

Impact to Date Report | Fall 2025

Fund for Unpaid Internships

TWARDOWSKI CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER
WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY



West Chester University
Twardowski Career Development Center
705 South New Street
West Chester, PA 19383

(610) 436-2501
cdc@wcupa.edu
www.wcupa.edu/cdc
@wcupacareercenter

Overview of the Fund

FUND VISION

The Fund for Unpaid Internships seeks to ensure that no student has to turn down an internship, and all of the experience, skills, access, and mentoring it provides, because of a financial barrier.

ABOUT THE FUND

This entirely donor-funded program awards stipends and scholarships to students completing unpaid internships, many of which are required for their degree, in fall, spring, and summer. The fund was established in fall 2021.

PROGRESS ON GOALS

When the fund was first established with a gift of \$15,000, the goal was to support 10-15 students in the first year, and by year five, grow that number to 80 to 100 students total.

At the end of the fourth year, the fund awarded a total of 251 students, far exceeding the original goal ahead of schedule, which was only possible through the generosity of donors.



Data Points | As of Fall 2025

27%

OF APPLICANTS

were awarded (301 out of 1,102)

Round	Applied	Awarded	Amount
2021-2022	182	45	\$87,950
2022-2023	319	56	\$62,300
2023-2024*	169	43	\$40,100
2024-2025	289	107	\$134,800
2025-2026 (to date)	143	50	\$58,900
Totals	1,102	301	\$384,050

*no awards issued in spring 2024 due to lack of funding

Employers that hosted students for internships represent a broad spectrum of community-critical industries including...



Education



Healthcare



Law Enforcement



Nonprofit & Social Services

\$384,050

IN STIPENDS/SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

ranging from \$500-\$2,000



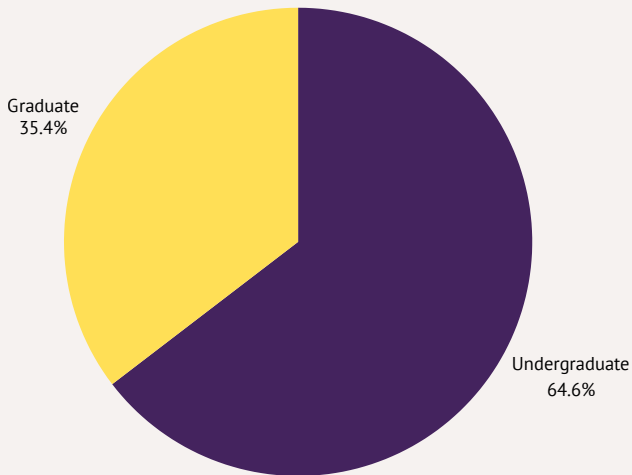
Out of the **73% of applicants** that were not awarded, about **one third reported higher than average financial need**, citing significant difficulty paying rent, buying groceries, and commuting to their internship site.

That equates to approximately
\$336,864 in unmet need.

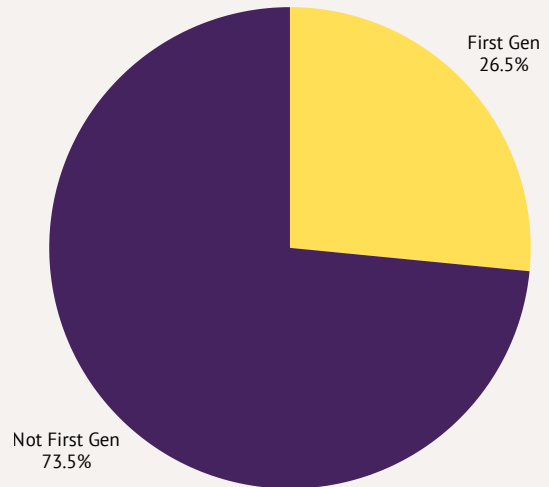
(based on the award average of \$1,276 per student)

