



WFOA SCHOLARSHIP/INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Purpose

In the last few years it has become increasingly noticeable that the employee candidate pool for government finance careers has been shrinking. As many of us know, careers in government finance can be very diverse, stable, rewarding, can offer a good life/work balance, as well as good benefits. It is the desire of WFOA to encourage college students to explore a career in government finance and the advantages that this career path can offer by providing scholarships and/or a paid internships to a select group of students each year. For more information regarding the WFOA Internship Program, please contact Sandy Langdon at slangdon@marysvillewa.gov.

General Guidelines

WFOA members can apply for an Internship: WFOA will set aside funds for a minimum of 7 scholarship internships annually of \$5,000 each. Students may apply for a Scholarship: WFOA will annually set aside funds for a minimum of 7 applicants to receive a scholarship of \$1000.00 each which may be received by the applicant in any one of the following ways:

- Toward college tuition
- Toward a one-time payment of student loans
- As a signing bonus upon being hired into a permanent governmental finance related position

Mission of the Scholarship/Internship Program

Mission of the Scholarship/Internship Program is to provide Washington public entities assistance in working towards sustainability in the governmental accounting workforce.

Committee Goals or Desired Outcomes

- To promote the internship as a recruitment tool, assisting the college student to view governmental finance as a viable career opportunity.
- To promote partnerships with local entities and Washington State's public and private colleges and universities to enhance the educational benefits of future governmental finance professionals.
- To provide financial assistance to governmental entities for internships.
- To promote college student involvement in government, providing them with work experience and promoting interest in government.

Success Measurements

- Growth of applications from members and future governmental finance professionals to the Scholarship/Internship Program.
- Annually award seven internships to membership entities based upon region.
- Increase awareness of program with governmental entities and government associated businesses.
- Increase the educational experience for the program applicants.

Project Phases and Timelines

- Initial program will begin January, 2010 by providing notice to state universities of the program and then every January of each following year.
- Application deadline will be February 12, 2010 initially and then every April of each following year.
- Application review will begin after application deadline.
- Program award will be March 2010 initially and then every April/May of each following year.
- Review of each applicant's monthly program status report through the term of the internship prior to authorization of program reimbursement to the partnered entity.
- Prepare report of the prior year's program results for the WFOA Annual Report to the membership prior to the annual conference.

Scholarship Procedures

Students may apply for a Scholarship: WFOA will annually set aside funds for a minimum of 7 applicants to receive a scholarship of \$1000.00 each which may be received by the applicant in any one of the following ways:

- Toward college tuition
- Toward a one-time payment of student loans
- As a signing bonus upon being hired into a permanent governmental finance related position

Scholarship requirements will be established by the committee and detailed on the application.

Entity Responsibilities and Guidelines

The internship program is designed to introduce the student to the financial operations of a governmental entity. One person should be assigned to work closely with the student to assist in developing their knowledge and to enrich their work experience. This person will also be responsible for the requirements of the financial assistance agreement. The student should experience at least the following activities, either through actual tasks, observation, and/or interviewing:

- General Cash Receipting
- Accounts Receivable
- Accounts Payable
- Budgeting
- Financial Reporting

The financial assistance may be used to compensate the intern either during the summer months or school year, with the approval of the WFOA Scholarship Internship Program Committee. For example, an entity may provide one internship during the summer months that might last twelve weeks, or two internships during the school year that might last 24 weeks, depending upon the needs of the entity and the scheduling needs and qualifications of the internship candidates. The student will be an intern of the entity and will be paid through the entity's payroll system.

The entity will be required to agree to the conditions of the financial assistance agreement.

Region Description:

To provide internship opportunity throughout membership of WFOA, internships will be awarded to address equal state distribution. There will be four regions; King, East, Southwest, and Northwest. The regions were divided based upon equal portions of population.

- *King* = Entities within King County (population of 1,909,300)
- *East* = Entities within counties of Adams, Asotin, Benton, Chelan, Columbia, Douglas, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman, and Yakima (population of 1,465,800).
- *Southwest* = Entities within counties of Clark, Clallam, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, Thurston, Wahkiakum (population of 1,932,600).
- *Northwest* = Island, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom (population of 1,360,500).