

S E C T I O N

02

GET IN, GET
EXPERIENCE:
INTERNSHIPS THAT
WORK FOR YOU

What is an Internship?

An internship is a short-term opportunity, paid or unpaid, that allows students to gain hands-on experience in a professional setting. Internships can take place during the academic year, summer, or after graduation.

They help students explore career paths, build skills, and make connections in their field.

What is a Fellowship?

A fellowship is usually a learning-focused program that supports students or recent grads with funding, mentorship, and training. It often comes with a stipend (not a paycheck) that supports the fellowships commitment.

Why are they Helpful?

Internships/Fellowship can be a great way to:

- Learn by doing – You get real experience in a job setting.
- Build your resume – It shows future employers what you've done.
- Meet people – You can connect with professionals who might help you later.
- Try out careers – You get to see what you like (or don't like).
- Grow your confidence – Being in a professional space helps you feel more ready for the future.

For undocumented students, internships can also be a way to show your skills, build a portfolio, and gain experience.

SOURCE: [IMMIGRANTS RISING – APPLYING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS](#)



The Hard Truth

Let's be real. Internships can be amazing—but for undocumented students, they come with barriers that aren't always talked about. Here's what you need to know:

- Most paid internships require a Social Security Number (SSN). That means if you don't have DACA or another form of work authorization, you may not be eligible for paid roles.
- There are some non-paid internships, but for some students, working for free isn't an option, especially if you're supporting yourself or your family.
- When looking for professional opportunities, recruiting teams may not know the ins and outs of the immigration system and they might ask you questions about your immigration status. It is up to you to share with them your experience.
- You may feel pressure to share your status, these conversations could be emotionally draining – remember that there are people and organizations interested in your success.

What to Look For Instead:

Here's what to keep an eye out for:

- Fellowships or stipends – These are often not tied to employment and may not require a SSN.
- Nonprofits and campus-based opportunities – These are more likely to offer flexible, inclusive options.
- Micro-internships or project-based opportunities – Some platforms allow you to work as an independent contractor using an ITIN
- Volunteer roles or leadership positions – These still build skills and experience, even if they're unpaid.
- Ask questions early. It's okay to ask if a position requires work authorization or a SSN before applying.

SOURCE: IMMIGRANTS RISING – INTERNSHIPS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
[HTTPS://IMMIGRANTSRIISING.ORG/RESOURCE/INTERNSHIPS-AND-PROFESSIONAL-DEVELOPMENT/](https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/internships-and-professional-development/)



CAL POLY POMONA DIGITAL BADGES



WHAT ARE DIGITAL BADGES?

Digital badges are verified micro-credentials that recognize the skills and experiences students gain through courses, workshops, leadership roles, and campus programs. The validated metadata for each badge includes evidence, criteria, and learning outcomes that demonstrate what a student can actually do for an employer.

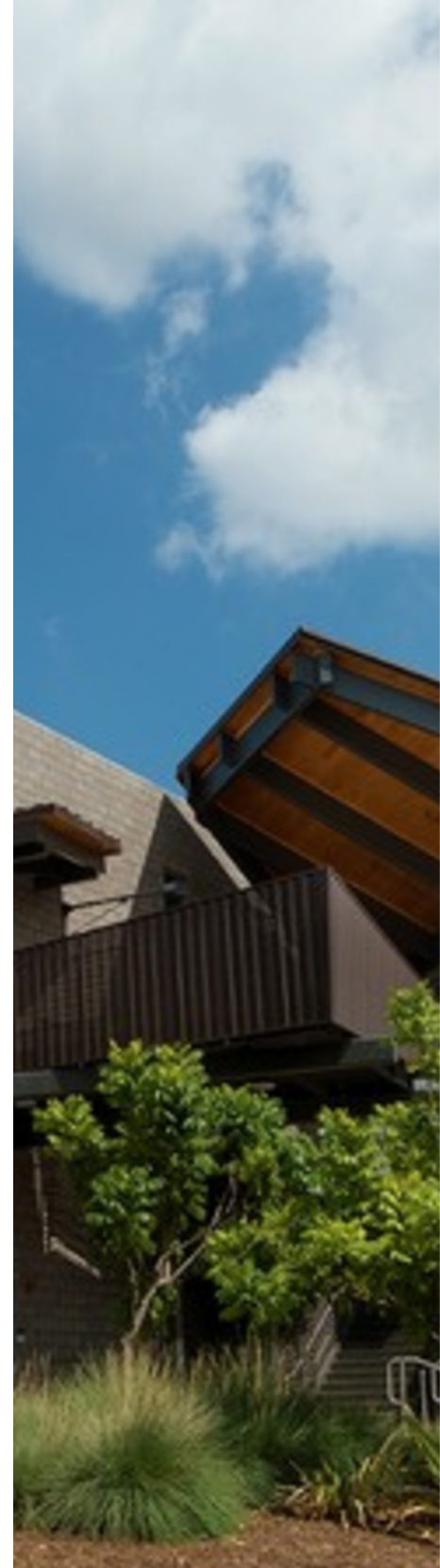
WHY DIGITAL BADGING MATTERS FOR STUDENTS:

- Helps translate experiences into real, career-ready skills (like leadership, teamwork, and communication)
- Makes achievements visible and shareable on LinkedIn, resumes, and portfolios
- Builds a student's professional story over time
- Gives employers a clearer, more trusted way to understand student capabilities (with many employers preferring verified credentials when evaluating skills)

MAKE YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS VISIBLE

You can share badges on:

- LinkedIn
- Resumes
- Portfolios
- Job applications



DIGITAL BADGES

FOR STUDENTS: HOW TO EARN A DIGITAL BADGE

1. Participate in an eligible experience
 - a. Join a course, workshop, internship, leadership role, or campus program that offers a digital badge.
2. Complete the required criteria
 - a. Each badge has specific learning outcomes, activities, or evidence you must complete or submit.
3. Get your badge verified
 - a. Once your participation and criteria are confirmed, the badge is officially awarded to you

HELPFUL LINKS TO START YOUR DIGITAL BADGE JOURNEY

Use these resources to explore badges, learn how to earn them, and understand how they support your career development.

- [Available CPP Badges](#)
- [Digital Badging Earn a Badge Webpage](#)

These videos are helpful videos that can assist you in your journey to understanding digital badges.

- [What are Digital Badges?](#)
- [Digital Credentials in the Workforce](#)

To learn more about how digital badges work at CPP including how to earn them, how to share them, and what badges are currently available : [Digital Badges Website](#)



INTERNSHIPS THAT ARE UNDOCU-FRIENDLY

Here's a list of micro-internship examples and resources that are especially relevant and accessible for undocumented students, including those without DACA but with an ITIN.



PARKER DEWEY MICRO-INTERNSHIPS

Parker Dewey offers short-term, paid, remote projects in areas like marketing, research, writing, and data entry. These are structured as independent contractor roles, meaning no work authorization is required—just a valid ITIN or SSN. Projects typically last 10–40 hours and include tasks like creating social media calendars, writing blog posts, cleaning up data, or conducting market research

Website: parkerdewey.com/projects/most-popular
Contact: support@parkerdewey.com

THEDREAM.US INCLUSIVE INTERNSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS



This directory lists paid internships and fellowships open to undocumented students with or without DACA. Most opportunities are stipend-based and require an ITIN or SSN. Examples include Dream Summer, Ignite Fellowship, and Code the Dream Labs. These programs offer leadership development, tutoring roles, and tech apprenticeships

Website: thedream.us/inclusive-internships-fellowships
Contact: info@thedream.us

UNDOCUPROFESSIONALS OPPORTUNITY BOARD



A job and internship board that highlights non-employment-based opportunities such as freelancing, fellowships, and independent contracting. Many listings are remote, short-term, and ITIN-friendly, making them accessible to undocumented students without DACA or a SSN.

Website: undocuprofessionals.net/opportunities/all
Email: undocuprofessionals@gmail.com

College Corps Fellowship at Cal Poly Pomona




College Corps, also known as Poly Corps at CPP, is a paid service-learning fellowship where students commit to community service in areas like education, climate action, and food insecurity. Fellows receive financial support, professional development, and leadership training while making a difference in local communities

To apply, you must:

- Have a high school diploma or GED by the start of the 2025–2026 academic year
- Be enrolled full-time (12+ units) as an undergraduate at CPP
- Be in good academic standing
- Be able to commit August 2025 – May 2026
- Not plan to study abroad during the academic year
- Need to work part-time or borrow loans to afford school
- Meet at least one of the following:
 - Qualify for a Federal Pell Grant, Cal Grant, or Middle Class Scholarship
 - Be AB 540 eligible
 - Have a completed California Dream Act Application (CADAA)
 - Be a Cal Grant B recipient

- Up to \$10,000 in total support (living stipend + education award)
- Real-world experience in community service
- Professional development workshops
- Networking and mentorship



 <https://www.cpp.edu/cce/students/college-corps-fellows-poly-corps.shtml>

 collegecorps@cpp.edu

 @cppcollegecorps

This Is Just the Beginning

We hope this section helped you understand the world of internships, micro-internships, and fellowships and how they can be powerful tools for building your future, even when the path isn't always straightforward.

You've learned about:

- What internships are and how they work
- The difference between internships and fellowships
- How to find undocu-friendly opportunities using an ITIN
- Resources available at Cal Poly Pomona, including College Corps
- Support systems that are here for you—because you're not alone

We know it's not easy. Being undocumented comes with real challenges—but it also comes with resilience, creativity, and strength. This workbook is here to remind you that your journey is valid, and your future is full of possibility.

There's no one "right" path. Whether you choose internships, fellowships, freelance work, or something entirely different, you get to decide what success looks like for you.

In the next chapter, we'll explore independent contracting and the importance of ITINs, how they can open doors to income opportunities and help you navigate the professional world on your own terms.

