
INTERNSIPS | STUDENTS WORK

Category: Cross-Boundary Collaboration & Partnerships
New Mexico

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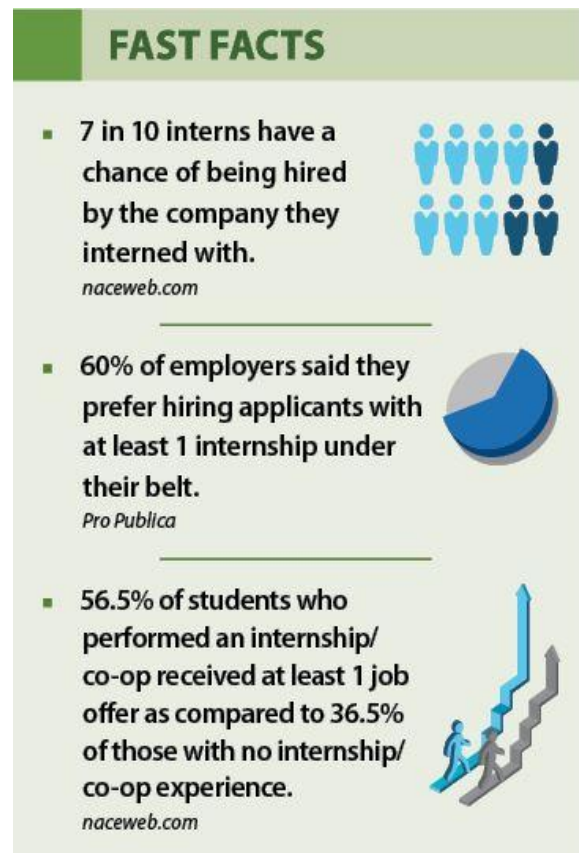
Executive Summary:

Career experience is increasingly important for students as they enter the workforce. In a survey conducted in 2016 by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, 56.5 percent of students who had an internship or co-op received at least one job offer, as compared to 36.35 percent of those with no internship experience.

As a result of the growing need for students to participate in internships, Governor Susana Martinez tasked the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) to create the state's first website linking students and job seekers to employers offering internships. **Internships | Students Work** (www.dws.state.nm.us/internships) was developed and launched in less than seven months by a team that included interns and developers from Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) Ingenuity, Inc. STEMulus Center Deep Dive Coding Bootcamp, with oversight from NMDWS. **Internships | Students Work** complements NMDWS' online suite of job search and career exploration resources, which includes the New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System (www.jobs.state.nm.us) and New Mexico Career Solutions (www.NMCareerSolutions.com).

Internships | Students Work is a workforce development tool for the communities of New Mexico. It was designed to not only share postings for available internships and other career experience opportunities with students and experienced professionals, but also provide information to employers and educators on how to create strong internship programs.

A lot goes into getting the most out of internship programs from all sides. Employers are the facilitators of an internship and must abide by legal policies and create a structure that supports the development of career-ready skills for the intern. Students and experienced professionals learn career-ready skills and the day-to-day tasks of a specific job. Finally, educators need to know how to support an education curriculum that provides students with career pathway development and learning opportunities that teach career-ready skill development. Each audience uniquely contributes to the success of a career experience, which helps build a talented workforce that is invested in their community and its future.



Concept, Significance, and Impact

Concept

In a survey conducted in 2016 by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), 56.5 percent of students who had an internship or co-op received at least one job offer, as compared to 36.35 percent of those with no internship experience. In that same survey, NACE affirms that graduates with internship experience are likely to have their first job with the median salary of \$45,301, nearly 3% more than \$34,601 by those with no internship experience. Furthermore, individuals not only gain skills and experience through these internships, but employers also gain a powerful recruitment tool and a training ground for prospective long-term employees. With all of these benefits, it became evident that it was vital to our state's economic future to provide a resource to which students, professionals, employers, and educators could turn.

