



Rock Internship Program – Student Handbook (2026)

Overview

The purpose of the Rock Internship Program is to accelerate personal and professional skills development and provide career-related exposure for rising high school seniors. This structured, earn-and-learn (paid internship) model offers students a meaningful career pathway experience that serves as a foundational element of their Academic & Career Plan (ACP), positioning them for future academic and workplace success.

Through the program, students gain valuable interviewing, job searching, and resume-building experience; direct career exposure at a worksite; opportunities to develop or strengthen communication, critical thinking, leadership, and teamwork skills; and important professional networking connections.

The Rock Internship Program runs for six (6) weeks. Interns report to their designated worksites each week and may work up to 30 hours per week. Actual schedules are determined by the intern worksite. In addition to worksite hours, interns are required to attend a pre-employment Signing and Orientation Day and a Graduation Day at Blackhawk Technical College's Central Campus.

The Rock Internship Program is a collaborative talent development initiative supported by participating employers, Blackhawk Technical College (BTC), the County of Rock, Rock County 5.0, and the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (SWWDB).

For program information, visit: www.YourRockInternship.com

Participation & Eligibility Requirements

To participate in the Rock Internship Program, students must meet the following requirements:

- Be at least 16 years old and a resident of Rock County, Wisconsin by the Signing and Orientation Day.
- Be eligible to work in the United States and Rock County, Wisconsin.
- Have documented parental and/or legal guardian consent submitted no later than two (2) weeks prior to the Signing and Orientation Day.
- Be entering their senior year of high school, as recognized by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction or an accredited educational organization.
- Have reliable transportation to their intern worksite and Blackhawk Technical College.
- Submit a complete online application, including a personal statement describing personal and professional goals and how the internship supports those goals.
- Submit one (1) letter of reference from a school district staff or faculty member.

- Participate in required interviews with the Internship Coordinator/Coordination Team and potential intern worksites.
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Program Calendar & Work Schedule (2026)

Interns may work a maximum of 30 hours per week and must attend all required program events held at BTC's Central Campus. Attendance and participation in all program activities are mandatory.

2026 Program Dates

- February 2 – March 6, 2026: Internship applications open
- March 11 – March 20, 2026: Preliminary interviews (virtual)
- March 23 – April 3, 2026: Worksite interviews
- April 6 – April 10, 2026: Confirm placements with worksites
- April 13 – April 17, 2026: Confirm student placements
- Monday, June 15, 2026: Internship Signing and Orientation Day (paid workday)
- June 15 – June 19, 2026: Week 1
- June 22 – June 26, 2026: Week 2
- June 29 – July 3, 2026: Week 3
- July 6 – July 10, 2026: Week 4
- July 13 – July 17, 2026: Week 5 (Draft capstone presentations due)
- July 20 – July 24, 2026: Week 6
- Friday, July 24, 2026: Graduation Day and Capstone Presentations

Intern work schedules (start/stop times and daily hours) must be agreed upon with the worksite supervisor and communicated to the Internship Coordinator by the Signing and Orientation Day.

Interns are responsible for their own transportation. Limited transportation stipends may be available for documented hardship cases and are determined on a case-by-case basis.

Employer of Record & Payroll

For the duration of the program, the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (SWWDB) serves as the Employer of Record. Interns are paid \$13 per hour. SWWDB is responsible for payroll processing and workers' compensation insurance.

Payroll onboarding instructions will be reviewed during Signing and Orientation Day. New hire paperwork will be completed electronically via DocuSign and must include identity verification and direct deposit documentation. Timesheets must be submitted according to SWWDB procedures to finance@swwdb.org.

Attendance, Conduct & Grounds for Termination

Attendance at all internship activities and BTC events is mandatory. Vacations, athletic events, and secondary employment obligations are not automatically excused.

Unexcused absences, habitual tardiness, or failure to participate may result in disciplinary action, including termination. Interns may receive up to three (3) strikes before removal from the program.

Immediate termination may occur for serious misconduct, including but not limited to:

- Use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs
- Theft, vandalism, or violence
- Possession of weapons or hazardous devices
- Fraudulent reporting of hours
- Harassment or aggressive behavior

Personal mobile or cellular device use during work hours or BTC events is prohibited unless expressly approved.

