



# Intern Handbook



**Institute for Diversity  
and Health Equity**

*An affiliate of the American Hospital Association*



**American College of  
Healthcare Executives**  
*for leaders who care®*

## Summer Enrichment Program

Advance the Next Generation of Health Care Leaders

**Diversity | Inclusion | Health Equity**

*The Institute for Diversity and Health Equity an affiliate of the American Hospital Association owns and operates the Summer Enrichment Program. The Institute for Diversity and Health Equity and the American College of Healthcare Executives are in agreement to co-promote the Summer Enrichment Program.*

## PAVE YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with more information about being a successful SEP intern! On the following pages, the Institute will outline the Institute's role in increasing diversity in health care, the key phases of the SEP program and guidelines for structuring your on-site SEP experience.

Once you have read through this handbook, you should have a good understanding of how you can partner with the Institute to leverage the SEP opportunity to create a winning experience that will help jump start your career.

- Jump Start Your Career with the Institute
- Hit the Ground Running

***“The SEP put me in direct contact with people, organizations, and resources that I could only hope would be available to me one day. There was always something to be learned, someone to meet, and something to think about. This internship is the definition of an experience that is organic and will grow into what you have decided to get out of it. This was truly a grand experience.”***

Randy Hall 2007  
SEP Intern

## JUMP START YOUR CAREER WITH THE INSTITUTE

Since 1994, the Institute's **Summer Enrichment Program (SEP)** has served as the premier internship program for leading minority scholars in health care administration. More than 1,200 interns have successfully completed the program and many continue to maintain a relationship with the Institute and our partners that have led to their securing post-graduate fellowships or management track positions in health care administration.

Today, the SEP continues to pair top diverse scholars with leading organizations to build the next generation of diverse executives. SEP provides each participant with real- world work experience, training and mentoring that leverages interns' education with their professional strengths to help them advance as effective leaders in health care.

Recent efforts have restructured the SEP as a national leadership development program to respond to the growing need for diverse leadership in health care. According to the 2007 Witt/Kieffer *Advancing Diversity Leadership in Health Care* study, health care executives agree that there is a need for programs that "expose young people to health care careers" and "seek ways to move individuals from college and/or health care jobs to hospital administration."

### **Best Practices in Developing Diverse Leadership**

Minorities and Caucasians also generally see eye-to-eye when asked about current best practices to develop diversity leaders, particularly related to mentoring programs.

Among minority respondents, best practices cited most frequently are:

- Create mentoring programs
- Create programs and/or expose young people to health care careers
- Seek ways to move individuals from college and/or health care jobs to hospital administration
- Communicate diversity initiatives to all employees

Majority respondents most frequently cited the following best practices to develop diversity leaders:

- Create programs and/or expose young people to health care careers
- Create mentoring programs
- Communicate diversity initiatives to all employees
- Seek ways to move individuals from college and/or health care jobs to hospital administration

*Witt/Keiffer, 2007*

Historically, the core component of the SEP has been a 10 week, on-site internship at a hospital or health system. The Institute for Diversity also supplements the interns onsite experience with a series of educational webinars focused on maximizing your post-internship experience, as you transition into the next phase of your career.

## THE SEP INTERN PLACEMENT PROCESS...

- **Profile Completion:** Complete your SEP profile in Mentor Scout. *(Note: You will not be considered for placement until all documents have been uploaded.)* The Institute staff will vet through your profile to make sure everything is in order.
  
- **First Interview:** The Institute staff will contact you to set up your Institute phone interview. They will cover the materials in your profile and, if needed, suggest edits to make your profile more attractive to host site representatives. They will also poll you for information about your geographic region and explore possible host sites for you.
  
- **Promotion:** When the matching phase begins, the Institute staff will send the host site a short profile about you, explaining why they think you are a good match for their host site. Usually, the host site will request two candidates per internship, to have a choice. The Institute staff will notify you that a host site is considering you for placement.
  
- **Second Interview:** The host site representative will review your online profile and then contact you to set up an interview. Please be patient with this process, as they often have to coordinate schedules for themselves, HR and your preceptor. Treat the interview like a job interview. Be punctual, professional and ready to go. *(Note: In a previous year, a candidate found out that one of his interviewers had written a book about healthcare. The student had located the book and was several chapters in, when the interview began. He was chosen for placement, that summer.)*
  
- **Selection:** After both interviews are conducted, the host site will make their selection and offer you the internship. You have 24 hours to accept or decline.

If you accept the internship, the second candidate will be notified and go back into the candidate pool for consideration for other internships. If you decline, the second candidate will often be offered the internship.