66.5% of college students surveyed said that internships should be mandatory
2014 Look Sharp "State of the Internship" Report



Governor Susana Martinez proposed the **Internships | Students Work** portal to fulfill the need of a single online repository in New Mexico that not only had the postings and advertisements for internships, but also served as a gateway for information specifically about internships for students, job seekers, and employers. New Mexico's Department of Workforce Solutions and Higher Education Department were tasked with pulling together local resources that would support the creation of this central online resource.

As a result, this agency partnership bridged together workforce development and higher education, producing a strong team of developers and students affiliated with the Central New Mexico Community College's (CNM) STEMulus Center Deep Dive Coding Bootcamp. The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions Information Technology team provided project development oversight utilizing the agency's existing technological infrastructure as the basis for this unique online resource. Both agencies worked together to document rich content that would benefit both of New Mexico's educational and business communities.

This collaboration between NMDWS and CNM's STEMulus Center was an important and crucial piece to completing the **Internships | Students Work** portal. It was vital that a tool that would be used by potential interns, be developed by interns themselves. This offered invaluable experience not only to the students working on the portal, but to NMDWS which was overseeing the project as well.

Students and developers worked for 6.5 months to complete the project. The project was completed in three phases: Phase 1 consisted of "initiation and planning" in which the development environment and processes were defined. Phase 2 was the "execution phase". In this phase login and registration, job seeker, employer, and educator features were developed. This was also the phase in which testing and deployment of features were completed. Lastly,

Phase 3 was the “closeout” phase, in which end-to-end testing and deployment (which includes integration, regression testing, and go live) were conducted.

Development of the **Internships | Students Work** began in April of 2016. There was a need to have the portal go live as soon as possible so that students, job seekers, employers, and educators could have the resources available to them when looking at winter internship opportunities. This meant that the main goal for the timeline of the project was for it to be a quick and efficient turnaround. This was a challenge that was met and embraced by developers and students working on the portal. Phase 1 was completed at the end of June, 2016; Phase 2 was completed in October, 2016; and Phase 3 was also completed in October, 2016. The **Internships | Students Work** portal went live on November 5, 2016.

The portal is hosted under the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions public website. In order to ensure accessibility and information security, the portal is managed by NMDWS’ Internship Program manager who works with IT staff to maintain the site’s integrity and functionality for the public. The program manager also works to ensure sustainability through community outreach and content relevancy. Community outreach has proved to be invaluable to the sustainability of the portal. Training has also been completed with the department’s field offices and internal staff using the site, in order for them to make the site known to potential users.

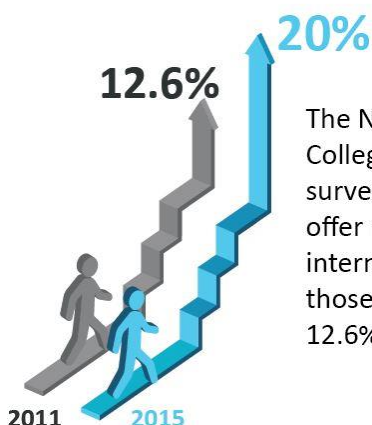
Since the go-live date, the **Internships | Students Work** portal has been a valuable tool for hundreds of users. There have been up to 200 internships posted on the site from a wide variety of employers varying due to school schedules and internships that have been filled. The internship types include: engineering, business-related, marketing, sales, IT, pharmacy, plus many more. With so many opportunities, New Mexico is excited to now offer a tool which has it all; a way for students and professionals to look for their next career opportunity; a way for employers to find the perfect candidate for their business needs; and a way for educators to help their students in developing and showcasing their skills.

Significance

Internships allow for employers to connect with high quality talent in an ever more competitive labor market. They also provide great opportunities for students to apply their classroom learning to invaluable real-world career experiences, and for experienced professionals to explore new career paths or reenter the workforce.

The **Internships | Students Work** portal was created to be a central place online that links students and job seekers to employers offering internship experiences.

The portal has become a primary location for New Mexico students and job seekers to connect to public and private sector job shadow and internship programs across the state.

