

2023 Summer Social Justice Internship Impact Report

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The Social Justice Summer Internship provided students with an opportunity to a) grow in knowledge and skills related to social justice leadership, nonprofit organizations, and professional standards b) provide local community organizations with talented, young interns to help them achieve their mission and goals and c) connect UWT students, the Center for Equity and Inclusion, and local community-based organizations to one another in mutual relationships. The Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) staff support interns in their learning and navigating UW-specific policies. OEI staff support community partners relationship with UWT, personnel management, and supporting interns in their success and growth. Each community partner selects an intern supervisor that determines scope of work and leads training/on-boarding of interns.

This summer, **nine students** interned at **four different placements** for **eight weeks**, **volunteering** more than **1800 hours** this summer. Each intern committed to serving 30 hours a week, interning at their site, participating in biweekly one-on-ones, and weekly 2-hour group sessions facilitated by OEI Director of Cross-Cultural Engagement. The community partners we worked with this summer were Asia Pacific Cultural Center (APCC), Fab-5, Write253, The Black Collective and Sound Outreach.

Interns supported their partner organizations by completing a range of diverse tasks including community outreach, data entry, curriculum development, teaching, creating promotional materials, attending staff meetings, event planning and support, facilitating summer camps, creating content and more. The impact that students have had at their sites is immeasurable. APCC Cultural Program Supervisor said, "My team and I are very proud of our interns, and we love and miss them already! We are very appreciative of all their work and support." Another APCC supervisor wrote, "Wowww! What's an amazing and successful Luau event 8/26. I am very proud of you both very much for putting the time to supporting and help out at the Luau event. You guy are so helpful to get the job done. APCC and I really really appreciated very much. Again, thank you very very much for your hard work of volunteering. APCC and I very proud to have you both in our cultural program."

SSJI Celebration

More than 60 people attended the Summer Social Justice Internship (SSJI) celebration Wednesday, August 31st where nine interns shared thoughtful presentations about their development throughout the summer. Each student reflected on internship highlights, a passion project and next steps.

UWT staff and faculty came to support and represented several units including: The School of Social Work and Criminal Justice, The Learning Commons, School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, Office of Global Affairs, Library, Academic Advising, AAPI Thrive Project, First Gen, Equity and Inclusion and the Chancellors Office. One UWT staff member reflected, "The multilingual presentation nearly brought tears to my eyes. We need to do more presentations like this. I love how the prompts were structured." Another staff member shared, "This was an excellent event. Thank you for inviting me."

Five Community Partners attended including Asia Pacific Cultural Center, Write253, Catherine's Place, TPC Habitat for Humanity and Fab-5. Several attendees describe the experience as beautiful. When asked about next year, each site supervisor said they would like to continue the partnership. The Write253 Executive Director said, "[We are] Thankful for this opportunity and this partnership." The Black Collective and Sound Outreach Supervisor shared, "Yes, I would like to be a site next summer. I am happy to help students who are looking to have a positive impact on their community." A new organization is interested in partnering with us next summer. A new potential partner, TPC Habitat for Humanity asked, "How do I get involved next year? This sounds like a great opportunity for our organization."

Intern Reflections

Interns have shared positive reflections on their experience. An APCC Intern said that, "It was an impactful experience and I am really grateful. Thank you." Another APCC intern commented, "Overall this was such an amazing experience and I'm so happy to have gotten this opportunity." The Write253 Intern said, "Write253 was a perfect fit for me and I feel so incredibly lucky to have spent eight weeks there. This experience was exactly what I needed to immerse myself more in Tacoma's community and gain the confidence I need to continue to do so."

In reflection, the interns shared some of their highlighted experiences, lessons learned and ongoing commitments.

Highlights

"One of my major highlights is Mosaic festival because I got to know a local Filipino Organization called Filipino American National Historical Society. The first day of the festival I got to know the Vice President and got to help setting up and clean up the booth because they were late, so it made their lives easier." – APCC Intern

"Collaborating with creative professionals in Chris and Arnaldo. They motivated me to pursue my own ventures in the non-profit organization realm." – Fab-5 Intern

"Having access to such a unique form of art in the print shop as well as access to mentorship for every step in that process is something that I will treasure for my entire life! I will particularly treasure the memory of the day that I got to design a poster for Write253's teen open mic and be a part of the process of creating and printing that poster." – Write253 Intern

Lessons Learned

"I learned how to listen with empathy and listen to understand rather than just to relate. I learned how to inquire and ask questions instead of assuming I understand. I also learned how to give space for people to fully share as they want to, instead of cutting them off." -APCC Mental Health Intern

"I'm proud of myself for consistently being myself during this internship. Whenever I am in a new group of people I feel the urge to shy away and hide myself, but this time I took many opportunities to show myself to other people. Not only did I show my best self by always being helpful and ready to go, but I also got to show my coworkers and supervisors what makes me unique." – APCC Intern

“[I developed] a deeper understanding of social justice knowledge and how it connects to non-profit work, more connections with fellow UW students who are also passionate about social justice, a better understanding of how my ideas about social justice connect to the real world and other people's experiences” – Write253 Intern

“I learned how to engage people in meaningful conversation that starts with the basics. We can't assume that there's a one-size-fits-all approach for mental health in every culture or that all modalities will work; the values, beliefs, and history of the people must be taken into account to find the best approach.” – APCC Mental Health Intern

“I learned how to better communicate with others in a business context and answer calls. I also learned how to take initiative in identifying things that can be improved or needs to be done.” – APCC Cultural Program Intern

Commitments

“I commit to learning people's stories and asking questions to understand their experiences, especially those who do not share the same identities as me.” – APCC Mental Health Intern

“[I will] take the experiences and skills learned in my future career with nonprofit organizations and educational institutions.” – Fab-5 Intern

“I commit to continuing to believe in myself and my growth. I commit to using the social justice concepts discussed in our meetings in my future community endeavors by continuing to learn about Tacoma's social justice community and getting involved. I commit to applying everything I've learned this summer--about myself as well as about social justice--to my future teaching career.” Write253 Intern

2023 Summer Social Justice Interns



REAR: Francisco Javier, James Le, Mikayla Pennington, Elizabeth Cham and Monica Consulta
FRONT: Steph Caronna, Shreeyamsa Poudel, Danalyn Lia Fernandez and Sandy Nguyen