**Note: If you accept the internship you MUST maintain that commitment. Do not accept an internship if you think you may not be able to participate.**

- **Travel Planning:** Now that you know your host site, you should begin planning your travel to your internship. Focus on answering these important questions... 1.) How will you get to the internship and back home in August?  
2.) How will you get around town while you are away at your internship?  
3.) Where will you stay for your internship? (*See the IFD website for suggestions on locating appropriate, safe housing.*)
- Once you have resolved these three issues, notify the SEP program administrator. They will be tracking your progress.

□ **Preparation:** Before you get to the first day of the internship, begin to research your host site and the senior staff of the host site. The more you learn, the better able you will be to navigate the campus and buildings.

- Check with your school to make sure that your internship qualifies you for any additional educational credits.
- Prepare a good plan to travel to the host site, three or four days before the internship begins. Get to know the new town before you begin.
- Coordinate with your host site representative or preceptor to identify your Special Project. You may even be able to begin researching it before you arrive.

□ **Travel:** Travel safely to your host site. Allow extra time for travel. Stay on schedule, if at all possible. When you arrive in the new town, please notify the SEP program administrator.

*“I truly learned so much during my internship. There is nothing like being in a healthcare environment and getting hands on experience. Textbooks can only teach you so much, and having this opportunity gave me the perspective I needed. It was great.”*

Fantasi Pridgon  
2014 SEP Intern

# HIT THE GROUND RUNNING

*Before you arrive at the internship site, there are many logistics that you need to think about. The SEP Intern Checklist will provide you with a means to hit the ground running.*

## THINGS TO DO BEFORE YOU START YOUR INTERNSHIP

- Make certain that all of your application materials (i.e. transcripts, proof of citizenship, etc.) have been submitted to the Institute and complete your SEP online profile, including your professional biography.
- Send a thank you letter to the organization or host/site where you accepted an offer. Consider sending a thank you letter to all organizations with which you interviewed.
- Contact your preceptor to further introduce yourself and to finalize your start and end dates (make certain that you inform the Institute of your schedule).
- Check with your Host Site (e.g., Human Resource Department) to see if housing options are available (e.g., corporate housing may be available through the hospital and/or a list of temporary housing options available). If not, do not hesitate to look up local housing options (e.g., corporate housing, local universities, Craig's List, etc.) on your own.
- Clarify any additional steps that need to be completed to ensure that you are formally processed through the Human Resource Department at your host site. Many host sites will process your forms during the first one to two weeks of your internship, but it is important to make certain that you are aware of the process and any additional paperwork or documentation that you may need to bring.
- Visit your host site's Web site to review all materials (e.g., mission statement, hospital statistics, etc.), services and programs that the hospital or health system has available for patients and families. Make certain you understand the areas/departments/clinics that your preceptor is responsible for.

- Keep abreast of current news and announcements regarding your host site, other local hospitals (e.g., competing services) and major changes in the health care field that may impact your organization.
  
- Speak with other people you know who currently work or have worked at your host site. Such individuals can provide you with good information about the history and culture of the organization that you are interning with.
  
- Identify and contact members of your professional organization who may be working in the general area or working at that particular organization. It will be helpful to introduce yourself via e-mail before or shortly after you arrive at your host site.

### **THINGS TO CONSIDER DURING YOUR INTERNSHIP**

There are three goals for interns during the SEP. The first goal is to gain tangible experience working on a project that is of significance to the hospital or health system. The second is to broaden your experience by working in different departments and working with different leaders in various areas of the organization. The third goal is to develop formidable mentoring relationships to help guide you successfully through the SEP and your career.

#### **Gain Tangible Work Experience**

- Identify projects that provide you with an opportunity to work with various departments, leaders and staff.

#### **Broaden Your Experience**

- Experience as many aspects of the hospital as possible. Consider exploring time to experience a day with the emergency response team or observing a bariatric bypass surgery.

## Develop Mentoring Relationships

- Get to know your preceptor/mentor. Preceptors are your supervisors. However, one of the goals of the on-site training experience is to provide students with the opportunity to develop mentoring relationships with health care professionals.
  
- Many students also take advantage of the opportunity to develop mentoring relationships with other leaders throughout the organization who may also become long-term mentors. Identify at least one other contact/mentor at the organization. One way to identify other potential mentors is to spend at least one day shadowing the heads of various key departments.
  
- Get to know other interns or fellows who are working in the organization. Other interns and fellows can often serve as your best ally. Depending on how much time they have already spent with the organization, they will be able to help you understand and navigate the organization's culture and politics. Be certain to take time to ask current fellows about their fellowship experiences and keep in mind that fellows often sit on the selection committee for the upcoming year.

