

Building a Foundation for a Career in Nonprofit



A HAMILTON EDUCATION is designed to prepare you for a lifetime of personal and professional achievement and satisfaction. Through your coursework and activities, you will develop a broad base of knowledge and skills to prepare you for a variety of career opportunities. However, you will need to take initiative to explore career options and develop career-specific skills. Obtaining an internship is one of the best ways to build a foundation for your career.

Most formal internships are competitive; you should view your first two years at Hamilton as a time to gain career-related experiences to make yourself marketable for a competitive internship following your junior year. Career-related experiences can take place during the academic year as well as during the summer. Your initial summer opportunities will most likely be unpaid, located close to your home, and with a small to medium-size organization. The following are types of organizations and departments you might consider contacting:

Type of Local Business/Organization:

- ▶ Cultural/historical society
- ▶ Environmental organization
- ▶ Library or resource center
- ▶ Multi-service community agency
- ▶ Nursing home/senior center/hospital
- ▶ Residential home
- ▶ Social services organization
- ▶ Town recreation department, YMCA or YWCA
- ▶ United Way

Departments/Functional Areas:

- ▶ Communications
- ▶ Community relations
- ▶ Event planning
- ▶ Fundraising
- ▶ Grant writing
- ▶ Policy/Research
- ▶ Programming
- ▶ Publications
- ▶ Grass-roots organizing

Hamilton

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The chart on the right identifies tasks in each of three educational areas. They are progressive, and we strongly recommend that you begin this process during your first two years at Hamilton.

Career-Planning Tasks

The Career Center offers personalized and comprehensive services to help you with the career-planning process.

Career-Related Experience

It is important that you be actively involved on campus as well as use your summers to develop career-related skills and experience.

Academic Preparation

Select courses, a concentration and electives that help you develop creative, critical thinking, writing and speaking skills as well as skills specific to a nonprofit career.

Photos from left: Taking a break during construction with Habitat for Humanity; Matt McKenna '72, president of Keep America Beautiful, the nation's largest community improvement network; visiting with residents in an assisted-care facility.

	Career Planning Tasks	Career-Related Experience	Academic Preparation
1	<p>Meet with a career counselor.</p> <p>Write a résumé.</p> <p>Attend career information sessions.</p> <p>Identify potential career-related experiences.</p>	<p>Become active on campus (i.e., HAVOC, HEAG, VOX, Alternative Spring Break, No Sweat!, Womyn's Center).</p> <p>Volunteer/intern during the summer in your home area (see options on reverse side).</p>	<p>Explore a variety of academic courses.</p>
2	<p>Learn about specific career options in the nonprofit fields using resources such as, www.spotlightoncareers.org/nonprofit, idealist.org and informational meetings with professionals working in nonprofit.</p> <p>Update résumé.</p> <p>Develop a prospect list of potential sites for gaining career-related experience during the summer.</p>	<p>Continue your involvement with campus organizations, assuming leadership roles.</p> <p>Obtain a career-related experience during the summer in your home area.</p>	<p>Choose a concentration and elective courses that enhance nonprofit-related skills and knowledge, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing-intensive courses ▶ Public speaking courses ▶ Courses in Africana/Latin American/Women's/Environmental Studies ▶ Sociology and psychology
3	<p>Secure a competitive career-related experience during the summer of your junior year.</p>		