CHARACTERISTICS OF A HIGH-QUALITY INTERNSHIP

• The internship is an experience that provides a substantial, meaningful, and challenging learning situation. While the intern's primary role may be focused, it must be situated in a broader context that provides exposure to multiple facets of the organization, its operations, and the field at large. Learning goals should be established with the intern and periodically revisited throughout the time period of the internship so that progress towards achieving the goals is monitored.

• The roles and responsibilities of the internship are documented in a written position description and describes real work assignments that are recognized as valuable by the organization.

• At the beginning of the internship experience, a formal orientation session is provided for purposes of onboarding the intern. The session should include explaining the organization’s mission, culture, and structure, the intern’s specific role, what is expected of them in regards to job performance and appropriate work conduct, as well as any training necessary to use the organization’s systems and technologies.

• An experienced supervisor is assigned to oversee the intern’s work ensuring they have adequate guidance and resources to learn and complete the assigned work. The supervisor is readily available to answer questions and provide feedback.

• When possible, the intern is provided opportunities to participate in in-house training. The content of the training could be in a work-related skills area such as a computer language or in a general skills area such as project management.

• Regular and ongoing feedback is provided to the intern throughout the experience. At the conclusion of the experience an exit interview is conducted in order to gather feedback on the intern’s experience.