

EVALUATION REPORT:

Tarboro Young Civic Leaders Internship



Rural
Opportunity
Institute

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I think it was a good thing for the kids this summer. I think it kind of changed [my kid] to bring them out to be around other people.

– Parent

Executive Summary

Introduction

In the summer of 2023, Rural Opportunity Institute (ROI) piloted an innovative new high school internship program, the Young Civic Leaders (YCL) initiative, in collaboration with the Town of Tarboro, North Carolina. Born out of the community's recognition of a significant gap in youth employment opportunities, this pilot program was designed to provide local high school students with meaningful professional experiences that contributed to their personal development and job skills. The program also gave them an opportunity to give back to the Tarboro community.

Background

Edgecombe County, North Carolina experiences systemic and entrenched economic challenges, largely caused by underfunded systems that fail to effectively serve residents. The median family income hovers just over \$40,000, and 74% of students are eligible for free and reduced lunch. Few opportunities for summer jobs exist, despite the fact that youth want opportunities to improve their skills, earn money, and build their resumes. As one intern highlighted, without the YCL initiative, they would be “just chillin’, playin’ football,” emphasizing the absence of existing summer employment opportunities. Nevertheless, the community has deep wells of desire and capacity to create opportunities for economic mobility and wealth-building. The YCL initiative was a product of community-led efforts to mobilize those resources to improve the town's systems.

Program Design and Execution

The internship pilot program was designed by ROI in consultation with community leaders and the Town of Tarboro. Ultimately, three summer interns were hired into the Town of Tarboro's Parks and Recreation department. These interns earned \$10.50 per hour and worked 20-25 hours per week, completing significant projects for the town over their three-month internship. In addition to practical work experience, interns participated in a Career Readiness Certification training and a comprehensive Trauma and Resilience 101 Training. Overall, feedback from the program was positive: 100% of interns would recommend the program to a peer, 100% of parents saw growth in their child from the internship, and 100% of interns' supervisors would hire an intern again next year. In the words of one intern, “it was a great experience.”

Achievements and Insights

The pilot program yielded meaningful results in terms of the interns' personal development and the town's capacity to serve its constituents. For each of the interns, this experience represented their first job. Getting real-world work experience, and the responsibility and independence that comes with earning one's own income, was transformative. As one parent shared, “I can see the difference it made in my kids... it seemed like they grew up in that situation.”

The interns not only learned the values of punctuality and accountability but also honed their people skills by interacting with the diversity of community members who depend on the Parks and Recreation department. The experience also gave interns a sense of accomplishment and community contribution. One intern shared a particularly rewarding experience: “My favorite part was when we filled in the mulch at different parks...and saw all the little kids come out running and jumping all in it...that was a happy experience.”

Opportunities and Recommendations

While this pilot internship program had many successes, it also revealed opportunities for evolution and refinement. Recruitment posed a challenge, as the timing of program approval came after the end of the 2023 school year. In the future, ROI will recruit earlier and more extensively, leveraging the positive feedback and experiences of the inaugural intern cohort to build interest among a wider pool of students.

In addition, the success of the pilot illustrates the potential for expansion. The program could appeal to a broader audience and cater to a broader range of students' interests and skills if more Town of Tarboro departments participate. As one supervisor suggested, there is an opportunity to "coordinate with some of the other departments to try to see if they can create a summer part-time position."

Conclusion

This initial internship pilot program has validated expectations held by ROI and community members about the value of providing more summer employment opportunities for youth, and provides a solid foundation to iterate on in the future. The interns, stepping into the workforce for the first time, demonstrated professional growth to their supervisors and personal growth to their parents and the community at large. Their testimonials, coupled with the feedback from parents and supervisors, showed that both the interns and the Tarboro community experienced benefits from this pilot that were well worth the costs to make this program a reality.

I can see the difference it made in my kids...it just seemed like they grew up in that situation. They're going to work, they're spending their money, doing that responsibility portion of it. It's just a process that I think was really beneficial to them.
- Parent

Background

In the summer of 2023, Rural Opportunity Institute (ROI) and the Town of Tarboro, North Carolina launched a high school internship pilot program, the Tarboro Young Civic Leaders Initiative (YCL). The program was designed to help high school students gain professional experience and pursue economic opportunities. The impetus for this pilot program came from ROI's policy listening sessions with the Edgecombe County community in 2022, in which the community identified that the lack of youth employment opportunities was a significant challenge.

