



ZERO HUNGER INTERNSHIP



Summer 2025 Internship Application Guide

Introduction



Thank you for your interest in the **Zero Hunger Internship**, a leadership development program of the **Congressional Hunger Center**.

We launched the Zero Hunger Internship in 2018 with support from the **Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation** to build the knowledge and leadership skills of the next generation of young people who will end hunger by 2030. Along with the **Bill Emerson National and Mickey Leland International Hunger Fellowships**, this internship supports our mission of developing, inspiring, and connecting leaders in the movement to end hunger, and advocating for public policies that create a food secure world.

The COVID-19 pandemic, war, conflict, and extreme weather have dramatically increased the need for food assistance in the United States and around the world. You will see first-hand how organizations are

working to eradicate hunger and its root causes on a national and global scale, using policy as a tool to create change. With your cohort of fellow interns, you will sharpen your leadership skills and gain subject matter and advocacy expertise through the Summer Seminars. You will end the summer with the confidence, skills, and knowledge to be an effective anti-hunger advocate in your community.

I hope you believe, like we do, that in a moment of crisis, a movement of dedicated and passionate people can **build a better future** for their communities—and that you will join us to do just that.

In service,

Shannon Maynard

Shannon Maynard
Executive Director

Emily Irsik

Emily Irsik
Internships and
Recruitment Coordinator

▲ Summer 2024 class of Zero Hunger Interns at their graduation ceremony.

ABOUT THE HUNGER CENTER'S APPROACH



Hunger is a multifaceted and far-reaching problem—and the movement to end it should be, too.

We believe that governments, nonprofits, educational institutions, corporations, philanthropy, and individuals all have a role to play, and a variety of approaches and strategies are required to solve the problem.



Any lasting solution to hunger must be led by people with first-hand expertise.

We invest in the leadership of people who have experienced hunger and poverty and people of color—who are disproportionately affected by hunger—as designers, implementers, and evaluators of anti-hunger programs and projects.



Breakdowns in understanding and differences in perspective on the root causes of the problem stand in the way of scalable solutions.

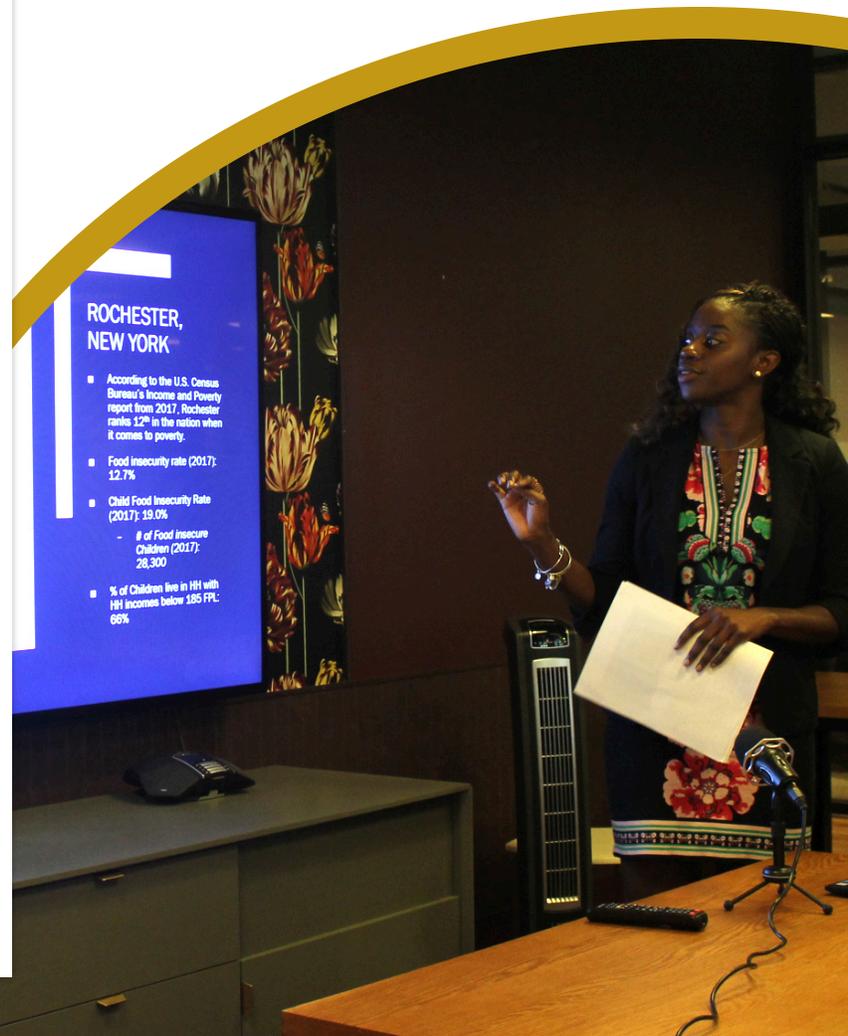
We focus on bridging the gap between community-based work and public policy, highlighting the ways that each can inform and strengthen the other.

