



## WHAT IS AGENDA 21?

For more than two decades, the Tennessee Hospital Association's (THA) Agenda 21 Internship Program has operated with the mission of matching minority healthcare students with hospital executives for summer internships in hospitals across the state.

Given recent action by the American Hospital Association (AHA) and the THA board of directors to encourage diversity in hospital governance and leadership as a way of combating healthcare disparities, the program has never been more relevant.

The Agenda 21 Internship Program is a 12-week supervised learning experience for qualified minority graduate students interested in healthcare administration or a related field. Through close work with administrators and staff, interns gain hands-on experience working with the hospital's management team. This experience will help expand their knowledge and skills and pave the way for success as future leaders in the healthcare industry.

As part of the internship, interns are assigned a major project, which has direct benefit to the organization. In addition, shadowing, staff interviews and work within the organization help interns hone communication and leadership skills while applying practices and theories learned in the classroom.

### **Agenda 21 internships consist of three main components:**

#### **Administrator Shadowing**

Attend meetings, discuss decision-making processes and exposure to the day-to-day life of an administrator.

#### **Senior Staff Interviews**

Meet with executives and leaders to learn about the various roles in health care, training and skills necessary for these roles, and how they all work together within the organization.

#### **Student Projects**

Complete short and long-term projects and work that brings value to the organization as well as the student. This allows interns the opportunity to deliver great work to their hospitals and gain real-world experience, which directly relates to their studies and/or thesis work.



## WHY SHOULD HOSPITALS BE PART OF AGENDA 21?

The opportunity to shape the future of healthcare by training the next generation of leaders is at the core of the Agenda 21 Internship Program. Because of the program's focus on minority students, it also serves as a way to continue and enhance diversity efforts within the hospital.

Agenda 21 interns also consistently provide value to their hospitals. Students are advised to begin the internship with an open mind and to demonstrate initiative and interest in areas that staff may not have the time or manpower to complete. Some examples of previous intern projects include:

- Revising the leave-of-absence procedure for nurses
- Establishing a "Heart Cart" that enables hospital administrators to greet and interact with patients and frontline staff
- Developing an initial entry process for patients in the emergency room
- Leading a hospital's efforts through LEAN task management
- Researching and developing the solution for patient safety issues



## WHAT DOES THE HOSPITAL COMMITMENT INVOLVE?

A hospital's agreement to host an Agenda 21 intern carries a few commitments:

### Financial

The cost for hosting an intern is \$10,000. This includes student pay for 12 weeks and operating costs for the program.

### Staff

Each intern is assigned a preceptor who is a member of the organization's senior management team. Preceptors are vital to Agenda 21's success. Preceptors are expected to:

- Introduce interns to key hospital staff.
- Provide access to different management styles within the organization.
- Provide opportunities to attend management meetings at all levels.
- Enable interaction with a variety of managers within the organization.
- Help interns meet with external parties and stakeholders when possible.
- Assign and supervise the intern's summer project(s).

### Education

Welcoming an intern to the hospital's management team means the preceptor and other staff will work to make the 12-week program a valuable learning experience for the student.



## HOW ARE INTERNS SELECTED?

THA staff performs an initial review of student applications based on academic excellence, a written statement regarding their interest and commitment to a career in healthcare, and academic and professional references. The goal is to identify a pool of qualified, ambitious students with a high potential for success. Qualified candidates then are interviewed by THA staff.

Candidates who successfully advance past the THA interview phase then complete a criminal background check. Satisfactory results from this check enable the candidates to be recommended to a hospital for placement.

Candidates are referred based on qualifications and the needs of the hospital. Only one student is recommended per hospital. The preceptor or other administrator is then asked to interview the student, preferably in person, to ensure that the candidate will be a good fit for the hospital.

THA will make every effort to provide quality candidates who match the needs of each participating organization. When necessary, geographic location and a candidate's ability to relocate or travel will be a factor in these recommendations. If a hospital feels the referred candidate might not meet their needs at the conclusion of their interview, every effort will be made to identify a suitable replacement.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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### COMMITMENT DEADLINE

December 31, 2021

### INTERNSHIP DATES

May 16 through Aug. 5, 2022