

How to Improve Your Chances of Receiving an International Scholarship or Grant

Hello International Students. Hope all is well with you this summer and that you are making the most of this time. Over the past couple of weeks, some of you have come by looking for help regarding scholarships, jobs and internships. Here are some important skills that will help you in the application process;

- 1) **Community Service:** It is very important to get good grades and maintain high GPAs unfortunately the story does not end there. Today's employers, grants and scholarship donors need more well rounded people, who engage in other activities in addition to academic work.

Giving back to the communities you work or live in reflects well on you. This summer you may think of volunteering in a local neighborhood program. This does not have to be a boring activity where all that matters is the number of hours you put in. For example if you are an art major, you may consider teaching art to disabled children or children from impoverished neighborhoods. This would be a fun and learning experience for both you and the students. The opportunities are limitless, just be creative with how you want to reach out.

Metro International through its Global Classrooms program offers a great opportunity for international students to get involved. Please visit their website www.metrointl.org . You may contact Ms. Erin Olson, Director of Global Classroom, at eolson@metrointl.org or (212) 431-1195 (x26) for further information.

- 2) **Internships:** Many student leave internships towards the very end. Try as much as possible not to do this. Many jobs require you to have a substantial amount of experience and internships are a great way to get this experience. Many times you have to choose between paid work and non paid internships. In such a situation you have to consider the opportunity cost of forgoing that internship. It may not pay of in a monetary form but could be the action that makes your resume stand out from the rest.
- 3) **Microsoft Office Skills:** Lack of Access, Excel, PowerPoint and other industry specific software knowledge puts many students at a disadvantage during the application process. Our advice to you is to create some time this summer to aquire or brush-up on these skills. Check you local libraries to see if they are offering special workshops on these topics. www.NYPL.org is also a good place to start. If not, most libraries do have "teach yourself" manuals. Do not let such simple tasks hold you back from your dream job.
- 4) **Spoken and Written English:** Many of you have addressed concerns regarding your command of the English language. You are not confident that your command of the language is adequate. Do not panic. There are ways to improve on this. Having speech partners works for some students. We currently have contact information for a student willing to exchange English speech practice for Japanese speech practice. Those of you who already have a good command of the language would like to be generous with your time, do let us know.

In addition to the above sources, The international Center in New York is a great resource. They offer a wide range of workshops on the English language, Computer skills, Math, cultural outings and many others. We encourage you to pay the center a visit and find out more about it; 520 West 23rd Street, 7th Floor

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