

The legal aspects of my internship this summer were research-oriented. I investigated a high volume of country conditions for both affirmative and defensive asylum cases. I used legal databases, including Lexis, to find relevant case law to support the legal arguments that my supervisors hoped to apply in their case. I also went beyond the scope of legal issues, when I was assigned to read through a client's files to find any relevant facts that could inform how to best approach their case. The latter task, in particular, added a more personal aspect to the research I was doing and brought me out of the abstract in an impactful manner.

Although the administrative and legal duties I performed this summer provided a somewhat holistic perspective of immigration law, I was perhaps most impacted by the personal connections I made. The BCNA is full of passionate students, faculty, and staff, all serving immigrant communities throughout Minnesota. Spending 10 weeks in this environment was reassuring. Seeing people effectively create change and advocate for justice motivates me to continue my involvement in this area of work. I have just started as a 1L law student at the University of Minnesota, where I am in the early stages of involvement in the Asylum Law Project. Further, I am volunteering as an Immigration Court Observer through the Advocates for Human Rights. At the end of my law school career, I hope to have earned a J.D. with an emphasis in immigration law.

I am grateful for the relationships I formed and the perspectives I gained this summer. I owe my ability to pursue this internship to the support I received from the Social Justice Internship Fund, the Carleton College Career Center, and the Office of the Chaplain's ongoing partnership with the BCNA.
Social Justice Internships

We Need More People Doing This Work
Grace Werner ’24
Cognitive Science
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota | Saint Paul, Minnesota

Over the course of my summer internship at the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota (ILCM), I became more and more convinced that the people I worked with were saints on Earth. This summer, I worked with the Community Defense Team, which helped individuals who were facing deportation from the United States. The situations in which these people found themselves were often heartbreaking, but the team continued to fight for the rights of immigrants in Minnesota, and I will forever keep that commitment to equality and justice with me.

One of my main tasks over the summer was to help answer the phone for the detention line, which is a line that immigrants in detention and their loved ones could call to ask questions about the removal process and hope to obtain representation. We often weren’t able to represent the people who called (not for lack of want); however, we could send information packets.

Listening to people tell their stories and hearing them express fear and confusion was difficult. I struggled to tell them that we couldn’t represent them when they already felt alone and scared. After a particularly tough call, I cried to my supervisor, who reminded me that it wasn’t my fault the immigration system was broken. I felt embarrassed; if I was crying after a few weeks, how did my supervisor feel after doing this work for years?

I continued to be in awe of how the attorneys on the team continued to help people, regardless of how complicated their cases might be. I wanted to help however I could, and assisted with country conditions research, a FOIA appeal, and helping draft bond arguments. Through the work that I did, I noticed how selfless the team was. Where some people would see a criminal, they saw a person, and win or lose, they continued to believe that every person deserved the right to have someone on their side.

Seeing that type of selfless humanity in action was incredible, and I admired everyone for their commitment to justice for all. They stuck with that commitment despite the challenges of the work: the heartbreak of having to tell people you don’t have the resources to help when you’re their last hope, losing bond cases, and having to tell a mother she can’t yet go home to her children, and having to say “I don’t know” when someone asks how much longer they’ll be stuck in detention. Part of the heartbreak comes from the lack of resources – there just aren’t enough lawyers, help, or funds to give people the help they need.

During my last few days at ILCM, my supervisor sent me off with a message: We need more people doing this work. I hope I can always do this work in some capacity, helping those who need it most, inspired by the selfless work I saw every day at ILCM.
Solhem Business Fellowship Fund

Skills and Self-Discovery

Bem Abebayehu ’25

Computer Science

Brightside Analytics | Baltimore, Maryland

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Solhem Business Fellowship Fund for making this internship experience possible. Their generous support has been instrumental in my personal and professional growth. Additionally, I extend my thanks to Brightside Analytics for providing me with an invaluable learning opportunity.

During my internship at Brightside Analytics, I was tasked with engineering a robust Facebook web scraper. This involved utilizing Python and web automation libraries to extract data from various customer channels. I conducted data analysis on the collected information, leveraging visualization tools to identify the most frequently used customer channels. Furthermore, I developed decision-making algorithms to automatically select optimal channels for data scraping, thereby improving efficiency while maintaining a secure and reliable scraping process. One of the most significant skills I honed during my internship was the ability to analyze and interpret data effectively. By working with real-world data sets, I gained hands-on experience in extracting valuable insights from raw information.

This internship also allowed me to apply my knowledge and skills in a real-world setting. I learned how to adapt and implement solutions to address practical challenges, bridging the gap between theory and practice. Additionally, the development of decision-making algorithms to optimize data scraping processes challenged me to think critically and solve complex problems efficiently. This experience enhanced my problem-solving skills and equipped me to tackle intricate tasks in the future. Through this internship, I discovered my ability to thrive in dynamic and demanding work environments. I learned that I possess a strong passion for data analysis and problem-solving, and I thrive when tasked with innovative projects that require creative thinking. Additionally, I realized the importance of adaptability and resilience in the face of unexpected challenges. I intend to leverage the skills and knowledge acquired during my internship to shape my future career path.

I am most grateful for the opportunity to work with a supportive and knowledgeable team at Brightside Analytics. Their mentorship and guidance played a pivotal role in my growth during this internship. To fellow students considering internships, I would advise you to look for internships that challenge you and expose you to a wide range of tasks and responsibilities. Diversity in your experiences will help you discover your strengths and interests. Approach your internship with a growth mindset. Be open to learning from your mistakes and seeking guidance from experienced colleagues. Every challenge is an opportunity to grow. Build relationships with colleagues, mentors, and supervisors. These connections can open doors to future opportunities and provide valuable insights into your chosen field. In conclusion, my internship experience at Brightside Analytics has been a transformative journey that allowed me to develop critical skills, discover my passions, and gain a deeper understanding of the importance of data-driven decision-making. I am excited to apply these lessons and skills as I chart my path forward in the world of data analysis and problem-solving.
Over this past summer, I worked on yet another startup called Dou Read, which pitched an AI-powered online reading tool that would help people read at a much faster pace. Using a clever combination of some off-the-shelf ML models (one of which was Amazon Comprehend, an AI engine used to extract information from receipts), the company was able to create an automatic highlighter to showcase only the most important parts of any documents. The software, in its infancy state, was able to parse any PDF and highlight keywords from said document. I was brought onto the team in order to take this product to the next level. That is, by introducing some meta-cognitive element into the parses, the hope is that this highlighter would take into account users’ reading behaviors/preferences to better determine where to highlight. The end goal was to create software that would condense reading time without the need for a summary.

That being said, about halfway through the summer, the executive team (which at this point included myself), decided that our idea was never going to succeed. When GPT 4.0 was released (for reference, ChatGPT ran on GPT 3.5), we knew that it was not realistic for a startup of our caliber to compete with the Microsoft-backed OpenAI. In addition, we weren't able to figure out a viable strategy to deal with the question of “why would anyone use this service as opposed to a summary.” Though it was a hard decision, the company decided to pivot into a new direction entirely. We wanted to retain our core as an AI-focused company, but instead of trying to help people read, we'd focus our effort on penetrating the language-learning market. It is still too early for the company to decide what to call this product, but we are excited to see how far we can take it before the end of this calendar year.

All in all, I would say that this summer has been a roller coaster for me. I've been involved with startups, in one way or another, for most of my college career. From starting my own in 2020 with [Discussify] to working under alum Ammar Babar '18 at Transcend, to finally joining Dou Read as a software engineer and eventual executive, I can confidently say that I will pursue this kind of venture for the rest of my life. It's definitely not easy to see your idea fail to commercialize, but I do think that it's an extremely fun thing to devote a life toward. Needless to say, none of this would've been possible without the generous help of our alumni. I'd like to give a special thanks to the Solhem Business Fellowship Fund, for the financial support and mentorship that has made these experiences possible. For the future Carls thinking about pursuing entrepreneurship at this school, please know that you are a part of a very special, exceptionally supportive community. And for the alumni, thank you for all that you have done: I will pay it forward for the rest of my days.
Solhem Business Fellowship Fund

A Grateful Software Engineer
Victor Huang ’24
Statistics & Computer Science
fooooof Inc. | New York, New York

Throughout the summer of 2023 I was granted the opportunity to pursue a long-time dream of mine: working as a founding software engineer for a startup that sought to create a social media app built to strengthen existing connections and discover new ones you didn’t know you already had. Working as a founding software engineer of a company, I was exposed to the technical and interpersonal tasks and responsibilities that come with being a “patient zero” technical employee. From technical tasks such as completing programming and coding assignments, conducting code peer reviews, and learning new technical skills to progress in the app development process, to interpersonal tasks such as working with the marketing team on designing app features, cross referencing with the design team on app user interface layout, and working with the business team to secure funding for the future, my summer was deeply enriched by the tasks and responsibilities that come with being a founding technical personnel.