[Read more about our approach.](#)

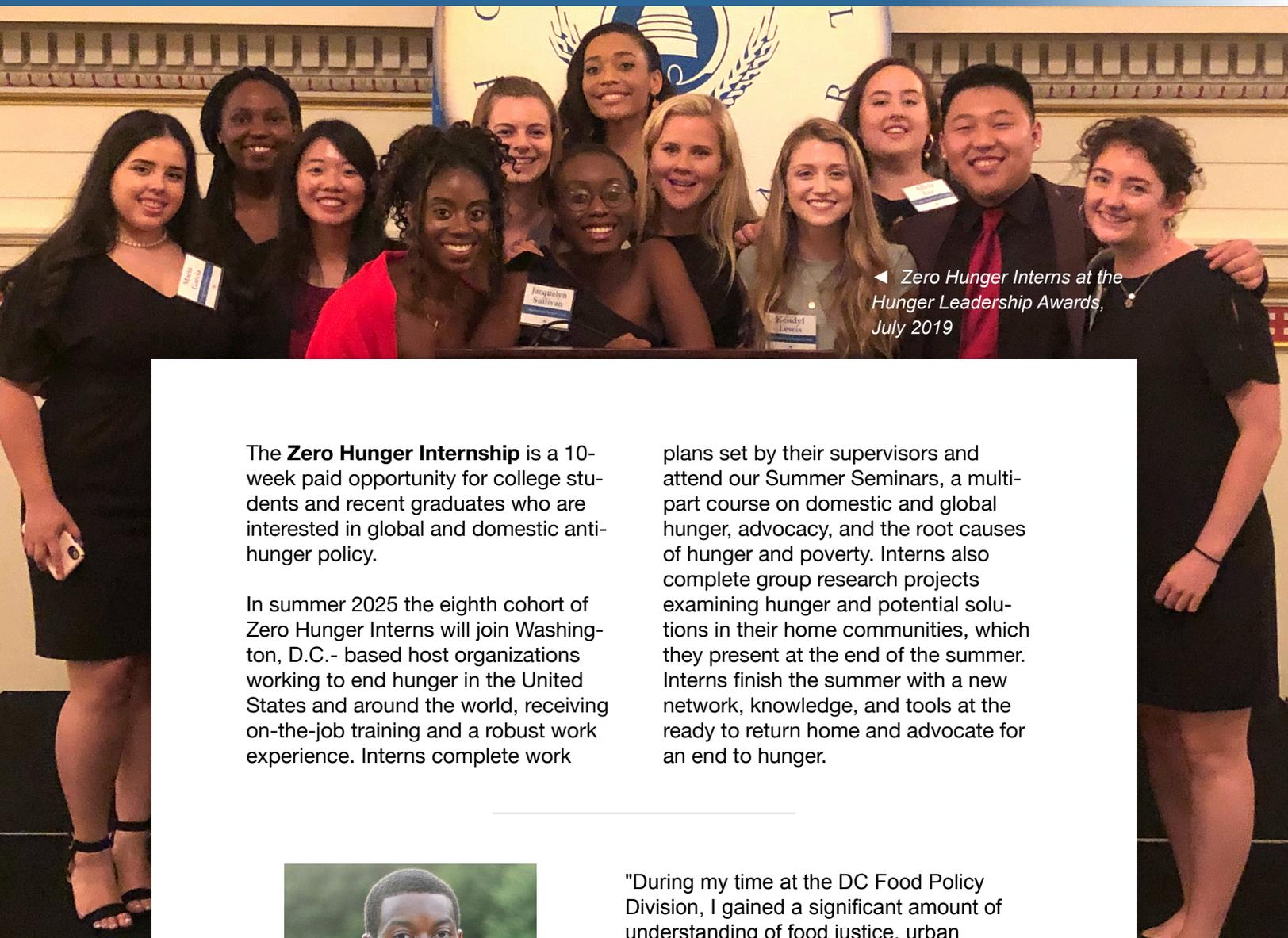


The Zero Hunger Internship is made possible by the generous support of the **Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation**. A partner and supporter of the Congressional Hunger Center since 2000, the Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation's mission is to ensure every child in the U.S. grows up with dependable access to enough nutritious food to enable them to lead a healthy, productive life. The foundation mobilizes experts, innovators, volunteers, and donors to feed children in the U.S. today and advocate for policies that ensure no child is hungry again tomorrow. [Learn more here.](#)

▼ *Kristina Benjamin ('19) presents her summer research project.*



How Does the Internship Work?



