NASPO’s Internship Program began in summer 2017 with three pilot states and four interns. From there, it has grown to eleven states this past summer, with 16 students from NASPO academic partner schools. Our internship program continues to work with state procurement offices across the country to build meaningful experiences for college students over their summer term.

The students from academic partner schools are impressive! They come from top-tier Supply Chain programs across the country—the closest field of study we’ve found to the work our members do in public procurement. Since the program’s inception, we have honed the process and continue to improve for both the participating states and their students. We have highlighted the experience via webinars and conference sessions, leading to an increase in excitement and interest from our state members.

2019 INTERNSHIP EVALUATIONS

Evaluation is a critical component of the NASPO Internship Program. Both interns and supervisors are required to evaluate their experience. Interns have both a mid-term and final evaluation, whereas the supervisor is only asked to evaluate their intern at the end of the internship.

The intern mid-term evaluation is a short reflective essay that asks the student to think about their position so far, as well as identify areas of improvement. We encourage the interns to discuss their mid-term evaluations with their supervisor to help them improve their ongoing internship experience.

At the end of the internship, the intern completes a final evaluation that assesses the internship overall, including the supervisor, specific projects, difficulty level and more. At the same time, the supervisor evaluates the intern’s overall performance. The supervisor is encouraged to sit down with their intern to discuss their evaluations before the internship ends. Sharing this feedback not only helps the interns identify their areas of improvement, but also helps the supervisor learn how to improve for future iterations of the internship program. NASPO encourages open and respectful dialogue between intern and supervisor, as it is helpful for both parties to learn from each other.

NASPO 2019 INTERNSHIP PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

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2019 EVALUATION RESULTS

We are very pleased with the results of the 2019 internship evaluations. Highlights from the results can be found below.

INTERNS

Five of our Strategic Partner Schools were represented in the 2019 program (A). The interns chosen represented all years of higher education, and the majority of interns were either Juniors in college or currently completing their MBA (B). The interns who participated in the 2019 Internship Program were overwhelmingly majoring in Supply Chain Management. Other majors include: Engineering, Finance and Business (C).
Overall, 100 percent (16) of interns agreed or strongly agreed that their supervisor was available to answer questions (D); the internship helped them connect their Supply Chain Management classwork to public sector work (E); the work climate was positive (F); they learned practical skills for their future careers (G); and they made contacts with employees that will be useful in their careers (H). Graphs to support these responses are shown.
Although most student responses were positive, these surveys identified areas for future improvement. A “neutral” response was given for the question about whether their Supply Chain Management classes prepared them for their internship (I). One intern commented that their “supply chain classes gave [them] background information for recollection...however, the specifics of how [the] department operates must be learned on the job”.

Some interns did not feel that they received thorough information concerning their job duties and expectations at the start of their internship and felt that their orientation to the organization was not sufficient (J & K). Given program participants are just beginning to embark on their professional careers, they may desire more clarification concerning the company and expectations than a more experienced employee would. This is something to keep in mind for organizations hosting an intern for the first time.
SUPERVISOR RESPONSES: FINAL EVALUATIONS

We were pleased to receive positive responses from the 2019 internship supervisors, which speaks to the caliber of student applicants from NASPO academic partner schools. The most positive responses from supervisors relate to intern performance; accomplishing duties expected of them in a satisfactory manner (L); working collaboratively (M); responding to instruction (N); being reliable (O); and prioritizing projects well (P). The final question on the supervisor evaluation asked if the supervisor believed their intern would succeed in the procurement field. 81.25% “Strongly Agreed” and 12.5% “Agreed” (Q). From our program, 25% supervisors shared that they have either made their intern a job offer or plan to in the future when they graduate. Clearly, our supervisors were impressed by the students who chose to participate in the NASPO Internship Program.
2020 INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

For interested states, the application process will begin on November 1, 2019. There will be twelve internship grants available, and we anticipate another summer of successful internships across the country. You can read more about the program on our [website](#), and check out the NASPO [Internship Toolkit](#) for information on how to get started with an internship program in your organization. We look forward to reporting back!