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LOCAL EMPLOYERS SOUGHT FOR UH SYSTEM BUSINESS STUDENT INTERNSHIPS

HOUSTON – Fort Bend County businesses will benefit this fall from a new internship program for bachelor's and master's students taking online and face-to-face classes at the University of Houston System at Sugar Land and the UH System at Cinco Ranch.

“An employer who uses the internship program will get a dedicated, hard-working and cost-effective employee to assist in accomplishing the business's goals,” said Ron Salazar, an associate professor of business who teaches at the UH System at Sugar Land. “In addition, the internship will give the student an opportunity to gain practical and valuable work experience, apply skills and knowledge learned in school, and gain exposure to jobs and industries.”

Junior and senior business majors, as well as graduate business students, will be eligible for the program.

The employee's salary will be the only cost to the business. Salazar still is researching pay rates for similar internship programs and will work with employers to determine internship salaries. Pay factors include student experience and the size of the company. Stipends paid to student interns can be made all at once or in equal installments throughout the work period.

By partnering with the UH System, an employer will have access to a low-risk recruiting source and a low-cost method of training potential employees, Salazar said.

“Hiring one of our undergraduate or graduate business students can provide high-quality labor, help meet seasonal employment demands and provide fresh ideas from emerging professionals,” he said. “Most of these students are graduate-level, so they could be ready to go to work as a credit analyst, for example. These are not all entry-level students.”

Salazar said businesses he hopes will take advantage of the program include accounting firms, banks, manufacturers, health care administration companies, consulting firms, construction businesses and engineering firms, to name a few.

These types of businesses will benefit from the skills students have acquired in the UH System bachelor's degree offerings, which include accounting, finance, general business, health care administration, management and marketing. UH System graduate business programs include the Master of Business Administration, Global MBA and a Master of Science in Economic Development & Entrepreneurship.

Adam Gould, vice president of marketing for the Houston-based Willis Group, said business student interns have proven valuable for research projects at his staffing and business service firm.

“We have worked with business student interns from the UH System to do research to help us find opportunities in the areas of electronic medical records and health care information technology, and they have pulled together really useful data for us,” Gould said. “We're getting quality students, and we anticipate using more to help us expand our sales footprint.”

Internships may take place throughout the year, but most are expected to last for one semester. There will be both full-time and part-time internships available.

“These internships are opportunities for students to test-drive a career field, giving them a chance to see what professionals do in that industry,” Salazar said. “Since interns are often looking for a way to showcase their talents in order to jumpstart their careers, they can prove to be valuable assets to an organization.”

The program will match students’ majors with appropriate businesses. Employers will decide what other criteria need to be met for student interns.

Students will create profiles that can be compared with other students. Employers then will select potential candidates for interviews. The process will be competitive, so employers will know they are getting the best student for the job, and the students will put their best foot forward.

For now, students will not receive course credit for the internships, although Salazar said one of the program’s future goals is to offer credit.

Dick Phillips, associate vice chancellor for the UH System at Sugar Land and the UH System at Cinco Ranch, said internships through business schools are popular.

“Internships have proven to be effective in linking students to real-world businesses practices and allow businesses to see prospective employees in their work environment. It is a win-win program,” he said. “We’re looking forward to creating that opportunity for more students and employers in the Fort Bend area.”

Interested employers may become involved or get more information about the internship program by visiting www.uhv.edu/SBAinterns or by calling 877-970-4848, ext. 4369.

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ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SYSTEM

The University of Houston System is a comprehensive system of higher education institutions serving to further the intellectual capital and economic strength of the Gulf Coast region. The UH System includes the University of Houston, a nationally recognized Tier One public research university; the University of Houston-Downtown, a four-year undergraduate university expanding into graduate programs; the University of Houston-Victoria, a four-year university with undergraduate and master’s level degree programs; and the University of Houston- Clear Lake, an upper-division and master’s level institution. The system also includes two branch campuses, UH-Clear Lake Pearland and UH Northwest, as well as two multi-institution teaching centers, the UH System at Sugar Land and the UH System at Cinco Ranch. In addition, the System owns and operates KUHF-FM, Houston’s National Public Radio station; KUHA-FM, Houston’s 24-hour classical music station; and KUHT-TV, the nation’s first educational TV station. To learn more about the UH System, visit <http://www.uhsa.uh.edu/>.