

SWLA Center for Health Services Grow Your Own Internship Program



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SWLA Center for Health Services Mission Statement:

SWLA Center for Health Services provides quality, cost-effective and comprehensive primary healthcare and support services in an environment that embraces Respect and Dignity.

SWLA Center for Health Services' Vision:

SWLA Center for Health Services aspires to eliminate all disparities in access to healthcare.

Program Overview

The SWLA Center for Health Services Grow Your Own Internship Program is an eight-week summer internship designed to provide high school and college students with hands-on exposure to the healthcare field. This program offers students an opportunity to shadow healthcare professionals, gain real-world experience in community health, and explore various career paths in the health care industry. Participants will work alongside professionals in disciplines such as family medicine, pediatrics, outreach, OB/GYN, nursing, dental care, behavioral health, pharmacy, and healthcare administration. Students will also work or have rotations with sponsors. Additionally, the program is committed to workforce development, fostering the growth of future healthcare professionals.

Through this internship, students will:

- Develop an understanding of current health issues.
- Learn about post-secondary education requirements for different healthcare careers.
- Gain hands-on experience in patient care.
- Observe the daily operations of a community health center.
- Participate in professional development activities and field trips to healthcare organizations.
- Complete a final project based on their career interests and experiences.

The program is open to all high school and college students in SWLA's service area (Calcasieu, Allen, Acadia, Cameron and Lafayette Parishes) depending on funding. Interns will earn wages, making it a paid internship that supports students financially while they explore a future in healthcare and contribute to workforce development.

Program Goals

The Grow Your Own Internship Program is designed to:

1. Foster Interest in Healthcare Careers

- Expose students to a variety of healthcare professions.
- Provide hands-on experiences that reinforce career decisions.
- Connect students with mentors in the healthcare industry.

2. Promote Civic Responsibility & Work Ethics

- Encourage students to engage in community health initiatives.
- Teach the importance of patient-centered care and public health services.
- Instill strong work ethics, professionalism, and teamwork in a healthcare setting.

3. Provide On-the-Job Training

- Offer shadowing opportunities in multiple healthcare disciplines.
- Allow students to practice basic patient care skills under supervision.
- Introduce workplace expectations, including time management, communication, and problem-solving.

4. Integrate Educational and Career Development

- Educate students on college and training pathways for healthcare careers.
- Provide resources and guidance on scholarships, college admissions, and professional certifications.
- Offer networking opportunities with healthcare professionals.

5. Create a Sustainable Pipeline for Future Healthcare Professionals and Workforce Development

- Develop a structured training program that connects students, healthcare professionals, and academic institutions.
- Encourage students to pursue higher education in healthcare-related fields.
- Address local workforce shortages by cultivating homegrown healthcare professionals.

6. Increase Access to Competent Healthcare Services

- Teach students how to provide patient care with respect regarding different backgrounds.

Grow Your Own Internship Program

- Strengthen the link between community health centers and future healthcare workers.

Program Structure

1. Rotational Shadowing Experience

Interns will rotate through different healthcare departments at SWLA Center for Health Services, shadowing professionals in:

- Family Medicine – Learn about primary care and chronic disease management.
- Pediatrics – Observe child wellness exams, immunizations, and developmental screenings.
- Outreach Programs – Assist in community health initiatives, health education, and outreach events.
- OB/GYN – Gain exposure to women’s health, prenatal care, and maternity services.
- Nursing – Learn about patient care, medication administration, and triage services.
- Dental Services – Observe dental procedures, oral hygiene education, and preventive care.
- Behavioral Health – Understand the role of mental health professionals and therapy services.
- Pharmacy – Learn about medication distribution, prescriptions, and patient counseling.
- Healthcare Administration – Explore management, billing, medical records, and operational logistics.
- Sponsor Agency Rotation – Interns will spend time with partner organizations engaging actively in these rotations to understand their roles in the healthcare sector.

2. Sponsor-Led Professional Development & Field Trips

Local healthcare organizations will serve as sponsors, engaging students through:

- Guest Speaker Sessions – Healthcare professionals will present on their career paths and specialties.
- Field Trips to Sponsor Locations – Students may visit partner organizations to meet representatives and gain hands-on experience while learning about the pivotal role the organizations play in supporting comprehensive healthcare delivery.

3. Final Internship Project

At the end of the program, each intern will complete a Final Project, which includes:

- A presentation on their chosen healthcare career.
- Reflection on their internship experience.
- A proposed community health initiative based on their observations and interests.

Eligibility & Application Process

Eligibility Requirements

To apply, students must:

- Be a sophomore, junior or senior in high school or incoming college freshman with an interest in healthcare.
- Be 16 years of age or older.
- Have a minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA.
- Submit a SWLA employment application, resume, and transcript.
- Complete an interview for program acceptance.
- Successfully pass pre-employment screening, including a drug screening.

Program Expectations & Criteria

Selected interns must:

- Commit to the full eight-week program.
- Complete all SWLA's onboarding requirements before starting the internship.
- Have no more than two unexcused absences during the program.
- Complete and present the final project at the end of the program.
- Acquire a comprehensive understanding of the sponsoring organizations.

Application Deadline

- **Deadline to submit application materials (SWLA employment application, resume & school transcript is Friday, March 27, 2026, by 2:00 PM to Angelica Scott, *Director of School Based Health Centers & Special Projects* at ascott@swlahealth.org.**

Long-Term Vision

The Grow Your Own Internship Program aims to build a strong foundation for the next generation of healthcare professionals by providing students with the tools, training, and mentorship needed to succeed in the healthcare industry. By investing in evidence-based training programs, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, and creating a sustainable healthcare pipeline, this program will strengthen community health services and inspire students to pursue careers in healthcare.

Over time, the program will expand to include additional schools within SWLA's service area and additional community health partnerships, ensuring a broader impact on students and the healthcare workforce in Southwest Louisiana.

This paid internship provides not only financial support for students but also a transformative experience that bridges the gap between education and professional healthcare careers, ultimately benefiting both students and the community.

Skills and Qualifications

Summarize any training, skills, licenses, certificates and/or characteristics of yourself that may qualify you as being able to perform job-related functions for the position which you are applying. _____

Educational Background IF JOB-RELATED

NAME AND LOCATION	YEARS COMPLETED	DID YOU GRADUATE?		COURSE OF STUDY
HIGH SCHOOL				
COLLEGE		MAJOR	DEGREE	
OTHER				

Professional References

NAME	TELEPHONE	YEARS KNOWN
	()	
	()	
	()	

It is understood and agreed upon that any misrepresentation by me on this application will be sufficient cause for cancellation of this application and/or separation from the employer's service if I have been employed.

I gave the employer the right to investigate all references and to secure additional information about me, if job-related. I hereby release from liability the employer and its representatives for seeking such information, and all other persons, corporations or organizations for furnishing such information.

The employer is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The employer does not discriminate in employment and no question on this application used for the purpose of limiting or excusing any applicant's consideration for employment on a basis prohibited by local, state or federal law.

This application is current for only 60 days. At the conclusion of this time, if I have not heard from the employer and still wish to be considered for employment, it will be necessary to fill out a new application.

I understand that just as I am free to resign at any time, the employer reserves the right to terminate my employment at any time, with or without cause or prior notice. I understand that no representative of the employer has the authority to make any assurance to the contrary.

I understand it is this company's policy not to refuse to hire a qualified individual with a disability because of this person's need for an accommodation that would be required by the ADA.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date ____/____/____