◀ Zero Hunger Interns at the Hunger Leadership Awards, July 2019

The **Zero Hunger Internship** is a 10-week paid opportunity for college students and recent graduates who are interested in global and domestic anti-hunger policy.

In summer 2025 the eighth cohort of Zero Hunger Interns will join Washington, D.C.- based host organizations working to end hunger in the United States and around the world, receiving on-the-job training and a robust work experience. Interns complete work

plans set by their supervisors and attend our Summer Seminars, a multi-part course on domestic and global hunger, advocacy, and the root causes of hunger and poverty. Interns also complete group research projects examining hunger and potential solutions in their home communities, which they present at the end of the summer. Interns finish the summer with a new network, knowledge, and tools at the ready to return home and advocate for an end to hunger.



"During my time at the DC Food Policy Division, I gained a significant amount of understanding of food justice, urban agriculture, and different methodologies that are out there to fight hunger. At the same time, I gained the resources and knowledge that will aid me as I continue my advocacy work. I will recommend the Zero Hunger Internship Program to anyone who believes that hunger is a problem that has to be eradicated...."

Kibiriti Majuto ('21)

2025 PROGRAM CALENDAR

November 2024 — January 2025

Apply to the Zero Hunger Internship. Application deadline is **January 13, 2025**.

February

Program staff contact candidates for interviews.

March — April

- Receive notification that you have been accepted
- Contact your host organization and set start and end dates for your 10-week internship
- Secure summer housing in Washington

June 2, 2025 — August 4, 2025

Core Program Dates

(all interns must be present in Washington, D.C. for this period)

- Complete work plan with host organization
- Attend Summer Seminars
- Complete and present research project

August 18

Latest date to finish internship.

August and Afterwards

Emerge as an experienced anti-hunger advocate, ready to work to end hunger in your community and beyond!

WORKING AND LEARNING

You will learn about hunger and develop as a leader through four program components:

1 INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT

The Hunger Center will match you with a *host organization* working on global or domestic anti-hunger policy. Host organizations are selected through a competitive process and supervise your day-to-day work. Interns and host organizations are matched based on the needs of the organization and the professional interests and skills of the intern. While supporting their host organizations, interns gain first-hand experience with **program implementation, development and fundraising, policy analysis, communications, or nonprofit operations.**

2 LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Our Leadership Capabilities model is the foundation of our leadership development trainings. The core capabilities of a leader fall into three distinct but interrelated categories that build on and reinforce one another: **develop self, lead with others, and create change.** Zero Hunger Interns develop these capabilities through partner exercises, cohort learning activities, and through the Summer Seminars. [Learn more about the Leadership Capabilities.](#)



"Such a great opportunity and I am so thankful for the Congressional Hunger Center for making it all happen! From all of the professional and personal development to getting to lobby on the hill to making friends with the cohort of other Zero Hunger Interns and working on meaningful projects with my host organizations, the Zero Hunger Internship was so cool and I would highly recommend to anyone interested in developing their skills in policy and leadership!"

Sai Chebrolu ('24)



SUMMER SEMINARS

You will expand your knowledge of domestic and global hunger, public policy, and advocacy through the Summer Seminar Series. During these sessions, you will learn directly from content experts; participate in lectures, learning simulations, and group discussions; and network with professionals and fellow interns. Sessions also include trainings on professional and leadership development topics.

RESEARCHING HUNGER

Translating what you learn in Washington to your local context is a key component of the Zero Hunger Internship. You will complete a group research project about a hunger problem in your community and present policy solutions before an audience. After you complete your internship, you will be able to use what you have learned to advocate for an end to hunger wherever you are.



- ▲ *Hunger Center staff at an advocacy event at the U.S. Capitol.*
- ◀ *A session of the 2019 Zero Hunger Summer Seminars.*

BENEFITS

Coming to Washington, D.C., for an internship can be a life-changing experience. Below are some of the benefits of becoming a Zero Hunger Intern.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

You will receive a stipend of up to **\$7,500** to offset the cost of living in Washington, D.C., for 10 weeks. The Hunger Center will also pay for your transportation to and from Washington at the start and end of the summer (departure and arrival destinations must be within the United States).

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Considering pursuing a Master of Public Policy degree? Zero Hunger Interns who successfully complete the 10-week internship are eligible for significant discounts on tuition at the University of Virginia Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy. [Learn more about this partnership.](#)

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

You will grow as a professional through on-the-job training at your host organization, advancing your team's work to end hunger in the U.S. or globally. You will also develop new skills and knowledge through the Summer Seminars and other professional development opportunities.

NETWORK

Our cohort learning model is central to the internship experience. Your fellow Zero Hunger Interns share your passion and dedication to ending hunger, and you will share your experiences and learn from one another throughout the summer and beyond.



