

ACING YOUR INTERNSHIP

A report based on Kristin Addison's Experience at her Project
Love and Angels Care Internship

GETTING STARTED

- Choose the location of your internship
 - Do you want to have an internship on/around campus, or would you rather go home for the summer and maintain regular email correspondence with a faculty advisor at Nova?
- Find a suitable program in the area you chose
 - The easiest way to accomplish this is by utilizing a personal connection (i.e. Do you have any friends or relatives who work(ed) in a program in which you would like to intern?)
- Contact the administrator of the program in order to apply
 - After confirming whether or not they are in need of internship assistance over the summer, make sure to ask if there are any specific requirements for the job (i.e. How many hours would they like you to work? Do you need a certain level of education? Are any specific certifications required?)

AFTER BEING SELECTED

- If you are pursuing an off-campus internship, kindly ask your internship supervisor to send you a letter (using the company's letterhead) that provides his/her contact information, the hours you will work each week, your hourly wage (if you are being paid), the start and end dates of your internship, the location of the organization, and the responsibilities you will have
- Deliver the letter to the appropriate individuals
 - First, your academic advisor
 - Second, your career advisor
 - Lastly, your assigned faculty advisor
- Set up a meeting with your faculty advisor to acquire the syllabus, learn about the internship expectations, and get to know them! Your faculty advisor will be your point of contact for the duration of your internship, and they often know of various opportunities you can exploit post-internship, so make sure that you have a constructive relationship with them

DURING YOUR INTERNSHIP

- Keep an accurate, up-to-date Experience Journal
 - Keep track of the hours you work each day
 - Jot down short summaries of what you did each day to inform your faculty advisor and keep your memory fresh
 - Highlight specific skill developments or new knowledge that you acquired throughout the week
- If you are receiving academic credit for the internship, think about the topic you would like to investigate for your research paper, and make a special note about any internship experiences that you could integrate into your essay
- Periodically ask your supervisor if you are fulfilling all of their expectations
- Email your faculty advisor weekly to give them updates about your development (this is why keeping a thorough Experience Journal is so helpful)
- Be friendly, diligent, and have fun!

AFTER YOUR INTERNSHIP

- Ask your supervisor for another letter that details the tasks you completed and your overall performance during the internship. This letter should be sent to your faculty advisor
- Schedule another meeting with your faculty advisor to ensure that you have completed all of the requirements
- Inquire about other areas in which you can use the knowledge and experience you acquired to further promote yourself as a professional and an academic
- Periodically read through your Experience Journal and your research paper (if you were required to write one) in order to maintain your memory of the internship. You can discuss this information in your interviews for professional and graduate schools, so make sure the foundation of your knowledge is fresh in your mind. You can also add certain skill developments to your resume!
- Be sure to thank your supervisor and faculty advisor for their assistance!

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Academic vs ExEI credit
 - Internships can count toward academic or ExEI credit, and each program has different requirements. Ensure that you choose the right fit for you
- Not all internships are paid
- If you have a vacation planned, clear it with your supervisor and faculty advisor *before* you begin the internship
- If you are receiving academic credit for the internship, financial aid may not cover the cost of a summer internship, so make sure you have a financial plan set
- Due dates for your internship application

EXAMPLE RESEARCH PROJECT

- The next few slides document some of the research I performed throughout my clinical internship at Project Love (a food bank and charity organization) and Angels Care (a free clinic) in order to provide you with an idea of what research in the clinical setting looks like
- Both of these organizations are located in Eloise, Florida, meaning that I was able to go home for the summer and complete this internship; therefore, it *is* possible to advance your academic career and spend quality time with your family!
- My research was centered around elder abuse and how we can use education as an effective tool to fight against the injustice. I included a variety of personal encounters that I experienced over the summer in order to validate the prevalence of elder abuse

WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE?

- Kumar (2017) defines elder abuse as “a single or repeated act of [inappropriate action], or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person”
- There are many discrepancies in the exact definition – some consider it a criminal offense while others do not – which illustrates the lack of mutual understanding on the topic

IS IT REALLY AN ISSUE?

- Of the 5 main types of elder abuse (psychological, sexual, economic, physical, and neglect), emotional manipulation and financial exploitation are the two most common (Yi and Hohashi, 2018)
 - Some seniors are more easily victimized due to depression, loneliness, or immobility (outsiders take note of this behavior and use it to their advantage by disguising their true intentions and appealing to the needs and desires of the elderly)
 - Example = Mrs. Margaret's story

HOW ARE MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED?

- Yi and Hohashi (2018) performed a study aimed at determining the varying degrees at which different types of medical professionals understood elder abuse.
 - Medical doctors were found to possess the *least* amount of knowledge on the topic
- Lower levels of understanding cause negative attitudes and inappropriate behavior.
 - Because the medical doctors are not knowledgeable on the topic of elder abuse, their attitude towards it may be that of indifference and disregard, and they will behave in ways that do not prevent the abuse or enhance the elder's quality of life
- Approximately 29 million seniors have been subjected to psychological abuse, which is often propagated by their doctor's disregard for their health (Hardin & Khan-Hudson, 2005).
 - Medical callousness often leads to depression – many clients at Project Love and Angels Care attest to this (Corbi, 2015)

HOW DOES IT AFFECT THE SENIOR?

- Decreased quality of life through social isolation, decreased familial support and care, depression, and heightened anxiety (Corbi, 2015)
- Financial exploitation may be the most dangerous type of elder abuse because it prevents the senior from being able to purchase certain necessities such as central air conditioning and cooling, washers and dryers, heating systems, and water heaters

THE MEDICARE PROBLEM

- After listening to the testimonies of many elderly clients at Project Love and Angels Care, I have discovered that the free Medicare plan is not inclusive of all the needs a patient may have, such as:
 - The services of a specialist – seniors have to meet the demands of a co-pay
 - Expedient medical services – many appointments are scheduled 4-5 weeks out
 - Clear answers about certain policies – long holds on the phone & vague answers
- This forces seniors to either pursue an outside insurance plan or buy a Medicare supplement; however, this is made particularly difficult when the representatives and websites don't provide helpful, descriptive information

FINANCIAL INSTABILITY OF POLK COUNTY SENIORS

- Sometimes, seniors cannot purchase better health insurance policies because they do not have sufficient retirement or social security funds
 - In Polk County, this is largely caused by the nature of working in citrus agriculture
- Better governmental policies should be in place to help seniors in this position; however, if the public is not educated on the injustice, no progress can be made against it

THE NECESSITY OF FREE CLINICS

- Since Angels Care (and most other free clinics) cannot serve patients who have insurance, the only seniors serviced by these clinics are those without a social security number (because they cannot qualify for Medicare), meaning that most of these patients are illegal immigrants to the United States
 - The citrus industry brought them to Polk County, and now these seniors are in desperate need of medical care
- Throughout my internship, I learned that all patients are worthy of respect and kindness regardless of their immigration status

LITERATURE CITED

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