Gaining Experience
Research, Clinical, Lab, Internships, Shadowing, Volunteering, Jobs

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• Career Services

• Sign up for the Career Services blog (careerblog.du.edu/)

• All career-related workshops and events are listed on the blog along with numerous tips.

• Finding opportunities to gain experience require very similar skills and techniques.

• DU students who complete an internship have an average starting salary for their first job after graduation that is $10,000 greater than students who did not have an internship. Employers always place a high value on experience, no matter what form it takes.
What do I want from experience?

- **Learn** about various careers.
- **Witness first-hand** what you are getting into.
- **Make informed decisions** before spending time and money to apply to and attend medical school or a graduate program.
- Know the daily or common **activities** in that career.
- Gain **professional connections** for future networking or personal recommendations. Think LinkedIn.
- Gain **experiences to talk or write about** for medical school/graduate program interviews and applications.
- **Demonstrate** to an admission’s committee that you have the **motivation/commitment** to pursue that career successfully.
- **Gain comfort in professional environments**: clothing, behavior, customs/expectations. Act and dress like professionals.
Types of Experience

- **Shadow** – to follow and observe someone closely in order to gain familiarity and understanding of a job, environment or clinical area/specialty. The experience could be a few hours, one-time or over a few days. **You will not be providing direct patient care.**

- **Volunteer** - to take part in a job or task without monetary pay. Consider the value of experience and networking connections as a form of pay. The experience could be short-term, project-based or of longer duration. **May have direct patient contact.**

- **Intern** – to apply what you learn. “An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional or work setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering.” Often paid. **More likely to have direct patient contact.**
What, Where, Who, When, Why?

- **What** would you like to learn? What skills or talents do you have to offer the employer?

- **Where** would you like to do it: Denver, your hometown, elsewhere?

- **Who**: type of organization?
  - hospital, dental office, research facility, clinic, lab or another type of organization?

- **When**: During academic year, winter break, summer, after graduation/before med/grad school?

- **Why**: The employer/med school/grad program will ask!
The Process

Two methods to finding an experience

• 1: Finding opportunities:
  - Existing (reactive - apply to opportunities that are posted)
  - Propose (pro-active – create your own)

• 2: Successfully applying for them:
  - Understand skills employers seek & identify yours
  - Complete applications carefully/thoroughly/on-time
  - Resume, cover letter, networking and interview prep
  - Consider how you could benefit the organization
  - LinkedIn - promote yourself! Be able to be found!
  - Follow-up, follow-up, follow-up
How to find experiences

• If you have **relationships** with professionals in your field, ask!

• **Ask at DU**: your professors, pre-health academic advisor or career advisor may know of opportunities or can help you find them.

• **Join** the pre-health club at DU or elsewhere such as the [American Medical Student Association (AMSA)](https://www.amsa.org) for contacts.

• **Join and participate in online groups** such as [Student Doctor Network](https://studentdoctor.net) or search LinkedIn groups using ‘**biology research**’

• **Search Google and LinkedIn** using terms like ‘**biology research lab colorado**’ or other variations.

• Start to **network** with relevant people. Like any relationship, develop it a bit before asking for something. LinkedIn is a tremendous resource.
Finding opportunities

Existing opportunities (reactive method)

- Go to DU Career Services and log into Pioneer Careers. Review the Pioneer Careers Jobs/Internships database and the UCAN Internship database. Set up Saved Searches (an email alert).

- Search Google and LinkedIn using terms such as ‘undergraduate research experiences’ or ‘research labs Denver’ or ‘Health Professional Opportunity Day at CU’ or variations on these terms.

- Search specific organizations such as ‘Children’s Hospital Colorado’ or ‘research labs National Jewish Hospital’ or ‘research Anschutz Medical Campus’ or ‘volunteer St. Joseph’s hospital Denver’ (ask about a volunteer research experience).

- Set up email alerts if possible, with specific organizations such as local hospitals and on larger job/internship databases such as Indeed.com.
Proposing opportunities (pro-active method)

Suggest that you be hired for the summer as a _______ or _______, even when nothing has been advertised. Develop an excellent cover letter and phone script to be at your best. Be specific – what would you like to do? What can you do? What are your qualifications? What kind of results can you deliver. Education, experience, character traits?

