



Princeton
Internships in
Civic
Service

PICS 2010 Internship Description

Organization Name: My Friend's Place

Internship Location: 5850 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90028

Required Dates: Yes No If yes, internship must start on: _____ and end on _____ or
must include the period:

Housing Will Be Available to Intern: Yes No If yes, housing will be free: or housing
will cost the student:

Expected working schedule for this internship:

Start Time: 9:00am End Time: 5:30pm
Lunch break: 1 hour (duration) 11:45am – 12:45pm (specific time, if applicable)

Additional Information, if necessary: Some evenings required in exchange for flex time.

(Please indicate if any of the preparation work will take place outside of the regular work schedule)

Organization Description

Please describe your organization briefly, including mission statement, activities, size etc. Please also explain the benefit that will be derived by your organization by sponsoring a Princeton intern.

Founded in 1988, My Friend's Place's mission is to assist and inspire homeless youth to build self-sufficient lives. Over the past two decades, My Friend's Place has grown from a volunteer based group serving meals from the trunks of cars once per week into a dynamic social service agency offering a comprehensive continuum of services to homeless youth between the ages of 12 and 24 and their children. Each year, nearly 2,000 youth access services at My Friend's Place, share their stories, and begin to move towards more stable lives.

The youth who visit My Friend's Place become homeless for a wide range of reasons. Physical or mental abuse. Incarceration of a parent. Emancipation from the foster care system. Substance abuse or mental health challenges. Whatever brought them to the streets, youth learn that they will find acceptance, support, and guidance at My Friend's Place.

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The primary goals of MFP programming are three-fold: 1) build trust with the homeless young people, 2) lower the traditional barriers many youth experience when attempting to access services; and 3) provide a diverse array of services to maximize the psychological, intellectual, and physical capacity of youth in crisis. My Friend's Place offers a comprehensive continuum of care in the following three areas:

The *Safe Haven Program* provides shelter and drop-in services during the day and engages youth by providing food, clothing, showers, communication services and transportation. These emergency necessities alleviate the demands of survival that often distract youth from participating in educational or health-related activities. Through our Safe Haven Program, staff take the first steps to build trust with youth, encourage them to disclose more serious issues, and make appropriate referrals to case management, mental health services and collaborating service providers.

The *Transformative Education Program* seeks to achieve four goals: 1) equip youth with marketable skills, 2) encourage positive behaviors, 3) teach youth how to connect with resources that improve their self-sufficiency, and 4) create an alternative way for staff to build rapport with youth who are reluctant to access more intensive health and mental health services. The Transformative Education Program achieves many of these goals through its Education Technology Lab by hosting workshops and one-on-one sessions in the areas of academic achievement, life skills, employment and creative arts.

The *Health and Well-Being Program* provides youth with health, medical, and mental health services addressing issues such as pregnancy and parenting, legal issues, sexual health, HIV prevention and emotional well-being. Case management services such as advocacy, goal setting, and public benefits assistance are offered by Master's in Social Work (MSW) clinical case workers who also conduct crisis intervention and therapy to provide support for challenges such as trauma resolution, substance abuse, partner violence, anger management and other mental health issues.

The need for My Friend's Place has never been greater. In 2008, MFP saw 1,860 individual youth who visited a total of 30,575 times, an increase of 16% over 2007. So far this year, MFP has seen over 1,700 youth, an increase of 33% over the same period last year. Clients divide evenly along gender lines and 200 of the youth served in 2008 were under the age of 18. Our clients are 41% African American, 22% Caucasian, 19% Latino, 2% Asian / Pacific Islander, 9% mixed ethnicity, and 7% other.

My Friend's Place programs are nearly 100% privately supported. The organization relies on the partnership of Foundations, Corporations, and Individuals who share its commitment to supporting some of the most vulnerable members of the community. Over the past year, the economic crisis has had a strong impact of MFP's income, leading to budget reductions. The organization and its unique, high impact programs have survived thanks to the strong commitment of its partners and members of the community who have stepped forward to help ensure that youth retain access to vital, sometimes life-saving, programs and services. My Friend's Place looks forward to continuing to grow and develop as an organization dedicated to helping homeless youth build confidence, build strength, and build self-sufficient lives.

For additional information, please visit our website at www.myfriendsplace.org

Internship Description

Describe in detail the work or project will do; please be as specific as possible. Please also explain the benefit that a student will obtain by interning with your organization.

Cultural Inclusion Program

Working closely with MFP supervisor, PICS Intern will provide cultural inclusion programming for the youth at My Friend's Place. Research, write curriculum, run educational workshop, identify and facilitate guest speakers, plan and execute field trips, plan special snacks. Partner

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with current existing creative and educational programming at MFP to enhance and highlight cultural exchange. Create a calendar of opportunities specific to programming.

The youth at My Friend's Place are as culturally diverse as the city of Los Angeles. Intern will help educate on various world cultures and cultures in Los Angeles through music, arts and crafts, foods, field trips, educational workshops and guest speakers.

Some examples of field trips include museums, visiting various neighborhoods in Los Angeles (Chinatown, Olvera St., etc.) and viewing local cultural happenings.

The programming helps link homeless youth to free or low cost educational opportunities in Los Angeles. Intern will obtain a basic understanding of issues facing homeless youth, particularly in regard to educational resources and opportunity. Intern will be exposed to basic advocacy on behalf of the population in the community and at MFP.

Intern Qualifications

Describe any particular skills, background, or qualities you are seeking in an intern.

Intern must possess interest in working with homeless youth.

Strong research skills are necessary. Prior experience running educational workshops is helpful.

Intern must possess people skills, gifted in communication with a variety of people. Interested in working with diverse populations.

Passionate about educating marginalized youth.

Bilingual in Spanish a plus.

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