# SEP WEEKLY PLANNER

WEEK 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Finalize paperwork with HR department and any other necessary details.</li><li>■ One-on-one meeting with preceptor to discuss organizational priorities, initiatives and expectations for the internship.</li><li>■ Host site organizational orientation.</li><li>■ Select a Special Project. (Intended to be completed by the end of the summer, the Special Project will benefit the hospital after you leave.)</li><li>■ Attend general senior management and departmental meetings.</li><li>■ Schedule introductory meetings with senior management team and other key staff members.</li></ul>
WEEK 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Second one-to-one meeting with preceptor to review personal goals and align with Special Project opportunities. Review list of additional activities at host site and review upcoming scheduled events.</li><li>■ Write a detailed Special Project proposal, deliverables, key metrics, timeline, key resources, potential challenges and barriers.</li><li>■ Identify other hospitals/health systems in the area that you may visit. Ask your preceptor to help schedule additional site visits with partner hospitals.</li><li>■ Resolve accreditation requirements with your university.</li></ul>
WEEK 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Bi-weekly meetings with preceptor to review projects, clarify deliverables, key metrics, timeline, key resources, potential challenges and barriers, etc.</li><li>■ Special Project meetings to identify key resources and begin detailed project analysis.</li><li>■ Schedule and begin additional activities at host site.</li><li>■ Attend general senior management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with the senior management team other key staff members.</li></ul>
WEEK 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Special Project meetings.</li><li>■ Continue with bi-weekly meeting to discuss project challenges and barriers.</li><li>■ Continue general senior management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with senior management team other key staff members.</li></ul>
WEEK 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Continue site visits at local hospitals and health systems and additional activities at host site.</li><li>■ Continue Special Project meetings.</li><li>■ Weekly SEP Educational Webinars - Wednesdays at 12pm CST (60 minutes).</li><li>■ Continue general senior management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with senior management team other key staff members.</li><li>■ Mid-internship review with preceptor to discuss performance-to-date and identify any additional opportunities for professional development.</li></ul>
WEEK 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Continue Special Project meetings</li><li>■ Continue site visits at local hospitals and health systems and additional activities at host site.</li><li>■ Continue general senior management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with senior management team other key staff members.</li></ul>

<p>WEEK 7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continue Special Project meetings and begin wrap-up analysis and/or recommendations.</li> <li>■ Continue site visits at local hospitals and health systems and additional activities at host site.</li> <li>■ Continue general senior management, departmental meetings, and individual meetings with the senior management team and other key staff members.</li> </ul>
<p>WEEK 8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Schedule final meetings and/or lunches between intern and members of the Special Project team to outline conclusion of Special Project process.</li> <li>■ Bi-weekly meeting with preceptor to review draft of Special Project report.</li> <li>■ Open meeting to present a summary of the Special Project to the host site leadership.</li> <li>■ Continue general senior management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with the senior management team other key staff members.</li> </ul>
<p>WEEK 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Resume review and career advice session with preceptor and/or senior leadership.</li> <li>■ Continue final meetings and/or lunches with members of the Special Project team to thank them before the internship ends.</li> <li>■ SEP Graduation Webinar - Time &amp; Date: TBD (90 minutes).</li> <li>■ Schedule meeting with project lead if different from preceptor to review final draft of key deliverable or project work.</li> <li>■ Continue general senior management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with the senior management team and other key staff members.</li> </ul> <p>Plan travel to return to home or school at the end of the summer. Finalize exit strategy to leave your summer housing.</p>
<p>WEEK 10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Finalize all Special Project work and assist intern plans for any training and/or transition work to ensure project success upon your departure.</li> <li>■ Continue with final meetings and/or lunches with members of the project team to resolve any outstanding issues.</li> <li>■ Send final Special Project report to the Institute at <a href="mailto:cbiddle@aha.org">cbiddle@aha.org</a></li> <li>■ Fill out the "Host Site Evaluation Survey". Return to Education Specialist.</li> <li>■ Schedule final feedback meeting with project lead and your intern.</li> <li>■ SEP Intern presents a summary of the Special Project at an open meeting of your staff.</li> </ul> <p><i>* If the internship lasts less than ten weeks, make sure to allow time in last weeks of your onsite stay to complete the important items scheduled for the last two weeks of this plan.</i></p>

## **BROADEN YOUR EXPERIENCE**

Start thinking about additional activities to maximize your SEP experience! Although each student is matched to a site/organization where an assigned mentor monitors and advises the student on a well-defined a project(s), there are many different activities for interns to participate in. Experiencing different sides of the organization will help you round out your experience, identify other potential mentors and validate your key areas of interest. Take a look at the list below and highlight at least three activities that look interesting to you.