FRANK BATTEN SCHOOL
of LEADERSHIP and PUBLIC POLICY



"This internship significantly contributed to my professional growth, and it helped shaped my vision for the future. I met so many wonderful people, and the entire experience truly enriched my world view. I definitely feel better prepared to tackle this type of work in the future!"

Meghna Phalke ('22)

How Do I Apply?

If you are ready to come to Washington, carefully review the following pages to prepare your application. All applications must be submitted on our website by **January 13, 2025**.

AM I ELIGIBLE?

All applicants must be **current undergraduate students** or **recent college graduates**. (A recent graduate is someone who attained their undergraduate degree in **December 2024 or later**.)

All applicants **must be U.S. citizens**, or have **authorization to work** in the United States beginning no later than **May 2025**.

HOW LONG DOES THE INTERNSHIP RUN?

All internships last **10 weeks** with start and end dates that are mutually agreed upon by the intern and the host organization and approved by the Hunger Center. Internships may start **June 1, 2025**, and end between **August 4** and **August 18, 2025**, provided the total length of the internship is 10 weeks.

WHAT ARE THE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS?

Interns are **required to work full time** at their host organizations during usual business hours. **Exceptions will not be made** for students who wish to enroll in a summer class, get a part-time job or any other obligation that would prevent the intern from supporting the host organization during usual business hours.

Interns are **required to relocate** to Washington, D.C. for summer 2023 to participate in this program.

Interns will be required to provide **proof of vaccination** against Coronavirus and must follow Hunger Center and host organization COVID-19 guidance (e.g. masking, social distancing) as directed.

WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Do these statements describe you? If so, you may be a great fit for the Zero Hunger Internship:

I am committed to food and nutrition security.

Many interns have completed coursework or volunteer experience addressing hunger in their communities. Many may also have personal experience with hunger and poverty.

I want to be an agent of change.

We cannot end hunger without new ways of thinking. Successful interns are creative, committed, and ready to learn about scalable and sustainable solutions to hunger.

I am flexible.

Successful interns can change plans and adapt to new scenarios and new work environments. Moreover, it can be challenging to move to a new city for 10 weeks. We are looking for people who are excited to live in Washington, D.C., for a full-time summer internship.

I am committed to racial equity.

We believe that no solution to hunger will succeed without leadership from people who are disproportionately affected by hunger and poverty, especially people of color.

I am a critical thinker with strong communication skills.

Work plans are challenging and will test an intern's ability to evaluate and solve problems on their own. Interns must be able to ask questions and work independently.

I have a learning mindset.

You get out of an internship what you put in. The Zero Hunger Internship provides many outlets for professional and personal growth; successful interns are able to make the most of them.

TIMELINE FOR APPLICATIONS



Read this guide completely.

If you have questions not covered in this guide, contact us at zerohunger@hungercenter.org



Complete the online application by **January 13, 2025.**

The application consists of several short-answer essay questions and a short writing test, and requires a one-page resume. Completing the application will take three to four hours. [Check out our website to find helpful tips for making your application shine.](#)



Hunger Center staff review your application.

Candidates complete online interviews in **February.**



You've been accepted into the Zero Hunger Internship!

Expect to receive a notification and your host organization assignment in **March or April.**



Prepare for the summer.

Once you have accepted your offer, start looking for summer housing in Washington, D.C., and set your start and end dates with your host organization.



Begin your internship by **June 2, 2025!**

Frequently Asked Questions



◀ Zero Hunger Interns **Katie Waeldner** and **Kristina Benjamin** at the 2019 Hunger Leadership Awards.

Do I get to pick my host organization?

No. The Hunger Center matches Zero Hunger Interns with host organizations, balancing the needs of the host organization with the experience, skills, interests, and geographic preferences of the intern.

Does the Hunger Center provide housing for interns?

No. The Hunger Center provides interns with a stipend of up to \$6,500 to help offset living expenses, including housing, in Washington, D.C., for 10 weeks. Interns find and secure their own housing. The Hunger Center may offer suggestions to help get interns started on their housing search.

Can non-U.S. citizens apply for this program?

Yes. However, program participants *must be authorized to work in the United States*. The Hunger Center does not support applicant visas; the applicant must have work authorization that is valid for a ten-week period for summer 2025.

Are Zero Hunger Interns employees of the Congressional Hunger Center?

No. You will be a 1099 contractor and will have to pay taxes on your income from the summer.

My question wasn't answered in this guide. What should I do?

Let us know! Drop us a line at zerohunger@hungercenter.org and we will be happy to assist you with your question.



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Have questions not covered by this guide?
Contact us at zerohunger@hungercenter.org

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Cover Photo: Seventh Class Zero Hunger Interns at the 2024
Hunger Leadership Awards.

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