And through the mundane and not-so-mundane tasks of the summer, I was not only able to strengthen and refresh the skills I already possessed, but also pick up a few new ones along the way. Through working with multiple points of contact, I learned that the importance of communication and interpersonal skills is indispensable for becoming a successful founder. As a computer science and statistics major, the utility of “soft” skills has always played second fiddle to my technical skills. However, from communicating with peers and colleagues to negotiating with investors to talking with students, I have learned that both are required in order to be a comprehensive software engineer. Through working with students from other colleges, I was introduced to new teaching, studying, and learning methods that weren’t part of the Carleton curriculum. These new ideas and strategies allowed me to continuously and quickly integrate customer feedback so that the product was constantly improving.

As someone who comes from a humble background, the prospect of being able to start my own startup was something that felt very distant. As such, growing up, I have missed many opportunities I regret not taking when looking back. Through the generous donations from the Solhem Business Fellowship Fund provided graciously by Curt ’89 and Catherine Gunsbury ’89 and gentle nudges from Luke Klefstad from the Carleton Career Center, I was able to take my first leap of faith and pursue something that I had been dreaming of since I was a child. To those who are in similar positions and grew up in comparable backgrounds as I did, I can now say with confidence that I have tried and failed and failed to try, and the fear of failure is far outweighed by the fear of regret. I can not express how much this summer meant to me and that, because of this opportunity, my career path has changed for the better.
The LA Media Intern Experience
Marko Stojanovic ’24
Cinema and Media Studies
Mandelay Sports Media | Studio City, California

For the summer of 2023, I had the wonderful opportunity of being introduced to the LA Entertainment Industry as an intern at Mandalay Sports Media (MSM). My job title was Post Production Intern. Responsibilities included completing script coverage, handling administrative tasks around the office, doing research for developing projects and potential intellectual properties, developing pitch decks and other related material for pitches/meetings/deliverables, and completing special projects for Executives as needed (i.e. transcription, sizzle reels, graphics for pitch decks, etc.). Due to the nature of my responsibilities, I ended up strengthening skills such as advocating for myself to get onto as many projects as possible and build up my experiences. In addition, I’ve also learned the importance of navigating social structures and hierarchies within my industry as it’s allowed me to ask for help on projects and ideas from a larger pool of people. The last most notable skill I’ve developed has been learning how to do proper research for intellectual properties and potential projects.

Key lessons I’ve taken away from this experience as a whole are very entwined with the skills I’ve developed. My supervisor taught me that it is important to put yourself forward and make it clear that you are willing to work. This is the reason why I was so keen on improving my ability to advocate for myself. The entertainment industry can be a very grueling environment, so learning how to hold your own best interests in mind is an incredibly fundamental skill to have.

Since my time at MSM, I have easily decided that I need to move to LA for the foreseeable future in order to further develop my skill set and meet more industry professionals until I can cement myself as a valuable part of it. Thankfully this isn’t really just a pipedream since full-time employment at MSM is feasible now that I’ve interned there. All of the previous executives and employees there have been interns before and I also seem to get along pretty well with the staff in general.

Speaking of which, I do have to admit that I am most grateful for having met the people I worked with and interacted with in LA during my time there. This was initially surprising at first since I had heard a lot of negative opinions about LA culture going in so I stayed cautious. However, I found that many of those I talked with within my industry always were willing to dispense invaluable advice, as long as you learned how to ask!

With that in mind, I think that the most important piece of advice I can give to other Carls heading into their own internships is to stay grateful. When meeting new people, handling whatever project, and/or braving a new environment, stay grateful that you managed to get there. Do this especially if you really are passionate about the field. Thank you the Solhem Business Fellowship Fund for funding my experience in LA and at MSM. Also, thank you Luke Klefstad for your advice and resourcefulness.
I am profoundly grateful to the Solhem Business Fellowship Fund for honoring me with this generous award. My sincere appreciation goes to A. Curt Lindeman Gnsbury ’89 and Catherine Lindeman Gnsbury ’89 for their visionary initiative. This award not only alleviated my financial burden but also reaffirmed my decision to explore EdTech business avenues I might have otherwise overlooked. Thank you for believing in my potential and for fostering such invaluable opportunities for students.

In the past eleven weeks, I embarked on an enlightening internship journey that unraveled the nuances of the global EdTech scene. Initially stationed in China and having recently transitioned to the U.S., I delved deep into product development, cross-cultural business dynamics, and the ever-evolving demands of the educational market. One particular challenge still vividly resonates with me. Upon my return to China, I was met with an unexpected revelation. The market we aimed to penetrate was already saturated with sophisticated, cutting-edge products. These offerings weren’t just advanced; they showcased a mastery of the domain, setting a standard in user experience and educational outcomes in line with Chinese standards. For me, this realization was a dual-edged sword, evoking admiration for the creators but also a twinge of shame. I had underestimated the dynamism and maturity of the local market. The ability to adapt and pivot thus became paramount. Faced with market competitors and unforeseen challenges, I learned the importance of not just perseverance but also nimbleness in refining our product vision. I also honed my skills in cross-cultural communication and understanding. From trying to bridge the gap with my co-worker in the U.S. to deciphering Chinese business cultures, I recognized the nuances that underpin global business interactions. Lastly, during this learning experience, strategic thinking and leadership emerged as vital assets.

This internship served as a mirror, reflecting my strengths and vulnerabilities. My passion for education and innate resilience kept me anchored, even when the tides seemed overwhelmingly adverse. However, the market’s maturity underscored a personal lesson: the necessity of thorough global market research and the humility to continually learn and evolve. One surprising lesson from this summer endeavor was the immense power of team dynamics. The infusion of fresh perspectives, like the arrival of our new team member, could drastically alter the trajectory of a project. It highlighted that while individual brilliance is essential, collective intelligence can propel any vision to unprecedented heights.

Moving forward, this internship experience reinforced the importance of adaptability in the ever-evolving tech landscape. The insights gained will shape my approach in future roles, reminding me to continually learn, innovate, and value collaboration. For students gearing up for their internships, here’s my advice: dive deep into market research and never assume. Embrace every challenge as a learning opportunity. Don’t shy away from unfamiliar terrain; it often harbors the most valuable lessons. It’s not about the skills you bring to the table, but the attitude with which you approach every task. Above all, cherish the relationships you forge, for they form the true bedrock of professional growth.
Trace McCreary ’89 and Alissa Reiner Endowed Internship Fund

Artist Assistant of The Wandering House
Tori Aguado ’24
Cinema and Media Studies
Arte la Milpa | Northfield, Minnesota

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to the Career Center for connecting me with the Trace McCreary ’89 and Alissa Reiner Endowed Internship Fund which provided me the opportunity to continue my work with Cecilia Cornejo’s The Wandering House project. This being my second summer working with Cecilia, it has been a truly gratifying experience being able to see through the work I’ve been putting in for over a year now.

The Wandering House is an ongoing multimedia project that explores notions of home and belonging in river towns in Southeastern Minnesota. This summer, our central focus was preparing for the launch of the sonic archive, which would be a database containing the organized audio testimonies from Northfield, Lanesboro, and Red Wing. My responsibilities spanned from recording ambient sounds in and around Red Wing, audio/video editing in Premiere Pro, translating/transcribing English and Spanish audio testimonies, and assisting Cecilia during artist talks and guided tours of the exhibition space.

The central skills that I refined from my internship experience were to analyze and interpret data, the ability to communicate/work with people from different cultural backgrounds, and ethical judgment and reasoning. An unexpected challenge of this summer was contending with some heavy and quite personal themes around which this project traffics. For days at a time, I would listen to people talk about their favorite and least favorite places, where they did or did not feel safe, and how they knew they were home. While the audio editing itself could be tedious and painstaking, the interviews themselves I never got tired of. I realized that when I care about the work I’m doing, I don’t mind sitting in front of a computer for hours at a time because I am able to see the bigger picture behind the work at face value. I learned that it is in fact important to me to maintain this degree of emotional weight in my future career and to be able to feel the impact of the work I’m doing. Because if not, why would I be doing it?

I was surprised, however, how much ethics were a part of this work. Being responsible for editing people’s voices was more taxing than I anticipated. Cecilia reminded me before I began to handle these testimonies with tenderness which quickly became a guiding principle of not just my work this summer, but my work at large. In that respect, I am most grateful for this internship for giving me two summers of guidance and mentorship with Cecilia Cornejo. She was a fabulous boss; one that I felt deeply respected. And it was thrilling to present the launch of the Wandering House Sonic Archive to the Northfield Community and to have Luke Kiefstad present to see the “season finale,” so to speak, of my work this summer and its impact on the Northfield community and beyond.
Trace McCreary ’89 and Alissa Reiner Endowed Internship Fund

Researching at the Hospital for Special Surgery

Brian Caplan ’25
Biology
Hospital for Special Surgery | New York, New York

I had the pleasure of completing clinical research at the Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) this summer, an orthopedic hospital in NYC. Throughout my time at HSS, I was able to contribute to a team where we looked into a range of research questions in orthopedics. Of the three projects, our most important project consisted of preparing for the start of a clinical trial in the fall. This project allowed me to see the ‘behind-the-scenes’ of clinical trials and how much work is needed to set them up. Our second project consisted of the physical administration of another clinical trial for decreasing lower back pain. Through this, I was able to have patient contact and learn what the front end of clinical research entails. To see both the back-end and front-end of clinical research allowed me to paint an entire picture and truly understand how to perform all aspects of clinical research. Our third project was a retrospective study that analyzed past patient data to come up with new conclusions. This study, surrounding a highly uncharacterized nerve issue, was aimed at creating a ‘gold standard’ for diagnosing this condition. I was able to learn how to analyze diagnostic images as well as brush up on my data analysis and statistics, allowing me and my team to help further characterize this condition.

