



Preparing to Host a STEM Teacher Extern

Our partners in the workplace have found great benefit from hosting STEM Teacher Externs. The great productivity and talent from Externs has brought dramatic new perspectives that have enhanced the bottom line of host organizations. Awareness of local career opportunities has grown with nearly every experience. Ultimately, it is the students of this partnership who stand to gain the most, perceiving classroom science and mathematics and their applications to technology and engineering as important and helpful in the real world.

To ensure the best outcome for your experience as a Teacher Extern Host, here is how you can plan for the summer:

- **Consider Cost-Share Contribution.** All hosts are asked to cost-share at least half of the total per Extern costs via a tax-deductible donation of \$3,000. If this is not feasible for your organization, discuss other options with the STEM Teacher Externship Program coordinators.
- **Gather your team.** Your team will be helping the Extern complete projects and solve problems. Letting your team members know that an Extern will be joining you is important to an overall successful experience. Externs and hosts often find the most benefit from the experience when Externs are viewed as a contributing team member.
- **Identify roles for your team members.** The Externship Program needs a point person at the work site, as well as the person that will most likely be working with the Extern on a daily basis. It is also important to identify secondary members of your team the Extern can turn to for smaller projects in order to build a complete picture of how your organization works.
- **Identify projects and/or needs.** It can be difficult to know the projects or needs in advance of summer. Longstanding “to do” lists that have been shelved are often the seeds that grow other opportunities during the summer. Multiple projects, varying in breadth, depth and time should be considered in order to accommodate for variable circumstances and to ensure maximum productivity for the Extern.

Each Teacher Externship experience is different and matched to the interest of the Host and the Extern. For examples of jobs Externs have held in the past, visit: www.iowaSTEM.gov/educators/externships/externships-faq

Testimonials from Previous Teacher Extern Hosts

Christina Boar, Community Outreach Coordinator at Monsanto in Muscatine: “It is a great benefit not only to the teachers, but to the business as well. The teachers can see what skill sets that companies need, and the teachers are able to implement techniques from real-world work experiences. It is a great tool to create relationships between business and teachers!”

Grace Swanson, Human Capital Vice President at Accumold in Ankeny: “The reason we support this program is that it is good for the community, good for the company and great for our future employees. The Teacher Externs come into Accumold not knowing the language of Micro Injection Molding and Tool & Die building. This immediately gets them in touch with how frightening it is to be in a foreign environment much like their students feel the first day of Algebra. However, it does not take long for them, with the support of our employees, to learn the language and start contributing to the company.”

Amber Pargmann, Global Program Manager at John Deere in Ottumwa: “A key piece is the relationship that is built between the school and the business. This opens the door for the teacher to not only be able to take real-world experiences back into the classroom, but also a way to further connect students through speakers and industry tours. In addition, the business benefits through helping to develop the future generation workforce.”

Testimonials from Previous Teacher Externs

David Yeoman, Life Science Teacher at Saint Albert High School in Council Bluffs: “Love of learning is key in any job. It is necessary to instill in our students a love of learning so they can continue to grow and develop intellectually. This love of learning might also save their employment in the future, as educators and employers do not know what the job market is going to be in 20-50 years. Preparing students to be lifelong learners who are ready and able to learn a new skill that will help them keep or earn a new job is necessary of all educators.”

Tricia Reichert, Science and Technology Teacher at Emmetsburg High School: “One of my takeaways has been that education and the “real” workplace share many commonalities. Whereas I am looking for student engagement and academic growth in the classroom, MaxYield is currently very focused on Agronomy interns who are willing to learn to be productive members of the MaxYield team who then ultimately remain with the company...How can I as a classroom teacher better prepare students of today to be well-qualified MaxYield team members of tomorrow?”

Doug Blosch, Science Teacher at Dubuque Hempstead High School: “This externship has opened my eyes to the reasoning behind Project-Based Learning as a tool that will not only engage students more deeply into the content but also open the door to a multitude of cross-cutting concepts and science and engineering practices naturally.”