### **Executive Meetings**

- Executive-level meetings
- Board meeting
- Leadership retreats
- Travel to corporate office, where applicable
- Organization-wide activities (e.g., United Way Events, recreational and social activities for staff)
- Departmental visits (e.g., Emergency Department, Quality Department, Finance, Human Resources)

### **Clinical Activities**

- Clinical chairs committee meeting
- Medical staff office
- A day in surgery
- A day with a physician liaison
- Physician rounds
- Rounds with patient transport

### **Other Enrichment Experiences**

- Site visits at other local hospitals and health systems
- Local health care-related conferences and meetings (e.g., AHA, ACHE, NFLHE and other local professional affiliations and groups)
- Visit state legislature and/or city council meetings on key topics related to health care

## **DEVELOP MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS**

Develop relationships with formal and informal mentors! Through the SEP, you will have an assigned preceptor who will serve as your mentor. Continue to develop this relationship throughout the SEP experience. In addition, consider developing relationships with others in the organization who can also serve as key contacts and/or informal mentors, regardless of their title or position in the organization.

Developing the right mentoring relationship can actually fast track you to the C-suite. Think about your interview process or any information that you have gained during your research experience and write down the names of two or three people that you would like to get to know better during your SEP experience.

Name / Title

---

Name / Title

---

Name / Title

---

## THINGS TO CONSIDER AFTER YOUR INTERNSHIP

- Revise your resume and ask for references for fellowship and/or job opportunities.
- Provide your employer and all key contacts with a forwarding address.
- If you have not already, now is the time to become involved in a professional organization. Visit the Institute's Web site at [www.diversityconnection.org](http://www.diversityconnection.org) (click on "Professional Organizations") to find more information about the Institute's affiliate organizations. Many of these organizations offer fellowships for post-grads, which you may be uniquely suited for.
- Keep your host/site organization leaders (e.g., president and CEO) and any preceptors or mentors abreast of your goals and activities. Strategically plan at least one or two times throughout the next six to 12 months to contact each person individually (e.g., holiday season, graduation, etc.).
- Stay abreast of any professional activities (e.g., conferences) that may bring leaders from your host site to your college/university or your general area. Use those visits to make a connection and expand your contacts.
- Become an SEP highlight by submitting your SEP Success Story to the Institute.
- Join the SEP Alumni Society by contacting the Institute. SEP Alumni enjoy discounted attendance for the Institute conference and other perks. It is also a unique opportunity to connect with other SEP Alumni, around the country.
- Register for the Institute's Career Services to keep abreast of fellowship opportunities and job openings.
- Mark your calendars to attend the ACHE Congress and Bi-Annual National Leadership and Educational Conference.

*"My experience and interaction with a wide variety of management and project ideas has allowed me to understand how much I really don't know. I have a strong didactic education, but my direct experience has shown me that I have many things to learn... experiences and ideas that cannot be taught in a book, but only through direct application. I have been fortunate in my internship to connect with a few members of the executive team that have offered amazing mentoring opportunities in both my professional and private life. These people have taken their duty just a step further to ensure that I am well taken care of and better able to focus on my future and career."*

Amy Mendoza  
2012 SEP Intern

## ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR DIVERSITY AND HEALTH EQUITY

In 1992, the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE), an international society of health care executives, joined the National Association of Health Services Executives (NAHSE), the association of African-American health care executives, to take a close look at the relative career advancement of their memberships.

The study found that minorities represent more than 20 percent of hospital employees but hold less than 1 percent of top management positions. It also disclosed that African-American health care executives made less money, held lower positions, and had less job satisfaction than their white counterparts. A 1997 follow-up study, expanded to include Latinos and Asians, found that although the gap had narrowed in some areas, not much had changed.

The 1992 study was a call to action for three progressive health care organizations—the American Hospital Association (AHA), ACHE and NAHSE—which united to create the Institute for Diversity and Health Equity (Institute) in 1994. The Institute has since gained other partners, the National Association for Latino Health Executives (NFLHE) and the Catholic Health Association.

The Institute for Diversity and Health Equity, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, works closely with health services organizations and educators to expand leadership opportunities for ethnic minorities in health services management. The Institute's mission is to increase the number of people of color in health services administration to better reflect the increasingly diverse communities they serve, and to improve opportunities for professionals already in the health care field. To accomplish this, the Institute has designed several initiatives to generate significant long-term results through educational programs, summer internships, professional development and leadership conferences.