Conflict Resolution

If a conflict arises, interns must participate in a facilitated resolution process involving the Internship Coordinator, worksite supervisor(s), and other relevant parties. Failure to participate may result in termination and potential school-related consequences.

Intern Responsibilities

Scheduling & Communication

Interns are responsible for confirming their weekly work schedule with their worksite supervisor and ensuring hours do not exceed program limits.

Attendance & Dependability

Interns must report to worksites and BTC events on time. If absent or tardy, interns must notify both the Internship Coordinator and worksite supervisor at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.

Professionalism & Performance

Interns are expected to arrive prepared, demonstrate professionalism, and actively engage in learning opportunities. Performance will be evaluated throughout the internship.

Timekeeping & Documentation

Interns must accurately track and submit work hours and complete weekly journals as required. Fraudulent records or failure to comply may result in delayed payment or termination.

Your Intern Worksite

First impressions matter. Interns are encouraged to:

- Be prepared and know schedules and contacts
 - Dress appropriately and arrive on time
 - Be attentive, respectful, and professional
 - Ask questions and take notes
 - Show initiative and maintain a positive attitude
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Completing Your Internship

During the final week, interns are encouraged to:

- Request references
 - Ask for letters of recommendation
 - Network and conduct informational interviews
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Additional Information & Support

Students are encouraged to connect with their school's Career & Technical Education or Guidance Counseling staff prior to applying.

Payroll questions: finance@swwdb.org

Program questions:

Molly Markley, Internship Coordinator
mmarkley4@blackhawk.edu | 608-757-6329

For additional information, visit www.YourRockInternship.com

Rock Internship Program Participation Agreement

The purpose of the Rock Internship Program is to accelerate personal, as well as professional, skills development and career-related exposure for rising High School Seniors. This structured, earn-and-learn (i.e., paid internship) model will provide students with a meaningful, career pathway experience that will serve as a foundational element of their Academic & Career Plan (ACP); thereby, positioning students for future academic and workplace success. As such, students will gain valuable interviewing, job searching and resume building experience; direct, career exposure at a worksite; opportunities to develop or improve communication, critical thinking, leadership, and teamwork skills; and important networking connections.

The Rock Internship Program is a collaborative talent development offering supported by participating employers, Blackhawk Technical College (BTC), the County of Rock, Rock County 5.0, and the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (SWWDB). While SWWDB serves as the program's Employer of Record, BTC is providing daily administrative and program management functions. Meanwhile, the County of Rock and Rock County 5.0 are providing other supportive program services.

It is agreed that _____ (Enter Student's Name) will perform the duties and responsibilities of a High School Internship with _____ (Enter Organization's Name).

The Employer agrees to do the following:

- Provide a meaningful, experiential earning-and-learning and mentoring environment for the intern; and adhere to the program's daily / weekly hours of employment regulations.
- Provide financial and technical support, as outlined within the Employer Internship Manual.
- Identify and assign a primary intern worksite supervisor and a secondary worksite contact; and agree to a participation background check (if requested).
- Immediately inform the Internship Coordinator of any concerns or issues that surface.
- Provide weekly feedback, as well as an end of program evaluation, unless otherwise agreed upon.
- Perform and provide payroll related services, if that is the agreed upon arrangement between the host worksite and the Internship Coordinator.
- Participate in the Internship Signing and Orientation Day, and the Graduation Day.
- Comply with all applicable local, state and/or federal workplace discrimination, environmental and/or safety regulations.

The Student agrees to do the following:

- Follow the (worksite supervisor's) employer's policies, practices, procedures, dress code, and/or standards of conduct, as well as any additional requirements outlined within the Student Internship Manual, as applicable. If I do not understand any of my employer's requirements, I will request clarification.
- I understand that my performance as an intern will be measured primarily by the worksite supervisor, and feedback from the Internship Coordinator will be taken into consideration, as well.
- I understand that program participation, beginning with the Signing and Orientation Day and then continuing through to the Graduation Day, is mandatory. Any pre-program related activities – such as interviews, training or testing – may also be considered mandatory, as well.
- I understand that I am responsible for accurately reporting and timely submitting the payroll time sheets, as more fully explained and/or demonstrated during a program's training session or its Signing and Orientation Day.
- I understand that I am required to complete and submit signed Intern Log Worksheets, as described during the Signing and Orientation Day event.
- I understand that I may be required to complete, and pass, a background check to participate in this program and/or to work at a specific intern worksite. Additional worksite requirements might apply, as well.

