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## Community initiative brings internship opportunities to students

Organizers hope teen internships will lead to permanent employment

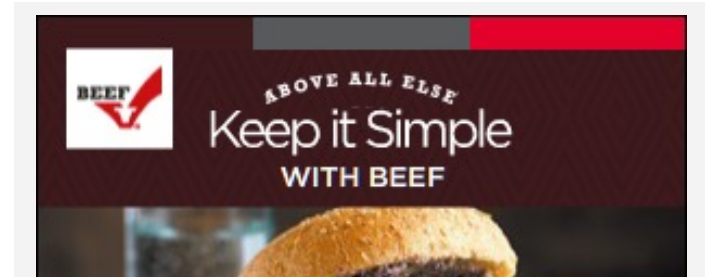
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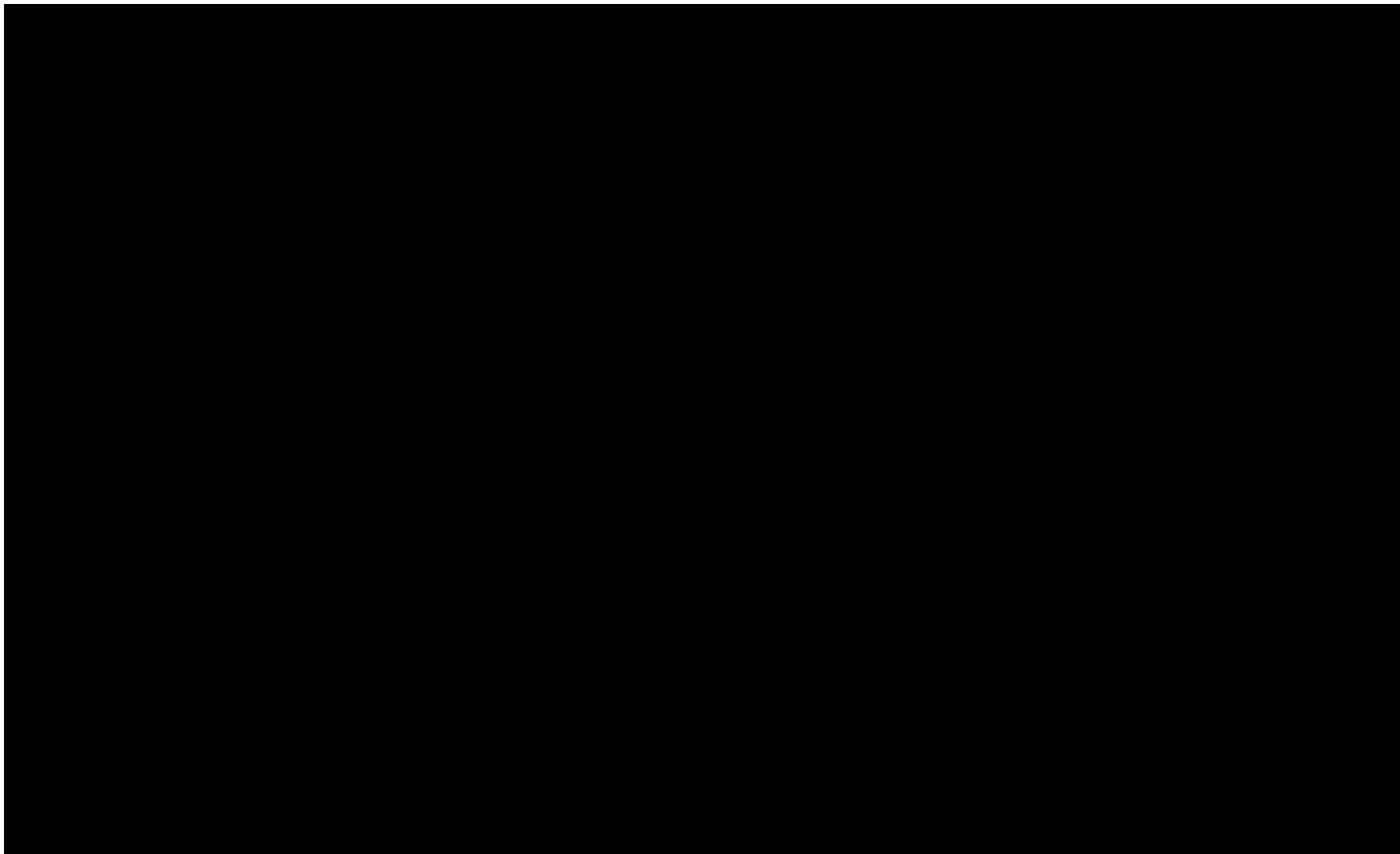
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Community initiative brings internship opportunities to students

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MADISON, Wis. - The Boys and Girls Club of Dane County and other community groups have joined together to create hundreds of summer internships for local youth ages 15 to 20.

The unemployment rate for young people in Wisconsin has increased by 27 percent, President of the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County Michael Johnson said.

Johnson hopes the program will empower students, especially those from low-income homes.

“Eighty percent of these young people will be students of color that come from low-income communities,” Johnson said.

Madison teen Julian Walters is one of the 160 students taking part in

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the program. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee business major will start an internship with CUNA Mutual in June.

“My friends have summer jobs, like working in restaurants and local stores. Working at CUNA Mutual will help me get a broader vision on careers,” Walter said. “From a networking standpoint it’s very helpful. I will get a better understating of what I want to do in my life and in my career.”

Students participating in the program will work in internships at places like American Girl, Metcalf’s Market and United Way.

Madison Mayor Paul Soglin said he thinks the initiative will bridge income gaps in the community.

“One of the challenges of our community is a gap in income in Dane County,” Soglin said. “One way we will do that is through the creation of jobs that lead to careers.”

Boys and Girls Club of Dane County officials hope the program will carry on to next year. Students already involved hope they will make lasting job connections.

“It’s something a lot of people don’t get, so I’m very grateful for the opportunity,” Walters said.

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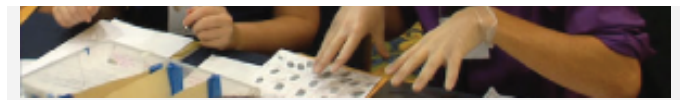
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Internships in business may be successful when job duties entail something more than being an office gofer. Granted, many office jobs involve performing necessary mundane duties. However, exposing young people to more challenging duties is necessary for a well rounded internship experience.

Student help positions at the UW are plentiful but often times do not involve anything more than gofer duties. Maybe the UW could improve upon that and be an example for other employers!

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