Through my research, I was fortunate to work on a very efficient and cooperative team, where we were able to build ideas off one another as well as build some of these research projects from the ground up. I learned a lot about the entire clinical research process, start to finish, and also had the opportunity to work on manuscript writing so that, hopefully, multiple of these projects will be submitted to journals and conferences.

One experience that I was able to partake in alongside this research was shadowing and observing surgery. This aspect of my summer allowed me to experience a deep dive into the potential work that I want to do with my career as a future doctor. I was able to experience both the patient contact side during clinical hours as well as observe the technical aspects of surgery inside the operating room. This has led me to want to become a surgeon.

Overall, I am very happy with how my summer turned out, as I have learned so much about this potential career path as well as about research as a whole. I have, more importantly, learned a lot about myself and my desires for my future, and also believe I have grown a lot personally through working and living independently in NYC this summer.

Additionally, I want to add my appreciation and gratitude towards the Trace McCreary ’89 and Alissa Reiner Endowed Internship Fund as well as towards Dr. Vad and Dr. Rodeo at HSS. You all have truly made this experience possible and I thank you for the opportunity to learn and further my personal and career goals this summer.
Trace McCreary ’89 and Alissa Reiner Endowed Internship Fund

On Memory Circuits and Self-Direction
Youssef Haddad ’25
Physics
University of North Carolina, Charlotte | Charlotte, North Carolina

This summer I had the opportunity to conduct research on an improved kind of on-chip memory circuit at the University of North Carolina Charlotte with Dr. Yong Zhang from their electrical engineering department. The research was focused on the energy efficiency and speed enhancement of a static random access memory circuit with a novel light-effect transistor as the major accessing transistor type instead of the widely used field-effect transistor. Most static random access memory circuits work as an on-chip memory circuit: an entire array of bits of information is located on the processing chip of any device. Each bit of information is accessed via two field effect transistors and word lines but these devices are becoming increasingly inefficient given the modern demand for faster, more efficient electronics. A novel light effect transistor was simulated by Dr. Zhang and his PhD student, Anterdipan Pal, to replace these access transistors, where a semiconductor nanowire is placed in connection to the bits of information illuminated by laser light from a parallel photonics chip. My work in continuing the project was twofold (and is still continuing): improve the waveguide model of the LET to achieve even power attenuation, and demonstrate experimentally the energy efficiencies of the memory circuit with a photocurrent-generating access device. I am still working on the first goal.

During the first half of the internship, Dr. Zhang was away from campus, and the PhD student who worked on the project previously graduated. I was left completely alone and needed to find the parts to assemble a memory circuit and recreate the model of the waveguide to improve its attenuation. Within the first two weeks, I read two dissertations and a paper published on the usage of LETs within an SRAM circuit, and I am greatly indebted to the physics faculty at Carleton for equipping me with the tools needed for the great degree of self-guided learning I accomplished during this time. Most of my work involved traveling back and forth from the equipment centers and figuring out how to properly test out the circuit I had built while gaining CAD experience after hours for modeling the waveguide.

During my time, I gave two presentations on my work and was commended by program directors for my adeptness with the topic, though I learned the concepts individually. I pride myself in the work I did (it was very similar to that of a graduate student) and improved my time management and advocacy skills. As someone continuing to work on the project, I hope to take those skills with me into my junior year and my upcoming summer experience.

I want to thank the Trace McCreary ’89 and Alissa Reiner Endowed Internship Fund and the Career Center for funding my experience this summer. You all assisted me with this very fruitful opportunity.
Trace McCreary ’89 and Alissa Reiner Endowed Internship Fund

Doing Good with WalkGood: Community Health and Wellness in Los Angeles

Nia Terry ’26
Undeclared
WalkGood LA | Los Angeles, California

This summer I interned with WalkGood LA, a Black and Brown-led community health and wellness organization based in Los Angeles. WalkGood LA emerged out of the racial justice movement in 2020, beginning as a weekly protest before transitioning into a health and wellness organization. Now they offer a variety of donation-based programming, including community yoga classes, guided meditations and breath work, hikes, and run clubs.

As an intern, I regularly attended events and assisted with set up, break down, check-in of attendees, and sale of merchandise. I also worked with the WalkGood LA team on several projects. I documented and filed financial records, edited event photographs for campaigns and social media, and designed a thank-you card for sponsors and partners. Because I did nearly all of these tasks collaboratively or with direct guidance from team members, I strengthened my ability to work as a team. I improved at giving and receiving feedback, and asking questions when necessary. Overall, I enjoyed working in a close-knit collaborative environment and will continue to seek similar working and learning environments. WalkGood LA hosts events two to three times a week. The high level of outward-facing communication was initially outside of my comfort zone. However, my communication skills grew through interacting with community members at check-in or sales and by fielding questions from people curious about the organization. I became more confident speaking with people I had not met before and felt comfortable representing the organization while discerning when to ask for support from team members when I didn’t know how to manage a particular situation. Eventually, I found joy in moments with community members built off small talk and brief check-ins. Lastly, this internship gave me the opportunity to further develop my creativity. For our three year anniversary event, I created two large chalk art murals in a community garden. To close off my internship, I worked with the creative director to make a thank you card for sponsors and partners.

This summer I learned how important community is. I always want to be in a community that values growth, joy, learning, and support. I am grateful to have witnessed the behind-the-scenes work that goes into creating a community, especially one with longevity and growth. I have a greater understanding of the time, energy, and money required, as well as the necessity of local government and institutional support of such organizations. As an Angeleno, I’ve also learned how important Los Angeles is to me. I’d love to work and live in Los Angeles after college, where I can use what I’ve learned at Carleton and beyond to contribute to my community.

I’d like to thank the Trace McCreary ’89 and Alissa Reiner Endowed Internship Fund for making this internship possible. I’d also like to thank the WalkGood LA team for hosting me, especially Etienne Maurice and Steph Wash.
Trace McCreary ’89 and Alissa Reiner Endowed Internship Fund

My Summer in the HAMsTER Lab

Evan Umbreit ’26
Undeclared
University of Texas at San Antonio | San Antonio, Texas

This summer I had my first research experience and worked in the HAMsTER Lab at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). Despite the name, there were no hamsters in the lab (unfortunately), and the only other life I encountered was the other students around me. Instead, my research dealt with rock samples from a small eruption in the Aleutian Islands of Alaska. The eruption occurred in 2016 and 2017 came from a volcano named Bogoslof. While Bogoslof was always a fun word to say, the internship had its challenges, but everything I learned and accomplished made it a worthwhile experience.

When I first started, I was extremely overwhelmed in my new environment. I was unsure of what exactly was expected of me and did not know how to apply my classroom knowledge to my lab work. Also, because my supervisor usually had a full schedule, there were many times where I had to figure out a productive use of my time without being told what to do. All these factors made getting started very difficult for me as I was so unsure of myself. However, as the internship went on and I began to figure out how to apply my knowledge and manage my time correctly, things became much easier and I was able to enjoy the experience.

Over the course of the summer, I learned so much about what research in academia looks like and about geological research in general. I learned many technical skills such as how to measure the different densities of a rock, how to calculate the total and isolated porosity, how to measure the viscosity of a rock sample at a various temperatures, and how to calculate the crystallinity of a rock from its heat capacity. However, I also improved many of my soft skills as well such as collaborating with my peers, time management, and how to create and give an effective presentation. To finish the summer, I wrote a final report where I went over everything I did this summer, reported my results and discussed what my results could imply about the sample and/or eruption. This was the first time I had written anything resembling a research paper and I was very proud of the end result.

Now that my internship is over, I can’t help but feel very thankful for the opportunity and to those who made my summer possible. Thank you to the head of the HAMsTER Lab and my supervisor, Alan Whittington, for giving me the opportunity to work under him, thank you to the Carleton Career Center for connecting with me with a donor to help fund my internship, and lastly thank you to the Trace McCreary ’89 and Alissa Reiner Endowed Internship Fund for providing the financial assistance to make this summer possible.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

Exploring Education through a Teacher’s Lens

Rocio Avila ’26
Undeclared
Faribault Public School | Faribault, Minnesota

During the summer, I worked with Faribault Middle School as a camp facilitator. My responsibilities there were riding the bus with the kids, being a math teacher assistant during the mornings, and leading my own class on nature during the afternoons.

From this experience, I’ve strengthened my skills in public speaking, which was crucial for leading my own sections of students in the afternoons. It was important to acknowledge the public that is listening to you and be able to adequately communicate with them. As I had two sections with kids divided per age, I learned how to present the same topics differently depending on their age and level of understanding.

Two other skills I’ve gained from this experience are teamwork and punctuality. Leading around 30 kids takes a lot of responsibility and it was important to utilize all the resources and delegate when tasks got overwhelming. Furthermore, practicing punctuality every day was crucial for riding the bus, since I was the adult in charge of the kids on the bus, and the bus would not leave without me to avoid leaving the kids on their own during the route to the school.

