



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

## National Volunteer Student Internship Program USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion

### Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion

*Improving the nutrition and well-being of Americans*

The USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) works to improve the health and well-being of Americans by developing and promoting dietary guidance that links scientific research to the nutrition needs of consumers. CNPP is an agency of USDA's [Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services](#).

#### Spotlights



MyPlate replaces MyPyramid. Order free materials. Also available [en español](#).



SuperTracker gives you a personalized nutrition & physical activity plan



The Dietary Guidelines for Americans give the basics for healthy eating



MyFoodapedia provides quick access to food groups, calories, & comparisons



Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food: Nutrition from farm to table



Try out the [Cost of Raising a Child Calculator](#)

### Introduction

Spending time in the Nation's capital can be a powerful experience. And as a student intern, you can use the power of your education to have an internship that places you right in the center of nutrition public policy development and implementation, as well as promotion, marketing and communications.

You can use the power of your professional and personal interest in nutrition, public health, economics, food science, education, and marketing and communications as an intern with USDA's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion.

The Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion is one of the few places where you can have the experience of working on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, electronic nutrition education tools that help Americans eat according to the Guidelines, the USDA Food Plans, evidence-based systematic reviews, and many other exciting projects that directly benefit the American public.

You can learn more about us at the following Websites:

- [www.cnpp.usda.gov](http://www.cnpp.usda.gov),
- [www.dietaryguidelines.gov](http://www.dietaryguidelines.gov),
- [www.nel.gov](http://www.nel.gov),
- [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov), and
- [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov).

***My experience at CNPP was very interesting. The most exciting part of my internship experience was the program I created for CNPP. The MyPlate, My University Ambassador Program will allow interns to spread health information to the youth in colleges/universities across the U.S.***

***I have been very happy with my internship at CNPP and have generally found nothing but amazing mentors and useful experiences in my time here. I enjoyed getting the opportunity to work on projects that immediately [produced] results, like the White House recipe project. I also feel very fortunate to have been here during the Dietary Guidelines process.***

## Degree Areas Applicable to CNPP's Programming

CNPP is seeking interns pursuing degrees in a variety of majors. A sample list of potential degree areas consists of the following:

### Human Nutrition/ Health Sciences:

Clinical Nutrition	Community Nutrition
Dietetics	Foods and Nutrition
Food Science	Food Technology
Health Policy	Nutrition Education
Nutrition Policy and Science	Public Health

### Public Policy, Social Sciences, and Economics:

Agricultural/ Applied Economics	Economics
Family and Consumer Sciences	Public Policy

### Communications:

Educational Communications	Marketing
Public Relations	Media and Technology
Graphic Design	



## Applicants

Undergraduates and graduates attending U.S. colleges or universities are considered.

## Application Materials

Applicants must submit a **cover letter**, a **résumé**, and an **official transcript** to be considered for the CNPP Internship Program. The cover letter *must include the following*:

- A description of your degree/major.
- An indication of one or two of the CNPP long-term project(s) of interest to you.
- Your preferred start and end date (e.g., May 24, 2012 through August 12, 2012).
- The number of days and hours per week you are available to be an intern. During the summer, internships are full-time (e.g., 32 hours per week).
- A statement indicating that you will request your registrar's office send a transcript directly to the CNPP.
- A statement acknowledging that you are willing to intern on a voluntary, unpaid basis.
- The name and contact information of your faculty/staff advisor.
- Your contact information, including telephone number.

## Submission of Application Materials

Submit your cover letter and résumé via email to [cnppstudentprogram@cnpp.usda.gov](mailto:cnppstudentprogram@cnpp.usda.gov) or postal mail:

USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion  
3101 Park Center Drive  
Room 1034  
Alexandria, VA 22302  
ATTN: CNPP Internship Program

## Submission Dates

### *Dates of Internship*

January through Mid-May

Summer

Mid-August through Mid-December

**4-Week** sessions\*

### *Deadline for Submission (5 p.m., EST)*

October 1

March 1

April 15

Two months beforehand

\*Not offered during the summer or during December.

## Notification of Acceptance

Within two weeks after the deadline, selected applicants will receive an offer to participate in the internship program. Those receiving offers will have **7 business days** to accept the offer.

## Contacting Us About the Internship Program

cnppstudentprogram@cnpp.usda.gov

703-305-7600



## Questions and Answers about Internships at CNPP

### What is the structure of the internship?

The internship program is a major effort by CNPP to provide experiences to *undergraduate* and *graduate students*, enrolled in accredited US colleges or universities, who are majoring in or have a strong interest in nutrition, public policy, community nutrition, economics and food behavior, or other areas related to nutrition and health.



The program is designed for those interested in (1) the development of nutrition policy and communication, (2) promotion of public health policy, (3) economics and food consumption, (4) nutrition research, (5) development of nutrition education materials and electronic tools, and (6) communications, customer marketing, and public affairs.

The internship program at the CNPP is designed to accommodate students in practicum classes, those fulfilling the requirements of dietetic rotations, and those not currently enrolled in a practicum class or dietetic internship but who want such an experience at the Federal level.

The internship program is a formal collaboration between the CNPP and your university, as represented by your instructor(s) or academic advisor.

### What are the CNPP's long-term projects?

1. Nutrition Evidence Systematic Reviews
2. Dietary Guidelines for Americans
3. ChooseMyPlate and e-Tools and Materials
4. USDA Food Plans
5. USDA Health Eating Index
6. Healthy Eating on a Budget
7. Expenditures on Children by Families (Cost of Raising a Child)

### Are there orientations sessions or opportunities to attend conferences/events that are built into the structure of the internship?