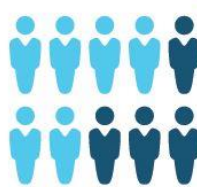


The National Association of Colleges and Employers 2015 survey showed that The gap in offer rates between students with internship/co-op experience and those without has grown from 12.6% in 2011 to 20% in 2015

Individuals not only gain skills and work experience via internships, but employers also gain a powerful recruitment tool and a training ground for prospective long-term employees. One of the main goals of the project was to encourage, educate, and facilitate the exploration of new career paths through internships for job seekers, employers, and educators. Through the project, several external stakeholders were identified: students & experienced professionals; employers; and educators. Other stakeholders include NMDWS, the New Mexico Department of Higher Education, and Economic Development with Governor Susana Martinez.

The **Internships | Students**

Work portal has many features to help external stakeholders. The “Students” section is designed to guide a student (whether they attend middle school, high school, or college) through the general



More than 6 in 10 students looking for internships with no success to date say they could use help in learning more on exactly how to search for opportunities.
2014 Look Sharp “State of the Internship” Report

process of planning and applying for an internship or alternative career experience. In the portal, users are able to learn about the benefit of career experiences as they are guided through the application process, and how to make the most of their internship for their professional future. Users can also find information on transitioning back into the workforce through internships. Students and experienced professionals are also able to save a résumé in their account which makes their account searchable by local employers looking for qualified candidates. Users are also able to create a customized internship feed based on their interests. Lastly, Students and experience professionals can apply to internships. They are also able to browse and save internships in their account and apply to them later.

Employers play an integral role in creating career experience opportunities for our community of students and experienced professionals. One goal of the **Internships | Students Work** portal is to assist employers in creating strong internship programs and increasing the number of career experience opportunities available for New Mexico students and experienced professionals. Employers are able to review rich content on how to create an effective internship program that works for employers and host students for an experience that benefits their business as well as their intern. They are also able to search for qualified candidates and contact them through the secure system. Lastly, the **Internships | Students Work** portal offers employers seamless connectivity; it allows them to connect to the New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System to update job orders within the Students Work system.

The **Internships | Students Work** portal offers helpful tools for Educators as well including the Student Internship Program Guide where they can learn about best practices associated with an internship program for their students and faculty including employer outreach, student preparation, and curriculum resources. The portal also offers community resources that they can use to prepare their students for a career experience and career pathway development. These community resources include local organizations, online applications, and peer to peer support.

Implementation of the **Internships | Students Work** portal was successful and through this, NMDWS is able to further its mission of Educating, Empowering, and Employing New Mexicans by integrating content and promoting helpful information about internships and other career exploration opportunities for students, job seekers, employers and educators.

Impact

Before the **Internships | Students Work** portal was developed, there was not one single online repository in New Mexico that not only had the postings and advertisements for internships, but also served as a gateway for information specifically about internships for students, job seekers, and employers. Since the go-live date, the **Internships | Students Work** portal has been a valuable tool for hundreds of users. There have been up to 200 internships posted on the site from a wide variety of employers with number fluctuating with the internships schedules between education and employers. Educators have been able to utilize the portal to help their students to start thinking about jobs and occupations and how to achieve associated goals.

Because the **Internships | Students Work** portal was developed by students from the Central New Mexico Community College's STEMulus Center Deep Dive Coding Bootcamp, the project was able to provide real-time experience to not only the students themselves, but to the department as well. It was a learning opportunity for all involved.

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions expects the **Internships | Students Work** portal to help strengthen its relationship with New Mexico students, job seekers, businesses, and educators. These relationships are important when thinking about the state's economic future. The more we work together to create a thriving ecosystem between our business community, our educational system, and families, the greater opportunities our future job seekers and businesses will have in New Mexico.

With such exciting results so far, NMDWS continues to move forward in cultivating ties through our community. The **Internships | Students Work** portal will help strengthen these ties further, while giving our students, experienced professionals, employers, and educators a valuable tool. The department will continue to monitor the health of the model, continue to ensure sustainability through community outreach and content relevancy, and continue to train staff on the qualities of the portal. With so many possibilities, NMDWS looks forward to opportunities to share information about the development, launch, and results of the **Internships | Students Work** portal.