

Internship Description: Public Communications & Research

Internship Title: Community Disaster and Preparedness Communications Intern

Department/Staff: Community Alert & Warning/Sam Wallis

Student objectives of internship:

Provide assistance to the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Management, specifically with a focus on community Alert and Warning communications and community relations, with an emphasis on writing, reviewing, and researching critical and non-critical emergency communications.

Duties, responsibilities, projects to be performed for the agency*:

The Intern will provide assistance to the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Management's Community Alert & Warning division in the form of reviewing, evaluating, and crafting messaging campaigns regarding emergency communications with the public. The Intern will also conduct research about the effectiveness of different communication methods, evaluate the strengths of previous messaging campaigns, and assist in the preparation and creation of new communication documentation. The Intern will be responsible for assisting in the creation and distribution of seasonal emergency communications to the community such as, but not limited to: fire season, water conservation, earthquakes, winter season, & mental health assistance/resilience. Interns that have a strong grasp of a secondary language other than English will have the opportunity to compose written and digital multilingual messaging campaigns to provide the Department with a greater community reach.

*In the event of an active emergency situation in Sonoma County, the Intern may be required to shift their responsibilities and duties from the aforementioned Duties, responsibilities, projects to be performed for the agency to providing support and assistance to the Emergency Operations Center. The Intern may be required to participate in gathering information which will be dispersed to the public, assist in crafting language for Sonoma County's social media platforms about the emergency situation, provide hotline support by answering phones and providing information to callers as requested, or participate in any other duties and activities as assigned by the Supervisor during the emergency situation.

Training/orientation provided by the agency:

Introduction to the Department of Emergency Management of Sonoma County's communication goals, procedures, and style. The Department shall also provide resources for the Intern to review regarding appropriate, effective disaster Alert and Warning and Alert and Warning preparedness communications. One-on-one mentorship to provide the Intern with professional development in effective communication.

Process of evaluation by supervisor including approximate number of site visits:

Work can be completed in a hybrid manner: remote and on-site visits to be determined by the Department and Intern. Within the first week of internship, the Intern shall determine with the supervisor specific project objectives and goals, and create a Gantt Chart (or equivalent) to ensure adherence to project deadlines and deliverable dates. The Intern will be wholly evaluated based on this agreement, as well as periodically throughout the internship during agreed upon remote or face-to-face meetings between the Intern and supervisor.

Required Skills/Attributes

High school diploma or equivalent; currently enrolled in a Bachelor's degree program (or higher); excellent composition and interpersonal communication skills; interest in community relations; knowledge of communications platforms; familiar/proficient with Microsoft Suite applications; strong language comprehension.

Preferred Skills/Attributes

Interest in quantitative and qualitative research; self-starter work ethic; effective time management capabilities; curiosity, enthusiasm, and discipline; familiarity with digital messaging platforms.

Student Intern General Responsibilities:

- Adhere to Sonoma County work hours, policies, procedures, and rules governing professional behavior
- Adhere to Sonoma County policies governing confidentiality and handling of confidential materials and/or information
- Assume personal and professional responsibilities for the student's actions and activities
- Maintain professional relationships and professional conduct with peers, managers, and the public
- Utilize courteous, enthusiastic, critical approaches to policies and procedures outlined by Sonoma County
- Prepare for and utilize opportunities for learning afforded by Sonoma County
- Ensure consistent and punctual submission of work assignments or designated duties to the student's supervisor or coordinator
- Provide periodic progress reports to or attend periodic meetings with the student's supervisor or coordinator
- Be comfortable with a self-directed, autonomous work environment