Yes. The first day of the internship is devoted to an orientation. Interns may have the opportunity to attend conferences, special events, and other educational or cultural events. The types of events and conferences will depend upon the timing of the internship.



### Must I obtain clearances before orientation?

There are some clearance forms that you will need to complete and return at least 4 weeks before your arrival. These forms will be sent to you after your acceptance of the offer to become an intern at the CNPP.

### How long are the CNPP internships?

The internship program provides experiences to students over the course of a semester (or trimester) or during the summer. Special arrangements are made for short-term experiences such as a **4-week** rotation. We do not offer internships for periods shorter than 4 weeks.

### What type of work will I be doing?

Projects vary throughout the year. You may be involved in activities such as:

- Creating nutrient profiles of food groups and food intake patterns.
- Helping to determine and implement campaigns related to any of Dietary Guidelines-based educational tools.
- Updating the food prices database that supports the USDA Food Plans.
- Writing a “Nutrition Insight” that characterizes a population group by its Healthy Eating Index scores or other topics of interests.
- Writing an “Evergreen” piece that would be targeted to a particular audience or for a particular time of year (e.g., eating well during the holidays).
- Updating nutrition messages associated with electronic nutrition-education tools.
- Supporting the work of the new Nutrition Evidence Library.



### Will I know what I will be doing before my internship begins?

The program coordinator matches interns with preceptors/mentors based on the information provided in the letter by the intern. In addition, the coordinator must consider project requirements. Thus, you may not receive information on specific projects before orientation. The goal is to balance your interest with project demands at the time.

### Is this a paid internship?

Student internships at the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion are volunteer positions.

**Is housing provided by CNPP?**

CNPP will provide interns with information and online resources for finding short-term housing in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area.

**What are the start and end dates for the internship?**

The start and end dates for the internship are fairly flexible and will be determined based on the needs of individual interns. However, a fixed schedule is available for those wishing to have a semester-based internship and for those desiring a summer internship.

**Are the internships full-time or part-time?**

Internships may be full- or part-time, depending on a student's schedule and academic needs. Schedules are determined on a case-by-case basis. However, summer internships are based on a full-time schedule (32 hours per week).

**Are interns allowed to work off-site (or to telework)?**

Students are expected to work on-site, unless there is an exception. For example, the Office of Personnel Management may determine that Federal employees may use unscheduled telework arrangements because of inclement weather. In instances such as this one, the student will need to check with his/her preceptor.

**Are there other internship possibilities at USDA?**

Yes. This link directs you to information about USDA's internship and student employment programs:

[http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=INTERN\\_SCHOLAR&parentnav=CAREERS](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=INTERN_SCHOLAR&parentnav=CAREERS)



United States Department of Agriculture

### **About the USDA and the Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services Mission Area**

Abraham Lincoln called the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) the “people’s department” because the Department’s work was so closely tied to the American people, most of whom were farmers at the time. Now, USDA’s scope is much broader, but improving people’s lives remains the core of its success. Everyone with an interest in good nutrition, food safety, and the health of the American landscape has a stake in USDA’s programs and activities.

The mission of meeting the needs of the American people is carried out by USDA’s numerous agencies and offices, from the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (located in the mission area of Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services) to agencies such as the Food Safety and Inspection Service, the Agricultural Research Service, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and many more. USDA has stewardship of more than 190 million acres of national forest land; fights hunger at home and abroad; supports land-grant colleges and universities; and battles against bugs, pests, and diseases that threaten American agriculture and ecosystems. USDA has responsibilities for protecting, promoting, and evaluating the production and consumption of American agriculture. It ensures that agricultural products imported and produced for domestic distribution in commerce are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled.

### **Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services**

As one of the mission areas of USDA, the Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services (FNCS) ensures access to nutritious, healthful diets for all Americans. Through food assistance and nutrition education for consumers, FNCS encourages Americans to make healthful food choices. FNCS consists of two agencies: the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion and the Food and Nutrition Service.





### **The Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion**

The USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) works to improve the health of Americans by developing and promoting dietary guidance that links the best evidence-based scientific research to the nutrition needs of consumers. The CNPP is committed to making a difference “Every Day, Every Way” by promoting the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. To accomplish these goals, the CNPP advances consumer messages that assist the American public and supports the use of the USDA’s food guidance system that can be personalized for individuals to reach their dietary goals.

*The staff members at the have a diverse educational backgrounds and experiences including—*

- Registered dietitians
- Food scientists and public health scientists
- Public affairs and marketing specialists
- Program administration specialist
- Visual information specialist

*CNPP staff attended a range of universities, including the following:*

James Madison University	University of Mississippi
University of Minnesota	Vanderbilt University
Michigan State University	University of Pennsylvania
American University	The Pennsylvania State University
University of Maryland	New York University
Cornell University	South Carolina State University
Seton Hall University	Howard University
West Virginia University	Rutgers University
University of Birmingham	University of Southern California
Boston College	State University of New York at Albany
East Case Western Reserve University	

Many CNPP staff members have taught at the university level and some are currently affiliated with university programs as adjunct teachers. CNPP staff members are well known among public- and private-sector food and nutrition communities.

### **Food and Nutrition Service**

The Food and Nutrition Service increases food security and reduces hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education in a manner that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence. USDA’s 15 nutrition assistance programs are the first line of our Nation’s defense against hunger. They include large, well-known programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the school meal programs, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), as well as many smaller programs.

## National Volunteer Student Internship Program USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion



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To file a complaint of discrimination, write to:

USDA  
Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410  
Washington, DC 20250-9410

Or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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