

FAQ for Participating Businesses

What is the Morris County School of Technology (MCST) Internship Program?

MCST is a public high school in Denville, New Jersey that provides its students with a career and technical education (CTE). The school has numerous academies, each focused on one career path with 15-32 students each. In addition to regular high school core curriculum, students also take courses relating directly to their field of choice. In their senior year, students must complete a local 120-hour internship in their chosen career path in order to graduate.

Where do I come in?

The Morris County Chamber of Commerce is partnering with MCST to help rising seniors in the Academy for Finance and International Business connect to industry-specific internships across the Morris County Area. The MCCC is looking to member businesses to provide opportunities for these high schoolers to learn valuable life experiences about working in a professional environment in a field related to business, finance, economics, or marketing. The member business should also be able to provide the student with a mentor who has experience in a business-related field, and who is able to help the student grow professionally throughout the course of the internship.

How does this benefit everyone in the program?

The High School Internship Program aims to benefit every member including its participating member businesses. Student interns can be an effective way to handle large workloads during busy times in the year and they can be easily trained to succeed in any professional environment. Students in this program benefit by gaining exposure to working in their selected industries. They also learn real-life skills that cannot be taught in a school environment such as working in a professional environment, interacting with customers, and managing personal finances. Finally, the program can be useful for exposing more students to industry-specific education in a time where many students do not know what they would like to pursue as a career, even beyond college.

I like this idea, but I don't have a formal internship program. How do I join this program without knowing all the ins and outs of how this works?

The Morris County Chamber of Commerce will be holding an optional information seminar about this program. Ambassador students from the Academy for Finance and International Business will be present to explain the program and answer any questions. Businesses who have utilized high school interns in the past will also be there to offer expertise along with MCST administrators and teachers. At this session, you can learn how to develop your own internship program.

What type of internships should I offer?

However, we do request that the position be finance or business-related since CTE standards mandate that students complete an internship related to their academies. If you have a position open that is similar but not exactly the same as any of the above options, please do not hesitate to participate! Although many of the students know what they want to do, they are still open to new and different experiences that will help them learn about their career path.

I usually hire college interns. Would I get students of the same caliber if I hire from a high school?

Students from the Morris County School of Technology are considered high-achieving students who have undergone a rigorous selection process. In addition, these students have taken courses specifically related to business and finance education. Students from the Morris County School of Technology can be comparable to college freshmen or sophomores. However, it is still important to note that these students are young, and for many this internship would be their first work experience ever. It is important to provide proper support and guidance to make sure the student learns to thrive in a non-educational professional environment.

This program involves minors working at my business. How does that change the equation?

Some of the students you may be hiring will be 16 or 17 years old. It is important to note that there are some differences in labor laws for employed minors. Many of these laws will be discussed at the informational seminar:

Minors cannot work more than 40 hours per week. On school days, they can work up to maximum of five hours and on non-school days, they can work up to 8 hours. Minors cannot work more than six consecutive days in one week. Finally, a minimum of 30 minutes for a lunch break must be provided if the minor is working for a consecutive 5 hours. In addition to different labor laws, minors also have different payment laws if you choose to offer payment. Any employee under the age of 20 can be paid \$4.25 per hour for the first 90 days of employment, and students can be paid \$8.50 if they work part-time as part of an internship program (The business must obtain a certificate from the Department of Labor allowing them to pay this wage.) The "Student-Learner Program" also allows vocational education students to be hired at \$7.50 per hour after the employer has obtained a certificate from the Department of Labor. In terms of scheduling, most students will not attend regular high school classes and will instead take part in a dual enrollment program at the County College of Morris or at Fairleigh Dickinson University. This means that students can be available to work during the day depending on their college schedules.