Data Points

Degree Level



First Gen Status



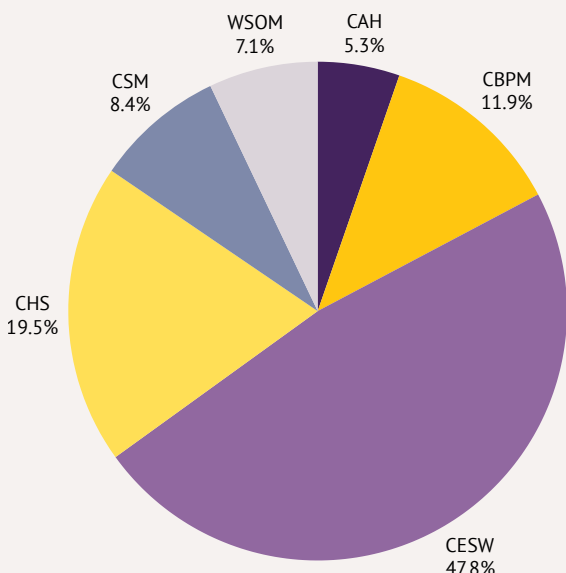
\$1,255

AVERAGE UNDERGRAD STUDENT AWARD

\$1,358

AVERAGE GRAD STUDENT AWARD

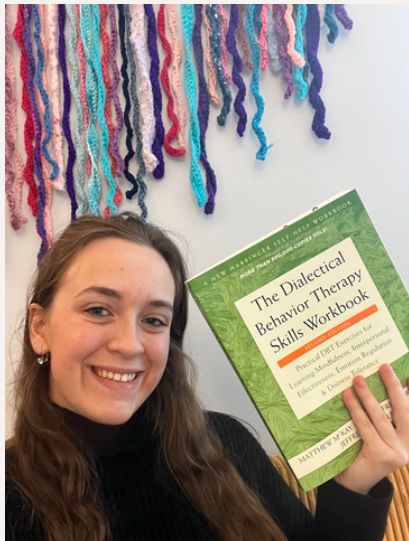
College



Students who received stipends or scholarships are pursuing majors within the College of Arts and Humanities (CAH), College of Business and Public Management (CBPM), College of Education and Social Work (CESW), College of Health Sciences (CHS), College of Science and Mathematics (CSM), and the Wells School of Music (WSOM).

Impact: Direct from Students

Since the beginning of my collegiate career, I have not received any financial support from my parents. I was also homeless in 2020. All my bills and anything I purchased came directly from my own pocket. I had to take a gap year between high school and college to save for my college years. I used to be so worried that spending \$5 on a coffee, once, would financially ruin me. Any financial help allows me to have less money anxiety. - Athletic Training Student



I am from a working-class family. We never had a lot, but we pooled our efforts together to make ends meet. I have worked summer and weekend jobs since I was 14 years old to contribute to the family income. I've saved some money but even with financial aid, my housing and other expenses aren't covered, which is concerning as I start my required internship that is unpaid. Receiving this stipend would help me close this financial gap. - Criminal Justice Student

I struggle to pay my expenses. This financial burden is a persistent and overwhelming strain that impacts every facet of my life. Each day begins early and ends late, consumed by the demands of my full-time internship, part-time restaurant job, and the long commute in between. While my clinical hours are unpaid, they are essential for completing the requirements of my degree. - Speech Language Pathology Student

Gratitude: Direct from Students

This funding is changing the course of my life and my family. - Criminal Justice Student



I am writing to express my sincere gratitude. I unfortunately had to resign from my full-time employment leading to the loss of income and health insurance. This scholarship will help to reduce the financial burdens I am now facing and will allow me to successfully complete my MSW practicum. – Social Work Student

Receiving this scholarship is a great honor as a student who struggles financially. It takes a substantial amount of financial burden off my shoulders, and I am very grateful. If it wasn't for wonderful people like yourself, my ability to impact the future in healthcare may not have been possible, so I thank you again for believing in me and my ability to impact generations to come. - Respiratory Care Student

Growing up without parental support and becoming an unaccompanied foster youth just before graduating high school, my journey has been filled with obstacles. The financial burdens have often been overwhelming, and this stipend has provided a relief that is hard to express in words. Thank you for your kindness and support - it has been a true blessing. - Elementary Education Student