Moreover, a key lesson I’ve drawn about myself from last summer’s experience is that enthusiasm is one of the most important tools to get the most out of any experience. Asking questions and being open to receiving new tasks made me feel part of the team and showed them that I was willing to help in whatever was necessary. For example, as a bilingual intern, I was always offering help in case there were classes where students did not speak English, and this attitude got me more connections and opportunities for after-summer activities.

While being a teacher is not one of my main goals for the future, I’m glad I got to explore what it is like to be in a class with kids. It surprised me how much they admired their teacher assistants. It is true that young students do not like authority figures, so they can be hard at the beginning, but if you are patient and understanding of their behavior according to their age, it is possible to establish a good relationship with them based on mutual admiration and respect.

I am so grateful I got to be an intern at Faribault Summer STEAM Camp since I made strong connections with my workmates, some of them live around Northfield and are people I can still reach out to if I ever need something and they know they can rely on me too. Moreover, I’m happy I was able to leave an impact on the kids’ lives. But more importantly, I’m happy I learned a lot from the kids too.

Finally, I want to thank the Trustee Endowed Internship Fund for making it possible for students to have access to these experiences that are so important in the career path of a college student.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

The Law: Surprises through Observation
Jonathan Birgen ’26
Undeclared
Hennepin County Public Defender’s Office | Minneapolis, Minnesota

This summer I interned at the Hennepin County Public Defender’s office in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Throughout those 10 weeks, I was responsible for summarizing documents for paralegals, reviewing our clients’ jail calls, and handing out subpoenas. While having an obligation to do these things, I also had the privilege of observing cases being disputed in court. I found this particular experience to be the most fruitful, as it allowed me to see the tactics that both public defenders and prosecutors use in court.

The three skills that I have developed the most throughout my internship are the ability to work effectively in teams, ethical judgment and reasoning, and the ability to communicate through writing. All three of these skills were strengthened through working with partners on cases, spending time in court while questioning if I would be able to do what a processor or defender does, and summarizing my findings after reading a report.

Something I learned that surprised me the most is that I do not want to become a prosecutor. This caught me off guard because I always believed it was important to put criminals away in jail and protect innocent people, but the more cases I worked on and the more time I spent in court I realized that the line between criminal and innocent is more blurred than I once thought. The other reason for my forgoing becoming a prosecutor is I witnessed people in that profession succeed by means I believe are unethical. This also connects to the main lessons I learned this summer which are that the law is much more jaded than people make it out to be, and sometimes people are forced into situations that are out of their control.

I am most grateful for the support that I got from the people who were around me, and those who were not. I was among eight other interns in my internship and in the ten weeks that we worked together, we were able to foster a healthy and conducive work environment where if anybody ever needed help with something their peers would be there for them. I am also extremely grateful for the donors that financially supported me during my summer internship, if it were not for them I would not have been able to gain the experience that I did.

The advice I would give to other students about to take part in an internship would be to make the most of it. The way to do this is by networking and introducing yourself to as many people as you can. While doing this get people’s contact information (emails, phone numbers, etc.). Doing these things could lead you to attain future opportunities such as another internship, externships, and even a job.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

Growing Community
Kyla Christie ’25
Psychology
C & D Peonies | Anchor Point, Alaska

This summer, I spent six weeks at C&D’s Peonies, an organic peony farm in Homer, Alaska. It was an incredible experience, and I am so grateful to the Trustee Endowed Internship Fund and WWOOF for making this opportunity possible. I could not have done it without their help.

During my time at the farm, my fellow interns and I took care of the peonies in the fields, worked on sustainable building projects, and learned the ins and outs of peony farm operations. We spent a significant portion of our work on the construction of a Himalayan greenhouse designed to withstand the high winds and heavy snowfall of the Kenai peninsula.

My hosts, Cathy and David, live in a rural neighborhood 15 miles outside of Homer. While it feels quite remote, their home is teeming with life. At the peak, there were eleven other interns on the farm. Living and working together every second of the day created an immediate sense of community. It also meant ample opportunity to develop my skills as a team member and a leader. Whether we were weeding and watering the fields, laying concrete on the greenhouse wall, or planning a weekend trip to a nearby state park, we were always working as a team. Often, we were given full creative agency in accomplishing assigned tasks. Cathy’s hands-off approach to management placed a high level of trust in our ability to find inventive solutions as a group. This sense of independence and ownership of our work made it all the more rewarding. Throughout my time there, I was struck by the deep-felt satisfaction that came from noticing our incremental progress. To finally get to harvest a peony or lay the last wall of concrete felt like a tremendous accomplishment. It was a culmination of the weeks of effort, thought, and care we'd put into these projects.

My time at the farm taught me that I want to be someone who does their own projects. Cathy and David are some of the most hard-working people I've met. They are always coming up with and executing innovative improvements to their farm and homestead. And they are devoted to learning new skills and finding new approaches. I know that when I go off and live on my own in the next few years, I’ll be drawing from the way they ran their household and built a life for themselves.

I am so grateful to have had this opportunity, not only to learn a new set of skills and to explore the beautiful state of Alaska but also to discover yet another way that adulthood can look. Spending six weeks on this farm was a reminder that there are so many ways to live and build community. This experience reminded me that I want to be a person who makes things with my hands, grows some of my own food, and puts community first, wherever I may be.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

Computational Neuroscience Intern at the NIH
Luke Drake ’25
Computer Science
National Institutes of Health | Bethesda, Maryland

This summer, I was a research intern at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), which is an institute in the National Institutes of Health (NIH). I had the privilege of working in Bethesda, Maryland, which is the main NIH campus and has over 18,000 employees. It was an incredible experience to be there and to have the opportunity to meet so many amazing scientists and learn a lot about cutting-edge technology at the NIH.

I worked in the Neocortex and Cerebellum Circuitry Lab, which studies brain activity in the areas of the neocortex and cerebellum in mice, through an array of various sophisticated techniques. Many of these techniques were personally developed by my principal investigator, Mark Wagner, and I had the opportunity to learn from him his process for creating these and a lot of engineering insights from his many years of experience curating the methods seen in his lab today.

Given my experience in computer science and my interest in computational biology, I was the main computational person for the lab and worked on processing and analyzing data of neuron activity in mice as they learned simple tasks. My specific project this summer was that I was given some data which was not used in an unpublished manuscript, and was tasked with finding certain trends in individual granule cells in the brain, and how they varied day to day as a mouse learned a task. To do this, I worked in a programming language called MATLAB, something which I had never used before. Alongside learning a new programming language, I learned a lot of statistical techniques for determining trends in data, and read scientific papers of adjacent studies of neuron analysis for ideas on what to look for.

Before going into my project, Dr. Wagner was clear that he wasn't even sure if there would be a relationship in the data that I analyzed. He had found in previous results that granule cells on a population level adjust their activity patterns as mice learn a task, but I was tasked with examining the individual cells tracked from each day a mouse was learning the task. I tried statistical analysis of a ton of different metrics and found some relationships between how granule cells change day to day, which was good but also not as significant of a relationship as he had hoped for. However, now he knows that it isn't particularly important to pursue this avenue of research, and he told me that mainly negative results are still good results and he can focus his efforts elsewhere.

I enjoyed my time a great deal this summer, and being able to work in this computational neuroscience position was incredibly valuable and reaffirmed my enthusiasm for scientific research. I would like to thank the Trustee Endowed Internship Fund for helping sponsor my internship and the Career Center for the professional learning opportunities and experience provided to me this summer.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

A Taste of Criminal Justice

Nate Ellis ’24

Political Science/International Relations

Hennepin County Public Defender's Office | Minneapolis, Minnesota

This summer I took the opportunity to work as an Investigative Intern with the Hennepin County Public Defender's Office (HCPO). I spent ten weeks with the Hennepin County Public Defender's Office during which interns were given the opportunity to work hand in hand on assigned cases with experienced paralegals, investigators, and attorneys on misdemeanor, felony, and juvenile cases. We would also attend court trials, observe and participate in client interviews and case strategy meetings, as well as shadow attorneys and investigators. My time with the office was rewarding as it equipped me with new skills essential to this field of work. Among the many skills that I picked up during the ten-week period, the internship helped strengthen my analytical skills the most.

This opportunity provided me with the perfect chance to increase my experience in public defense and investigation within the legal field and has sparked a new interest in finding more opportunities like this in the future. Despite my interest in criminal law, I have always been quite set on my preference towards international relations but my time with HCPO has compelled me to consider a career in the criminal justice field.

Although I was well aware of the unjust nature of the Minneapolis Police Department and favoritism towards their representatives in court prior to my internship experience, fighting against such powers with the Public Defender's Office put the forces that they are up against into more perspective. The functioning of detention centers in Minneapolis also came as a big surprise to me as I had underestimated the extent to which jail overpopulation would affect livelihood. My experience gave me a genuine behind-the-scenes look at the criminal justice system and this new perspective I was granted continued to surprise me throughout the ten-week period.

I am extremely grateful that Carleton has students connect with its alumni network as this opportunity was made possible through getting in touch with a Carleton alumnus. Through this connection, I have been able to make many more meaningful ones during my ten weeks at HCPO. I am also grateful for the funding I received for the summer as I doubt I would be able to enjoy this experience without the financial support. I would advise other students to also take advantage of not only the resources Carleton has to offer but also the network systems that come with just being a student. In addition, the Student Career Assistants proved extremely helpful in not only finding opportunities to apply to but also improving cover letters and résumés.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

Financial Crimes at PwC
Alejandro Gonzalez ’24
Mathematics & Computer Science
PricewaterhouseCoopers | Washington, D.C.