- Eliminates competition but requires more up-front effort
- Demonstrates tremendous initiative and maturity

Example: You could ask the Faculty of the 2015 Summer Child Health Research Internship at Children’s Hospital

- Look these people up on LinkedIn. Call, write or visit.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital Name</th>
<th>Volunteer Link</th>
<th>Distance from DU Campus</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Hospital - Volunteer</td>
<td><a href="http://www.childrenscolorado.org/donate-volunteer/volunteer">http://www.childrenscolorado.org/donate-volunteer/volunteer</a></td>
<td>12 miles from DU campus</td>
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<td>various locations - Denver</td>
</tr>
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<td>National Jewish Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Joseph’s Hospital - Volunteer</td>
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<td>2.7 miles from DU campus</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Colorado Health Ctr.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cu.edu/cu-advocates/advocacy-resources/volunteer-opportunities-cu-anschutz-medical-campus">http://www.cu.edu/cu-advocates/advocacy-resources/volunteer-opportunities-cu-anschutz-medical-campus</a></td>
<td>various locations - Denver</td>
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Even though some deadlines may have passed, check anyway since some employers have multiple rolling deadlines per year.

- **Summer Research Opportunities in Biomedical Research and for Pre-Medical Studies Students** (courtesy Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT))

- **Pathways to Science**. Numerous STEM opportunities.

- **Science Undergraduate Laboratory Internships (SULI)** – at the 17 Dept. of Energy (DOE) national labs

- **Summer Opportunities for Pre-Health Students** (courtesy Johns Hopkins U.)

- **National Institutes of Health (NIH) – Undergraduate Research**

- **NIH – summer programs outside the NIH** (see the fourth listing)
Resources - 2

- **National Science Foundation (NSF) – Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)** – scientific disciplines including small business

- **NSF - Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)**

- **Assn. of American Medical Colleges Summer Undergraduate Research**

- **Sci MON (Math Opportunities Network)** – some are open to students from any school (example: UT Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences - third from the end)

- **Mayo Clinic Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship**

- **Summer research opportunities** (courtesy of Cornell University)

- **Science.gov - Internship and Fellowship Opportunities in Science**
• **Summer Research Programs** (courtesy of Journal of Young Investigators)

• **Summer research in Germany ‘Research Internship in Science & Engineering’ (RISE).** The working language will be English!

• **Various other German research opportunities**

• **Pasteur Foundation Summer Internship Program in France** - knowledge of French is not necessary, but a desire to learn it is advisable. This program is open to U.S. citizens only.

• **Int’l Research Experiences for Undergraduates (courtesy Georgia Tech)**

• **Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR)** – matches undergraduates with research experience

• **Exceptional Research Opportunities Program (EXROP)** – for students from underrepresented groups in the sciences

• **ZINTELLECT** - internships, experiential learning opportunities, academic fellowships and scholarships funded by government and private sector organization
Innovative Industries Internships

- Colorado program to partially reimburse companies that offer high-level internships in the innovative industries including: advanced manufacturing, aerospace, **bioscience**, construction, electronics, **energy & natural resources**, **engineering**, and information technology

- Intern Eligibility:
  - Intern must be enrolled full-time in a secondary school, adult education, college (no master’s level), or certificate/training program or a graduate from one of these schools within 6 months post-graduation
  - Intern must be a **legal resident of the State of Colorado**. [Students from out of state who are attending DU but who have not established official Colorado residency, such as obtaining a Colorado driver’s license and registering their car in Colorado, are not eligible.]
  - Must not be a current or past employee of a participating business or relative of an owner or operator of a participating business
  - Must not displace a current employee of the business

- [Intern Application]
Three DU Career and Internship Fairs
held in October, February and April

DU Pioneer Career Blog – lists all workshops, events, fairs and numerous career tips throughout the year.

Download the Pioneer Life app OR log into Pioneer Careers (http://www.du.edu/career).

Dress for success and bring your resumé.

Free LinkedIn pictures.

DU ID required.
University Career Services
Driscoll Student Center South
Appointments: 303.871.2150
www.du.edu/career
http://careerblog.du.edu/