

## Summer Internship Program

*Overview: I helped develop and directed a summer internship program for the independent school from which I graduated.*

I graduated from Hawken School, an independent school near Cleveland, OH. There were 27 in my 1964 graduating class, a far cry from the 120-125 who currently graduate each year.

Over the last few years, the Alumni Office frequently has had requests from recent graduates asking for help finding summer internships. Four years ago, they asked me to take the lead in developing a summer internship program.

We started by identifying characteristics we wanted in internships:

- An internship not a summer job
- A sponsoring company
- An internship that is beneficial to both the intern and the sponsor
- 8-12 weeks long

We developed expectations and applications for sponsoring companies and alumni and marketed to Hawken alumni and parents who might be willing to sponsor internships. I contacted potential sponsors to discuss the program and worked with those interested to write job descriptions. We had 29 opportunities from 13 sponsors in 2019, our first year.

I collated the job descriptions for all the opportunities into a list that we sent to our college aged alumni. 28 alumni applied to a total of 63 opportunities. I developed an automated way to segment and send the appropriate applications to each company, which then went through their own hiring process. 16 of our alumni were offered internships and 14 of them accepted.

At the end of the summer, we requested evaluations from alumni and sponsors. The evaluations were positive for the most part, although some of the alumni complained that their internships devolved into busy work.

We felt the pilot program worked well and we had high hopes for 2020. The 2020 program started well, with 29 sponsoring companies offering 39 opportunities. We had 62 alumni apply to 165 opportunities before we decided to cancel the 2020 program because of COVID. We lost some momentum in 2020, as we had 31 alumni apply for 74 opportunities offered by 10 companies in 2021.