Over the summer I worked for PwC in the financial crimes unit. I worked in a team of four people, a manager, a senior associate, an associate, and me. We worked with a client to help them transition from one software to another and helped them design a new one. In particular, I helped in testing, I drafted test scripts and acceptance criteria. The skills I learned in software design were particularly useful for this. However, I also had to manage relationships in the workplace and advocate for myself. These skills were key to building strong relationships with my supervisors and other interns and making sure that I had work to do and the opportunity to learn.

I learned multiple things during my internship, a lot about sanctions and data analytics, I also had the opportunity to learn from other interns as I got involved in a machine learning project where we examined dummy bank records and designed a model to identify suspicious activity. This was also a great moment for me to grow as a person and expand my skills as I had access to a lot of online training including Alteryx, Azure, UiPath, and Knime.

After my internship, I received an offer as a full-time associate to start soon after my senior year. I had a lot to consider before I accepted this offer as it would be a full-time commitment and I know I need to make sure it’s a good fit for me before I commit. Considering my summer experiences, it is very likely that I accept this offer. However, I intend to talk a little bit more with the people involved in my experience. Given the good relationships I cultivated with them, they all offered to talk to me outside of the internship and help me find a better fit if I decided not to pursue the firm.

This was a wonderful experience and I would not have been able to complete it had it not been for the funding I received. Therefore I would like to personally thank the Trustee Endowed Internship Fund for the funding and trust they have given me. I made sure that I represented all of the Carleton values and name as I was there and now I’m trying to get more people to apply as I’ve heard interest in consulting within the student body but lack of awareness on how to get the opportunities.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

Affordable Housing in Northfield

Molly Howard ’24
Political Science/International Relations
City of Northfield | Northfield, Minnesota

This summer I worked for the city of Northfield in the Community Development Department. Specifically, I worked under Melissa Hanson on all things related to housing in Northfield. Despite having lived in Northfield for the last three years, I knew very little about the broader Northfield community beyond the scope of Carleton. Living and working in Northfield this summer allowed me to connect with the Northfield community. I learned so much more about the issues the town faces, especially regarding housing.

During my time working for the city, I learned a lot about affordable housing in the United States and abroad. Everyone needs and deserves a safe and affordable place to live so many American families struggle to afford housing. 49% of renter households and 23% of homeowners are cost-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing. This problem continues to get worse and worse. I got to do a lot of research into what different countries, states, and cities are doing to solve this problem, from investing in manufactured housing to developing large-scale public housing projects.

A huge part of my work for the city of Northfield was doing research for my supervisor on a number of topics related to housing. For example, Northfield is trying to develop affordable homes on a piece of land that the Housing and Redevelopment Authority owns. My supervisor is considering using manufactured homes instead of traditionally stick-built homes for this development so I researched the pros and cons of manufactured homes and put together a report for both my supervisor and the Housing and Redevelopment Authority board. It was great to be able to put the research skills that I’ve learned from my time at Carleton into practice for an actual job.

I also really enjoyed learning more about the functioning of local city government. As a political science major at Carleton, a lot of the politics I study is at the international or national scale. I knew very little about the actual daily functions of a small city government. I was pleasantly surprised to see how engaged the city government is with its community members. My supervisor and I often had meetings with Northfield residents and helped connect them to different resources such as downpayment assistance, housing rehabilitation loans, section 8 vouchers, and more. Working for local government really allows for more collaboration and individualistic solutions. I also got to meet with and learn about a variety of other organizations in Northfield that are doing great work to support the Northfield community, such as Growing Up Healthy, Friends of Downtown Northfield, and Habitat for Humanity. Overall, it was so encouraging to see the great work being done in Northfield, and has definitely made me think about a career in more local community development.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

Experiencing Sports Medicine and Athletic Training in Practice
Trevor Jones ’23
Biology
St. Croix Soccer Club | Stillwater, Minnesota

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the funding sponsors of the Trustee Endowed Internship Fund, as their generosity has allowed me to explore the fields of sports medicine and athletic training over this past summer. Thank you very much to all who supported my learning through this fund; your support is greatly appreciated.

This summer, I interned at St. Croix Soccer Club, where I observed athletic training and sports medicine practice in action for semi-professional and youth soccer. Furthermore, I was able to research soft-tissue injury recovery. Through this research and witnessing the direct application of such knowledge, I was able to learn more about how modern practices in medicine influence point-of-care decisions from sports medicine and athletic training staff. I also learned about how team goals and age influence the goals of athletic training staff, which involves a complex ethical backdrop and particular interpersonal skills to incorporate such factors into effective care.

One particular lesson that will stick with me as I continue my career in healthcare is one learned through practicing soft-tissue recovery. Whereas older methods emphasize icing and rest, the modern practice emphasizes blood flow to injured areas to speed recovery, which is antithetical to icing injured areas for long periods. Learning these modern approaches to soft-tissue care was interesting, but the larger lesson about the value of fluidity and flexibility as a healthcare provider was even more valuable to me. In order to provide the best possible care for patients, healthcare providers must be willing to incorporate new data-driven knowledge into their practice, even if it counters what was previously believed to be effective. Especially as I strive to integrate clinical research into medical practice in the future, this ability to maintain an open mind and seek to improve my knowledge throughout my career will be valuable.

Another important lesson from this experience was understanding how the interpersonal relationship between provider and patient plays a vital part in improving patient outcomes. Coaches and athletes were far more likely and willing to follow the medical staff’s advice for recovery when there was a trusting relationship between the two parties. Especially when teams’ short-term goals relied on certain players’ ability to be healthy in the near future, the relationship between the athletic staff and medical staff played a huge role in balancing short-term competitive goals with long-term goals regarding an injury.

In all, this experience allowed me to better understand modern practice in a healthcare field of interest to me. This internship has helped me frame my thinking as I step into the healthcare field and provided me with valuable experience.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

Spleen Development Research at UCSF

Alice McClain ’24
Biology
University of California San Francisco | San Francisco, California

This summer, I interned as a research assistant in the Selleri Lab at the University of California, San Francisco. The lab’s primary research is focused on craniofacial biology, but I worked with a small team studying spleen development. My typical daily tasks included performing lab techniques such as qPCR, real-time PCR, RNA extraction, cryosectioning, and immunofluorescence, as well as shadowing dissections and other lab procedures.

Through this experience, I applied and expanded upon the knowledge and laboratory skills that I had gained in my biology classes in a real-world setting. Looking at and interpreting my own results in the context of the team’s work has given me a stronger understanding of key laboratory techniques and genetics and embryology research as a whole. This experience will undoubtedly serve me well as I seek to better understand and communicate science. As work in the lab revolved around animal experimentation, it also forced me to explore my own ethical judgment and reasoning. The lab fostered an open dialogue about the ethics of their research, and I appreciated the conversations that I had with various lab members about my questions and concerns.

One highlight of my experience this summer was the conversations I had with lab members about their own journeys in science. In addition to sitting in on lab meetings, I spoke to both my supervisor and colleagues about what drew them to this work and their hopes for the future of science, which illuminated both the positives and negatives of working in an academic research system. I also gained a much deeper understanding of genetics and embryology, both of which have applications to many different fields of interest.

Since I am going into my senior year and will be applying for jobs soon, solidifying what I am looking for in a career has been a particularly valuable part of my experience. This summer has allowed me to explore what it’s like to work in a research lab, a path that I hadn’t been exposed to full-time before, and has clarified my career priorities and goals. For example, I’ve learned that a strong sense of community and purpose is very important to me.

I have learned so much this summer and gained insights that will undoubtedly shape my future pursuits. I am especially grateful and proud to have contributed to the lab’s work as part of the larger effort to cure congenital asplenia. Thank you to the Trustee Endowed Internship Fund for supporting this summer experience.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

Computational Biology at Fred Hutchinson, The Human Gut Microbiome
Shreya Nair ’24
Biology & Computer Science
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center | Seattle, Washington

Over the summer of 2023, I interned at the Dey Lab of Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, Seattle Washington. The lab focuses on how the gut microbiome may influence gastrointestinal health and disease function, where my project was tied to both colorectal and breast cancer. My work utilized the results of 16s rRNA sequencing and metabolomics. I analyzed the data from two studies the lab had conducted with collaborators and compiled my findings. We looked at short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs) and microbes to see how they were changing as a result of different body conditions, induced by dietary or physical activity treatments.

This experience has been crucial to figuring out my future, one that combines biology and computer science in innovative ways. I was able to harness and build my coding skills over the course of three months, particularly in the data science area. Part of this was engaging with scientific literature and reading various experimental articles and reviews, a skill I was able to build upon from my classes at Carleton. I also understood what it meant to be working in this environment of research, to collaborate and work effectively with a group of highly varied and skilled scientists.

