



The coolest jobs out there and how to get them

Internships are your foot in the door. Stacey Shackford

When Mount Holyoke College junior Erica Lutes landed a summer internship at the United States State Department (state.gov/www/careers/rinterncontents.html) in Caracas, Venezuela, she had no idea what to expect. The job titles "international paper shredder" or "coffee server for the ambassador" came to mind. But instead, the international relations major spent her summer heading up an election observation program for the American embassy, writing reports on Venezuela's economic situation, composing classified cables on revolutionary activity, and hobnobbing with Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez Frias. "It was wonderful. You just can't imagine how much you can learn in one summer," said Lutes.

Recent University of Vermont grad Jody Handly interned as a head field technician on a national wild fish health survey for Fish and Wildlife in Alabama, traveling between 10 states and working with state and federal agencies. Handly eventually developed her own project, which she hopes to complete in graduate school with the help of grants she was offered because of her internship.

"It was a life-changing opportunity for me," said Handly.

Finding the Right Internship

Erica had to go through a rigorous application process that included interviews with the CIA to get her internship. Jody found hers at the Student

Conservation Association web site (sca-inc.org). The SCA is the country's oldest and biggest intern placement organization for those interested in conservation, placing thousands of students into positions with organizations like the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service.

The U.S. government has tons of opportunities in practically every field. Although

White House interns inevitably have to deal with occasional snide jokes about Monica, isn't it worth it to help shape domestic and foreign policy? Students interning for the Council on Environmental Quality advise the President on national and international environmental policy matters (whitehouse.gov/CEQ/interns.html), while interns at the Social Office help plan White House dinners and other gatherings. Try (whitehouse.gov/internship/program.html) for other government internships working



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for the Chief of Staff, Counsel to the President, Office of the First Lady, the National AIDS Policy and other offices.

Even the FBI is looking for a few good men and women (fbi.gov/employment/honors.htm). So is the Department of Commerce's Central and Eastern Europe Business Information Center

(mac.doc.gov/eebic/intern.htm).

Whatever your interest, be it folklore, African art, space travel, or astrophysics, the Smithsonian will likely have an amazing internship (<http://web1.si.edu/ofg/resopp.htm#intern>).

From Mickey Mouse to Letterman

Ever wonder what it's like to be Mickey Mouse for a day? Disney theme parks (wdwcollegeprogram.com) have hundreds of opportunities for business majors, future hotel and restaurant managers, and even aspiring animators, filmmakers, dancers and actors.

Fan of daytime drama? The new NBC show "Passions" is seeking interns now

(<http://home.nbc.com>). Aspiring music video maker? Palomar Pictures lets interns dub and edit its music videos and commercial showreels with professional systems (rsinternships.com/applications/posting.php3?ID=192). Another internship site, www.rsinternship.com, can help you land jobs that range from running a night club in New York City to promoting the House of Chanel fashion, fragrance, or make-up lines through a public relations internship with the legendary French company.

Fifteen lucky students per semester get to pour coffee for David Letterman (csp.msu.edu/slc/indetail.asp?code=CM A=010). And according to MTV Networks spokesperson Suzanne Lumerman, about 700 interns get to work in the same building with the likes of Carson Daly and the folks who bring you "Total Request Live" and "Real World" (mtv.com/jobs.html).

Even if you don't land on Letterman, there are likely to be plenty of possibilities for cool internships in your hometown. Check with your local newspaper, TV station, congressman, police department or courthouse.

It beats sitting in a stuffy classroom or flipping burgers for the summer. And a truly cool internship might lead to an even cooler job after graduation and end your burger-flipping days forever. •



Interns working for the Block Island branch of the Nature Conservancy.

A few hours on the Internet will reveal literally thousands of internship opportunities. Try these sites:

- www.rsinternships.com
- internshipprograms.com
- 4internships.com
- summerjobs.com
- futurecollegegrads.com
- coolworks.com
- resortinternconnection.com

Above: The New York Yankees share their 1999 World Championship champagne with David Letterman. (AP Photo/HO, Alan Singer)