- I will provide current, and complete, personal, and family contact information, to the Internship Coordinator and the worksite supervisor, at all times during the internship. This information will be submitted, by using the Internship Contact Information Form, at the Signing and Orientation Day event.
- I understand that my intern worksite and/or the supervisor is counting on me to complete my assigned work accurately and on time. I will notify my worksite supervisor and Internship Coordinator immediately if I will be absent due to illness or another serious circumstance. I will immediately contact my worksite supervisor and/or a designated alternative contact, and the Internship Coordinator, if I experience harassment, discrimination, workplace violence; sustain a worksite injury and/or any other improper workplace incidents.
- I will conduct myself professionally at all times. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - ✓ Maintaining confidentiality regarding employer information, relating to clients, customers, patients, employees, products, services, and other non-public information, which is proprietary to the employer.
 - ✓ Reporting to work on time and in proper attire; providing an outstanding work product; working cooperatively with the worksite staff.
 - ✓ Using appropriate written, oral, and electronic communication in all interactions with worksite staff, clients, customers, patients, and the Internship Coordinator.
 - ✓ Completing all orientation, training, or testing as required by the Rock Internship Program; and observe all safety rules, procedures, and policies.
- Engage in positive, professional, and legally compliant behavior; and accept responsibility and accountability for my actions; and ensure that I conduct myself with dignity and respect toward every person with whom I interact.

The Internship Coordinator reserves the right to terminate the internship if it is decided the student is not performing satisfactorily; if program (conduct and participation) rules have been violated; and/or the experience fails to meet the expectation of both the student and the employer. The worksite supervisor may also request removal of the student, at its discretion and without prior notice.

Students participating in the Rock Internship Program may maintain, if they choose and at no cost to any of the participating and/or sponsoring organizations, comprehensive health and medical or student accident insurance. Upon request, evidence of such insurance shall be provided to Internship Coordinator.

The Internship Coordinator / Coordination Team agrees to do the following:

- Coordinate the Internship experience, serving as the primary contact and resource for interns and their intern worksites.
- Lead and/or manage the intern and intern worksite selection processes.
- Provide and conduct intern onboarding, basic pre-employment training and exposure to other relevant workplace topics.
- Monitor intern journals and facilitate access to supplemental career and/or higher education resources.
- Identify, address and/or resolve any SWWDB payroll related issues.
- Identify, address and/or resolve any disciplinary or conflict resolution issues.
- Conduct pre-and-post and/or current intern worksite visits.
- Communicate with participants and partners for the purposes of conducting formal program assessment and evaluation related activities.
- Collaborate with Rock County 5.0 regarding any media, public and/or stakeholder reports, updates, etc.

The SWWDB Agrees to do the following:

- Serve as the Employer of Record for this program unless other arrangements have been mutually agreed to in advance by the host worksite and the Internship Coordinator.
- Be responsible for handling all payroll and workers’ compensation insurance items associated with this program; and serve as said resources as it concerns these topics.

By signing below, you are confirming that all Information you have provided on this form, and all other related Rock Internship Program forms and/or materials is accurate, complete and truthful; and you certify that you have read and understand the program’s terms and conditions; and you agree to hold harmless the Intern Worksite Employer and/or its staff; Blackhawk Technical College and its Internship Coordinator; Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board and staff; the County of Rock; and Rock County 5.0 and/or any of its member or partnering organizations, its contributors, independent contractors for all liability claims; for any direct or indirect damages, and/or outcomes associated with participation in this internship program. Additionally, you agree to and understand that certain participant information will be collected, maintained, and potentially shared – in an electronic / hardy copy format – among the above organizations strictly for approved and acceptable emergency, payroll or regulatory related purposes. You further acknowledge that you are authorized to sign this Agreement; and understand this section shall continue beyond the expiration or termination of this Agreement.

I/We agree to comply with the conditions of this Agreement.