I value what this internship has taught me about myself, particularly how much I enjoyed this kind of research. I learned more about how to deal with new situations, made new friends, learned how to explore a new city alone, and found comfort in my own companionship. This internship also pushed me out of my comfort zone, both with the independence that was required but also with public speaking. I had the opportunity to present my research to my lab members and collaborators, people whom I had never met, and people who were much more well-versed than me in this field. This was both a nerve-wracking and enjoyable experience and I continued to get more comfortable with it.

I am excited to pursue this work and this field in further education and hope to eventually begin my own research so that I can give back to both the scientific and general community, whether it be through cancer or another disease that requires vital attention. For any student who might be considering research or other internships, my advice would be to never stop reaching out to people, professors, students, and alumni and to give every opportunity, no matter how big or small, their full effort.

I will end this internship with much gratitude to all the people who made it possible, Dr. Neelendu Dey and the Dey Lab members who have taught me so much and made my three months with them unforgettable, to my family and friends who have helped me get here and who have given me the love and support to keep going, to the peers, professors and staff at Carleton who have begun to equip me with skills I will use for many years to come, and to the donors of the Trustee Endowed Internship Fund who made this opportunity possible.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

Reflections from an Unforgettable Summer in Pasadena

Jamal Omosun ‘26
Undeclared
Caltech | Pasadena, California

This summer I was an undergraduate student researcher at the California Institute of Technology. I was advised by R. Michael Alvarez ’86 who is a professor of Political Science at Caltech. For my summer research project, I worked on identifying and tracking misinformation around cryptocurrency on the social media Twitter (or X). During this project, I learned how to deal with large amounts of textual data, natural language processing, and how to use cloud computing. Before my research, I had very little experience in all of these areas so over the ten weeks I did my project, I was able to learn a lot about the academic side of these fields. I also learned a lot about quantitative research in general and how data is collected and used in research in the social sciences in areas such as polarization where the data isn't necessarily obvious on how to collect it or even use it.

The three skills that I learned from this experience are communication skills, writing skills, and critical thinking skills. Due to both the research requirements and the Carleton requirements, I was able to improve my writing skills through reflections as well as reports and a final research paper. I gained more insight on how to communicate through my weekly meetings with my mentor and our lab group in which I had to communicate ideas as well as my final research presentation. I improved my critical thinking skills throughout the research process in trying to figure out solutions to problems that would come up.

I learned a lot about resilience through this experience. Since research is inherently on the cutting edge of science, there were many times when things didn't work or I had to change the scope of my project. My project went through multiple iterations in real time but I learned that especially with a process as fluid as research to just roll with the punches. This makes me more interested in doing research in the future and potentially attending graduate school. I was surprised by how easily I adjusted to living with a new roommate and doing things like budgeting in a city I've never been to before.

To other students trying to get internships, I would tell them to try everything and ask for help. Apply to as many places as you can but expect rejections. Use those rejections to improve your application and ask resources such as the Career Center or a professor to help you review your applications and give you tips. Remember that many times unexpected opportunities come up so be ready for those and have fun with the process.

I am most grateful for everyone who took a chance on me. I would like to thank Professor Alvarez ’86 and Caltech for taking a chance on me so late in the year. I can't thank you all, especially the Alvarez Lab enough. I would like to thank the Career Center for their help and advice and the Trustee Endowed Internship Fund for their financial support.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

Research Internship in Privacy and Cryptography
Alistair Pattison ’24
Mathematics & Statistics
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities | Minneapolis, Minnesota

This past fall, I worked as a research assistant for the Privacy and Cryptography Lab, a small research group within the University of Minnesota College of Science and Engineering led by Professor Nicholas Hopper P’26. My work focused on exploring how to add accountability to encrypted messaging services like WhatsApp and Signal in a way that preserves as many of their privacy guarantees as possible, and my contribution was to develop and implement a protocol in which users can report abusive or misinformation messages to a group of moderators. If the moderators vote via majority that the message requires action, the identity of the sender can be proven. If there is no majority, absolutely no information is revealed. I'll be presenting my work at a conference in May.

The project was very self-directed, and it forced me to develop habits for staying on top of my work when there are few checkpoints and external deadlines. When I started in September, Professor Hopper P’26 sent me a PDF of a recent paper and told me to see if I could come up with any possible extensions of the work. I would check in with him once a week to talk about my progress, clarify our path, and let me ask questions about anything that confused me. I learned about fascinating modern developments in cryptography since the “classical” work I learned about in school, made connections to the other students in the lab, and gained experience in communicating technical material when I gave several half-hour lectures to update my lab-mates on the progress of my work. These talks, and the process of writing up my results for submission to conferences, were invaluable in ensuring that I deeply understood my work.

Fruitful research experience as an undergraduate is almost required for admissions to top grad schools these days, so I’m increasable grateful to David Liben-Nowell for introducing me to Dr. Hopper P’26 and to the Trustee Endowed Internship Fund through the Carleton Career Center for providing funding to offset the costs of undertaking this work. I am also indebted to the NSF for sponsoring my travel to the conference to present my work and to my parents for graciously agreeing to let me move back in for a few months while I took part in this experience. Finally, I cannot thank Professor Hopper P’26 enough for generously agreeing to host me for the fall and for taking time out of his busy schedule to advise me on this project. Thank you all!

To other students who are curious about doing research, but there are not faculty at Carleton doing work that interests you, ask your professors if they know someone who is! The worst possible scenario is that they say, no, and who knows, you might end up landing a sweet gig.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

Utilizing Creativity and Perspective in Advocacy Work

Sean Smith ’25
Political Science/International Relations
Laura Baker Services Association | Northfield, Minnesota

I engaged in two part-time internships, which allowed me to explore different career paths that I have been curious about. I was a “student intern” with the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Recovery Programs and a “public policy/marketing intern” for Laura Baker Services Association (LBSA). Because I received funding for the LBSA position, this essay will focus on that experience. However, it is worth noting the other position because it provided insight into federal government careers. The Treasury’s larger, more bureaucratic work environment contrasted with LBSA’s tightly-knit environment.

At LBSA, I worked directly with the Executive Director, Sandra Gerdes, and the Director of Community Relations, Andrei Sivanich. There was not a set structure to the internship, therefore the flexibility of this position allowed me to utilize my creative thinking skills and lead projects I was passionate about.

My passions for advocacy and education fit perfectly with LBSA’s goal of growing its social media presence. In ten weeks their followers increased by 8%, in part because I created infographics to share information about the Intellectually/Developmentally Disabled (IDD) community and the healthcare profession. As a frequent social media user, I recognized trends where popular advocacy pages utilized infographics to share information, motivate supporters, and reach broader audiences. Therefore, I conducted research and condensed material into comprehensible posts. For example, one highlights that “53% of homecare workers rely on some form of public assistance, despite working full time.”

This example of utilizing my perspective was just one example of how I made an impact in my role. Another example came from my own ignorance about the IDD community. In part because I am not close with anyone with IDD, I was no expert on the issues they face. And although a challenge, I viewed ignorance as a strength. In a conversation with my supervisor, she admitted that LBSA and other similar organizations use a lot of jargon and “insider baseball” language, which makes communicating issues more difficult. Because my understanding was similar to the general public, I utilized my own ignorance to bridge that gap, and re-frame the issues in ways that were easier to understand, and in language that was more accessible, which was the driving force behind the infographics.

In addition to these projects, I got LBSA SMS registered, meaning they can now send text message alerts to their supporters rather than only email. I also used platforms such as VoterVoice, AirTable, and Salesforce. Furthermore, I will continue my work with LBSA this fall as part of my work-study, and I am very excited to build on what I have done so far.

Because this was unpaid, I would not have been able to take on this position if it were not for the Trustee Endowed Internship Fund. I am very grateful for the donors who have helped contribute, which enables me and so many other students to explore their academic passions without financial burdens.
Trustee Endowed Internship Fund

Reflections on Embodied Design Math Research

Evelene Zhang ’25

Mathematics & Cognitive Science
University of California Berkeley | Berkeley, California

This summer, I joined UC Berkeley’s Embodied Design Research Lab as a research assistant for the Balance Board Math (BBM) project, a novel balance-based interface for math instruction that integrates embodied cognition and sensory regulation. Over the past summer, my responsibilities included reading and crafting literature reviews for BBM and embodied design research papers, as well as Electrodermal Activity (EDA) papers. Once I immersed myself in the relevant content and terminology, I began transcribing pre-recorded interviews with participants. These interviews provided fascinating insights into how children with diverse sensory profiles and special needs responded differently to mathematical activities. Some interviews featured individual participants, while others involved pairs. It was equally captivating to observe how children both competed and collaborated, employing their bodily movements on balance boards to graphically represent mathematical concepts on the screen.

After transcribing all the videos, I started a qualitative analysis of the “gesture” portion of the interview. During the interview, the participants were asked to gesture and describe the printed graph two times, one before the activity started and one after the activity ended. The qualitative analysis was completed based on a pre-existing code book. The hypothesis was the kids would use their bodies more when gesturing the graph after the activity, however, the information was not provided to the coder during qualitative analysis. After analyzing the gesture interview, I coded the interview based on all the movement types. Now, I am quantitatively analyzing how participants’ EDA changes for different movement types. Also, I am curious to see how participants’ EDA differs when they have different sensory profiles.

This summer marked my inaugural venture into psychology research, and it was a profound learning experience. I acquired the ability to read papers more swiftly and compose concise literature reviews. Additionally, I undertook my first qualitative analysis and drew upon my computer science background to analyze the dataset. Furthermore, I am in the process of applying regression analysis for my quantitative investigations. A significant revelation was the striking dissimilarity in arousal and calmness strategies between autistic children and those without special needs. Contrary to our initial assumptions, certain repetitive activities were found to induce a sense of calm in autistic children and those with sensory-seeking tendencies.

I extend heartfelt gratitude to the Career Center for the funding, enabling me to be physically present at Berkeley. I also appreciate my supervisor, Dor Abrahamson, for providing the opportunity to collaborate with Sofia Tancredi in the EDRL lab. Their guidance and support have been instrumental in shaping my summer research. For fellow students embarking on internships, I offer this advice: seize every opportunity to learn and grow. Don’t hesitate to ask questions, as profound insights often arise from curiosity. Internships are not just about completing tasks; they encompass skill acquisition, relationship building, and self-discovery. Embrace challenges, adapt swiftly, and make the most of every moment. In sum, this summer was an enriching journey into psychology research, fostering skills and insights that will undoubtedly shape my academic and professional future.
Voyager Endowed Internship Fund

A Summer in Colombia: Working with Fundación Cerros de Bogotá
Leo Jordan ’24
Environmental Studies
Fundación Cerros de Bogotá | Bogotá, Colombia

Before anything else, I want to thank my sponsors from the Voyager Endowed Internship Fund and Trustee Endowed Internship Fund for making this experience possible. Your support means the world, and I deeply appreciate it.

This summer I worked at the foundation component of Fundación Cerros de Bogotá supporting their educational workshops in many different capacities. I did a ton of lesson planning, scripting out activities for two different groups of kids, one with children ranging from ages 4 - 7 and another from ages 11-13. I also supported the foundation’s “memorias de la la ruralidad” team which creates other workshops that often take place in a nature reserve in the eastern hills of Bogotá.

Probably the most important skill I gained from this experience is Spanish language skills. Living and working in Spanish for almost ten weeks has had a huge impact on my ability to communicate. I went from barely passable choppy speaking to a much more usable, proficient form of communication and it has been a very satisfying experience to do so. A close second is the lesson planning skills. Drafting scripts for a group of students with experiences so different from my own has been a tremendous learning experience, one that will serve me very well in my future career as a teacher where I hope to serve a diverse group of students.

Something I learned from this internship experience that surprised me was that I really don't love the hybrid format. It is very popular lately and I don't doubt that it is a great option for lots of people but in my experience, I found it a little bit isolating and sometimes hard to motivate myself to do any kind of work when not in a more traditional office environment. I will certainly keep this in mind as I search for jobs throughout this year. I am going to avoid any sort of hybrid/virtual options, I could see them really stunting my ability to form a community in whatever city I land in.

This internship reaffirmed my desire to enter the world of education, specifically teaching after graduating from Carleton. I really enjoyed doing lots of lesson planning, and this honestly is one of the least exciting parts of being a teacher with the expectation of grading and other clerical work. Although I didn't get to spend quite as much time in schools as I would have liked, the moments I did have were incredibly joyful and completely reaffirmed my career aspirations.
A Summer of Rats and Relaxation

Sophie Lenzer ’25
Psychology
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Psychology Department | Madison, Wisconsin

This summer, I went to UW Madison to work with Dr. Anthony Auger, a leading researcher in hormones, puberty blockers, and transgender health. I’m a research assistant in the Meerts Lab here at Carleton, which specializes in sexual dysfunction in female rats. I’ve always been quite fascinated by sexual health, the hormones and behaviors that accompany it, and the process of development on a psychological level. I also love animals. As such, working with Dr. Auger felt like a natural progression.

Our primary focus was to explore the impacts of the puberty-blocking drug Lupron on the brains of pubertal rats, and consequently the implications for physical and mental health in transgender individuals. When I arrived in Madison, I met with Dr. Auger and we discussed different passions I had and what specific projects I wanted to be involved with. I learned very quickly that my plans for a ten-week research position could go up in flames very quickly, so summer was a major exercise in cognitive flexibility.

Luckily, my biggest goal was to work with the rats. I spent most of July waking up at 7 a.m., injecting 48 rats with Lupron, sitting silently in the dark for several hours running their behavior tests, and scoring the recordings of their behavior. I also helped my labmates run PCR on rat brain tissue. I realized that I’m not nearly as interested in the biological component of this research as I am in the psychological-behavioral aspect. At first, I felt really guilty about this. I think the most important lesson I learned is that internships teach you a lot about what you’re passionate about, but maybe even more about what you’re not. I loved thinking about the social and behavioral implications of treatment for animals and humans alike. I felt very personally invested in the work we did in the lab for that reason. This internship cemented the fact that my niche is certainly not in biological practices. I don’t feel passionate about cellular-level lab techniques, but I’ve learned that this is okay.

I would advise all future students/interns at Carleton to allow themselves to dislike things. That’s not to say they shouldn’t be eager and hardworking, because that’s essential; however, it is okay to leave an internship with your mind changed about what you love. Now is the time to discover.

I’m most grateful to Dr. Auger, who is absolutely brilliant and profoundly kind, and my lab team, for making me feel so welcome and valued as a member of their scientific community, even though I wasn’t a student at UW Madison and would only be there for a number of weeks. I made some friends I’ll have for many years to come. I’d also like to thank Luke Klefstad for his enthusiastic and unwavering support of the interns during this process, my peers in Cohort K for helping me gain a new sense of perspective every single week, and especially the Waterbury Endowed Internship Fund, whose extremely generous award allowed me to pursue this magnificent and life-changing opportunity.
Welsh Family Endowed Internship Fund for High Growth Industries

Embracing Professional Growth: Lessons from a Summer Internship
Batmend Batsaikhan ’24
Computer Science & Statistics
Pypup | Dover, Delaware

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Welsh Family Endowed Fund for Internships in High Growth Industries, whose generous financial support played a pivotal role in realizing my internship. My thanks also extend to the Carleton Career Center for facilitating connections that opened the door to this incredible opportunity.

During the summer, I served as a part-time full-stack intern at a small tech startup. Over twelve weeks, my primary focus was the development of a synchronous shared Integrated Development Environment (IDE). This intricate technical project imparted numerous technical and soft skills. Through this experience, I grasped the significance of prioritizing my physical well-being to maintain consistent productivity. Giving priority to proper sleep, nutrition, and exercise resulted in tangible improvements in my energy levels when approaching work each day. Furthermore, delving into the complex task of constructing a shared IDE exposed me to new technologies while reinforcing my fundamental skills. My exploration of building synchronous systems led me to encounter various new technologies. Additionally, understanding the codebase authored by my senior colleagues and translating this knowledge into a functional product taught me essential code organization practices and optimal techniques for using TypeScript.

This journey highlighted my limited experience with teamwork in professional scenarios. It marked my first time collaborating with a technical project manager. Navigating this professional relationship was a new terrain for me and required time to adapt. During the initial weeks, I tended to set overly ambitious expectations for myself, leading to stressful situations when trying to meet them. However, over time, I learned to establish more realistic goals and to communicate effectively when facing challenges. I intend to use this experience as a foundation to evolve into a more adept team member, equipped with strong communication skills and consistent performance. Observing the remarkable efficiency of my mentor, who could accomplish tasks in minutes that would take me hours, was truly enlightening. It underscored the disparity between knowing a technology and truly mastering it. Unlike the classroom environment, my work now contributes to a product that will impact the lives of many people. This realization has instilled a deep commitment in me to ongoing growth, improvement, and learning.

For fellow students seeking internships, the importance of maintaining meticulous organization throughout the process cannot be overstated. Once secured, thorough pre-internship preparation on both professional and personal fronts is crucial for strong performance and minimal stress. Lastly, nurturing curiosity and mindfulness are invaluable assets on the path of continuous learning.

In summary, this transformative summer internship has cultivated enduring insights into effective work habits and self-awareness. Through hands-on experiences and fresh perspectives, I am genuinely enthusiastic about making meaningful contributions and thriving within the dynamic tech industry.
Wiebolk Endowed Internship Fund

Bridging Technology and Healthcare
Siddharth Chundru ’24
*Cognitive Science*
The Ohio State University | Columbus, Ohio

During my internship at the Cognitive Systems Engineering Laboratory at The Ohio State University, I was part of a team focused on using Artificial Intelligence to improve the efficacy of nursing. My role involved analyzing and assisting the lab in various other miscellaneous ways. I was also able to attend weekly lab meetings where we discussed things such as important new publications in the field, progress updates on different teams and projects in the lab as well as future directions.

The internship significantly enhanced three key skills: technical expertise in machine learning and coding, interdisciplinary communication between the tech and healthcare sectors, and critical thinking for problem-solving in a simulated high-stakes environment. Rather than applying our technology directly in emergency rooms, we engaged with trainee nurses who assessed the likelihood of patients needing critical care in the next thirty minutes based on vitals and AI-assisted prompts. This setting offered a unique blend of academic rigor and real-world applicability, allowing me to learn that I excel in interdisciplinary spaces that demand both technical proficiency and a nuanced understanding of human factors.