Student Intern (Print and Sign Name) Date

Student Parental and/or Guardian (Print and Sign Name) Date

Employer/ Intern Worksite Supervisor (Print and Sign Name) Date

Rhonda Suda, Southwest Workforce Development Board (Print and Sign Name) Date

Molly Markley, Internship Coordinator (Print and Sign Name) Date

FREQUENTY ASKED QUESTIONS

When is the Rock Internship Program Offered?

The program will be offered immediately following the spring school semester, kicking-off on June 13, 2025.

Who can participate in this internship program?

If you're at least 16 years old; a resident of Rock County, WI; and entering your senior year of High School; then you can apply to participate in the program. Internship placements are limited, so applicants are encouraged to apply early versus waiting until the February 7, 2025 application deadline.

How long is the internship?

The internship program will last for a total of up to six (6) weeks, which includes a pair of paid days that will take place at BTC's Central Campus. The first paid day at BTC is the June 10th Signing and Orientation Day, which represents an approximate four-hour commitment. The last and final paid BTC day is the July 26th Graduation Day event, which will likely represent about a three-hour commitment. Unless otherwise notified by their host worksite (i.e., employer), interns are expected to report their designated worksite locations for the duration of the internship.

Attendance, throughout the entire internship program (including the BTC days), is mandatory.

How much will I get paid and how will I get to work?

You will be paid an hourly rate of \$13 / hour (minus the customary payroll deductions); and you will be responsible for providing your own transportation to/from the worksite and BTC.

What types of internships will be available?

There will be a limited number of internships available. While the list of participating employers may fluctuate, the goal is to make sure there is a diverse internship offering, covering a range of career clusters. Using information from the personal statements and related application materials, the Internship Coordinator / Coordination Team will attempt to provide the most appropriate and optimal intern and worksite match.

What assignments, tasks or jobs will I be performing?

You may be performing tasks or jobs that are consistent with your skill-set capacities and capabilities. You will not be assigned to "hazardous" duties (as defined by OSHA) and your worksite supervisor will make sure the appropriate level of safety, instructions and related oversight are provided.

Where can I receive more information and how do I get started?

First, contact your Guidance Counselor and/or the Career & Technical Education instructors. Next, review the Rock Internship Student Manual and once you've finished, then complete the [online application](#). If you need more info, contact Molly Markley, Rock Internship Coordinator at mmarkley4@blackhawk.edu or 608-757-6329.

Personal Statement Guidelines:

We have made the decision to substitute a personal statement in place of a more formal ACP document. This statement should do the following:

1. Address why you want to go into a particular career.
2. Talk about the kind of education you want to pursue after high school, or education that you've already taken in your career field of interest. This can include summer camps or programs pertaining to your chosen field.
3. Give a good idea of who you are. Please do not run your personal statement through ChatGPT or any other AI-powered tool. We want to hear who you are in your own authentic voice.

Original: I have always wanted to go into engineering. When I was younger I loved taking things apart and putting them back together in ways that I thought worked better. I was lucky enough to go through the AIM program for industrial maintenance and this sparked my interest in industrial engineering. With this in mind I was able to take more classes at my school on engineering. So far I have taken Principles of Engineering and Introduction to Engineering Design and plan to take more classes next year through Blackhawk Tech, UWW at Rock County, or MSOE. I think I want to go to MSOE, UW-Platteville, or UW-Madison for industrial engineering, but am keeping my options open for college right now. I just know that I want to be an industrial engineer.

ChatGPT: Since my early years, a passion for engineering has fueled my curiosity and creativity. I reveled in disassembling and reassembling objects, constantly seeking ways to enhance their functionality. The pivotal moment came when I enrolled in the AIM program for industrial maintenance, igniting a profound interest in industrial engineering. Empowered by this newfound focus, I eagerly delved into engineering courses at my school, including Principles of Engineering and Introduction to Engineering Design. Looking ahead, I am enthusiastic about expanding my knowledge and skill set through additional classes, exploring opportunities at institutions such as Blackhawk Tech, UWW at Rock County, and MSOE in the coming year.

As I contemplate my collegiate path, I am drawn to esteemed institutions like MSOE, UW-Platteville, and UW-Madison for their robust industrial engineering programs. While my preferences are crystallizing, I remain open to exploring other options, recognizing the importance of finding the perfect fit for my academic and professional aspirations. Undoubtedly, my unwavering goal is to carve a path toward becoming an accomplished industrial engineer.