The experience had a profound influence on my future path. I am now keen to further my studies in fields that bridge technology and healthcare, armed with a real-world understanding of how the two can interact for meaningful change. This internship didn't just offer me technical skills but also gave me a vision for my future; creating technologies that can make healthcare more efficient and equitable. For students considering internships, my advice would be to seek out opportunities that push you both technically and ethically, driving you to consider the broader implications of your work.

In summary, the internship was not just an academic exercise but a deeply enriching experience that has equipped me to pursue a fulfilling, impactful career.
Communing with the World
Ella Daniels-Koch ’25
Philosophy
Tidelines Institute | Gustavus, Alaska

I am quite grateful to the Wiebolt Endowed Internship Fund, which allowed me to experience a way of life this summer that has changed me for the better.

A week after the Carleton spring term ended, I flew directly from Minneapolis to Juneau, Alaska. From there, I boarded a four-hour ferry ride to the remote town of Gustavus, a town with a population under 1,000 and a completely off-the-road system. I spent about two months there, working at an alternative school called the Tidelines Institute.

Tidelines is based on L.L. Nunn’s educational model that he applied to Deep Springs College, which follows three educational pillars: academics, labor, and student self-governance. I was a WWOOFer (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) at Tidelines and mainly spent my time working in their large garden meant to feed all the students and staff (about 22 people, sometimes more if the professors bring their families and if guests from the community stop by). In addition to gardening, I also helped cook many meals, as well as level the floor of a root cellar, tend the chickens and ducks, and help with general maintenance.

Tidelines not only solidified what I believe to be the ideal way to live a life, but it taught me many, many new things about myself and people and community. I know I want to have my own garden, but Tidelines does not just run a garden, it sends excess produce to neighbors. I know I want a strong community, and Tidelines has utterly embedded itself into the tight-knit Gustavus web within only a few short years since the institute’s founding. Tidelines helped me realize just how accessible such a community is, it is simply up to me to take a leap of faith and join such a place, even though it is outside the status quo.

One element in particular that I will carry with me as I walk away from college and toward adulthood is my love for relationship building. I loved going from strangers to good friends with just about everyone at Tidelines, from students roughly my age to Larry, the retired maintenance man. Such relationships were key when we had group discussions on matters such as climate activism or effective altruism. Diving deeply into important ideas and topics with these people this summer reminded me of what matters. In my future, not only do I want to lead a good life for my community, but also lead a life that questions and prods at and sometimes rages against what is wrong.
Exploring Lightweight Debiasing and Enhancing Robustness
Barry Han ’25
Computer Science & Mathematics
California Institute of Technology | Pasadena, California

This summer, I was fortunate enough to serve as a research assistant at the California Institute of Technology, under the guidance of Professor Anima Anandkumar and Dr. Rafał Kocieński. Our primary focus was on the challenges that arise when trying to de-bias large-scale pre-trained language models, a critical issue in the field of Natural Language Processing (NLP).

Working at Anima’s Group was both challenging and enlightening. Our research began with investigating the Mass Memory Editing Technique, a lightweight method that modifies a model by adjusting weights over specific critical layers. This approach seemed promising, but its limitations in generalization soon became evident. This led us to the second phase of our research: enhancing the robustness of lightweight debiasing through data augmentation tailored for adapter tuning. We explored various augmentations, and our preliminary findings indicated that these not only improved debiasing efficacy but also preserved the model’s language capabilities.

Reflecting on my internship, three skills I significantly enhanced were the ability to work with large datasets, the development of academic skills, and the ability to quickly learn and adapt. Analyzing and training models required handling vast amounts of data, an experience that honed my data analysis skills. I also had to present our findings, write formal academic reports, and contribute to publishing papers, which strengthened my academic skills. Additionally, being in a dynamic research environment necessitated rapidly absorbing new information from texts and tutorials, enhancing my ability to quickly adapt.

One key lesson I learned about myself during this experience is that research is a time-consuming process. Experiments often do not yield the desired results, which can be disheartening. However, I learned to manage my anxiety, interpret the results, and contemplate the reasons behind unexpected outcomes. This internship has laid a strong foundation for my future in NLP and will be incredibly valuable as I pursue my PhD. It also provided me with numerous networking opportunities, which I believe will be beneficial in the long run.

I am immensely grateful for this precious opportunity and for everyone I met and collaborated with this summer. I am also very appreciative of those who supported my summer research. First and foremost, I want to express my profound gratitude to the Wiebolt Endowed Internship Fund and the Carleton Career Center for granting me access to this extraordinary learning opportunity. Additionally, I would like to thank the California Institute of Technology and the Caltech SFP office for holding this amazing opportunity. I also want to thank my mentors Professor Anima Anandkumar and Doctor Rafał Kocieński, my lab mates, and my supportive parents and friends for their encouragement and assistance during my summer research internship.

In conclusion, this internship was an eye-opening experience that has significantly shaped my path forward. I encourage other students to pursue internships as they provide invaluable real-world experience and a chance to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical setting.
Wiebolt Endowed Internship Fund

A Second Summer with the Franklin Furnace Archive
Brett Olson ’24
Art History & Studio Art
Franklin Furnace Archive Inc. | Brooklyn, New York

With the generous funding offered by the Wiebolt Endowed Internship Fund, I was able to accept an internship offer from the Franklin Furnace Archive this summer. I was so grateful to be asked to return to Franklin Furnace for an in-person position after my hybrid role last summer and to be working on a project that my supervisor, Harley Spiller, thought I would excel at. Not only was the internship an incredible learning opportunity but it also gave me the chance to live in New York City with a fellow Carl, which provided access to institutions for my comps research, alongside many additional unique obstacles and achievements.

One of my main roles as an archival intern was to manage the material housed in our Event Archives. These archives cover performance events, artist readings, and exhibition openings from 1976 to 2023, and include notable names such as William Pope L, Yoko Ono, Felix Gonzalez Torres, Tehching Hsieh and Barbara Kruger. I was tasked with determining which of the materials had already been made available to our online archive, what needed digitizing and processing, and finally researching event records that were incomplete. Part of this required reaching out to artists and their studio assistants to acquire material, and interview for context. At times it was challenging to know what could be included in our online archive, due to the controversial, ephemeral, or personal content in much of the work. Additionally, I worked on grant writing and editing, our annual fundraising campaign, and processing new artists’ book donations in collaboration with the Museum of Modern Art. A special highlight was the day we received a donation of over 140 works from a single artist. I was grateful to get to intimately handle such a plethora of material, while also working towards our mission of more accessible public scholarship.

I can’t express how much I enjoyed working with a small team of people, and the opportunity it gave me to ask lots of questions about our organization but also my coworkers’ positions as archivists and photographers, and their experiences in graduate programs for library sciences. Our conversations gave me an incredible amount of insight into plans for after Carleton, including places to investigate and how to apply for artist grants and residencies before diving into another degree myself. I left this internship with a greater sense of agency and leadership in making decisions about how to progress in projects and strengthening professional relationships. The confidence I developed proved valuable in navigating challenges with landlords.

My advice to future interns would be to say yes to all the opportunities you can and seek them out even when things are not offered. Staying late to process just a couple more files turned into rich conversations about my supervisor’s adventures abroad on courier flights or design ideas for a “banned-book bandolier.” I look forward to keeping up with Franklin Furnace, and highly encourage other students interested in the arts to seek out an internship or grant with them.
Wiebolt Endowed Internship Fund

Disparities in Palliative Care Research
Irene Tang '26
Undeclared
University of California, Irvine | Orange, California

The internship I participated in during the summer of 2023 focused on analyzing the demographic disparities in palliative care as a treatment method for end-of-life cancer patients, specifically focusing on patients with peritoneal metastases. The research uses patient data from national databases and attempts to identify patterns within those data that could potentially have larger implications. My role was more literature-based: I looked for past literature on related topics to help draft the final paper.

The three most important skills that I gained were using academic writing, interpreting data, and searching for academic writing. I learned how to do scientific searches online through STEM courses that I have previously taken at Carleton College, which definitely came in handy during my internship. The ability to use keywords and phrases to look for the most relevant and sometimes the most recent discoveries in the field of interest greatly increased my efficiency.

During the summer, because I am constantly looking for new literature, I now know many more reliable platforms for scientific papers than I previously did. Most of the skills I have gained will be a stepping stone to more involved participation in the future. On top of just gaining experience as a research assistant, one of my other goals from this internship is to learn more about the life of a physician. After I had more meaningful chats with my mentor, Dr. Eng from UCI, I learned a great deal from him, not just academically but also about life as a medical student and beyond. As a physician currently doing research, he was once in my shoes and felt the same struggles I am currently facing. Dr. Eng reassured me that light is at the end of the long premed journey ahead. During my internship, Dr. Eng was knowledgeable, understanding, and always enthusiastic to help, which I am incredibly grateful for.

Now that my internship is ending, I feel more determined to pursue the medical field and develop my career in healthcare. In the future, I will seek more focused career development opportunities from the Carleton Career Center. The pre-med department is one of my main sources of information in freshman year. I want to thank Pam Middleton, our pre-health advisor, for all the support and suggestions she has given me that ultimately led me to find this internship opportunity successfully. I am also very grateful to the donors to the Wiebolt Endowed Internship Fund, who gave me the financial support needed for the duration of this internship.