This observation is supported by data and research on the topic of youth unemployment. **Research going back to the 1980s** identified that youth unemployment stems primarily from a lack of job opportunities, not (as some might argue) an unwillingness on the part of youth to work. However, the same research suggests that teenagers often need job opportunities presented to them as a push to become part of the workforce. In the past, federal government programs like the Neighborhood Youths Corps and the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act provided funding for youth summer employment opportunities. However federal funding in this area has dwindled, leaving the private and public sectors responsible for hiring teenage workers if they can afford to do so. Data from the **Census Bureau** shows that labor force participation among teenagers 16-19 in Edgecombe County is about half of that for young adults 20-24, yet the unemployment rate of teenagers is significantly higher (12.2% for 16-19 YOs compared to 7.7% for 20-24 YOs). Taken alongside the research, this data supports what community members knew implicitly: many more teens in Edgecombe County want to work than can actually find work opportunities.

The challenges that teens face in finding work are one part of the bigger picture of poverty in the rural, Black Belt South. The vast majority (95 percent) of poor rural Black children live in the South. Systems shaped by the legacies of slavery and racial oppression are important contributors to this, and a lack of skill-building and wage-earning opportunities are also contributing factors. In Edgecombe County specifically, the median family income is just over \$40,000, 45% of households are under 200% of the federal poverty line, and 74% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch (all data are from 2021, the most recent year available).

Exiting poverty is extremely challenging. But research has shown that families living in communities with less social isolation, where upper-class members do not hoard opportunities, are more likely to advance economically than families living in communities where local power relationships prevent connections across the lines of race and class. An important mechanism for individuals exiting poverty is having a cultural toolkit—ways of communicating, ways of being, and social connections—that help them navigate their way into higher earning opportunities.

Again, Edgecombe County community members know this implicitly. In 2017, ROI collaborated with community members to create a systems map identifying how generational trauma, poverty, and punitive systems intersect. Community members identified that having a supportive community, and development of both hard skills and soft skills (like communication and social skills), were important preconditions for career attainment and interrupting the generational cycle of poverty.

The YCL pilot project was intended to create new internships that would provide youth with part-time summer employment and help them build their cultural toolkit, enhancing their ability to pursue future jobs or college, build relevant job skills, and give back to their community. At the same time, the internships were intended to enable local governments to better serve their constituents by adding additional support during the summer months. Before this pilot project, there were little to no summer internship opportunities for youth in the Town of Tarboro or Edgecombe County offices.

ROI led this pilot program with the intention that, if this succeeds over multiple years, the Town of Tarboro would build this program into the Town budget and host summer interns consistently in the future. This pilot project was designed in collaboration with several local leaders, including:

Na'im Akbar: An ROI ambassador with strong community relationships

Andrew Harding: An ROI ambassador and Tarboro High football coach

Travis Stigge: The Town of Tarboro's Parks and Recreation Director

Troy Lewis: The Town of Tarboro Manager

Ultimately, ROI reached an agreement to pilot the internship with the Town of Tarboro. Interns began their positions in June 2023 and completed them in August 2023. Three summer interns were placed in the Town of Tarboro's Parks and Recreation department. Two worked closely with the maintenance staff, and one split their time between the E.L. Roberson Senior Center and the Tarboro Community Pool. Interns were paid \$10.50 per hour, and worked 20-25 hours per week over the course of the internship. Interns also

participated in two trainings: A multi-day Career Readiness Certification training facilitated by the Opportunities Industrialization Center, and a 90-minute Trauma and Resilience 101 Training facilitated by ROI. Finally, ROI facilitated an end-of-program celebration for participating interns, their supervisors, and family members.

This internship pilot program contributes to several aspects of ROI's overall Theory of Change, as outlined in the following table:

High School Internship Pilot Program Contributions to ROI's Theory of Change	
NEAR-TERM RESULTS	
	Community members earn more money and autonomy, through interns building job skills and earning supplemental summer income.
	Public agencies are equipped with the resources and tools to deliver programs, through the additional capacity that interns provide.
	People have increased awareness of trauma, through interns participating in trauma-informed workplace training.
LONGER-TERM IMPACTS:	
	Growth in rural innovation: Edgecombe County is noticed by employers as an innovator in preparing its citizens for the workforce, and attracting employers to the region.
	Just policies and institutions: The Town of Tarboro and Edgecombe County see value in hiring high school students and make it part of their accepted practice.
	Structural Social Change: The internships become a model for other rural communities.

A summary of the design and the desired outcomes of ROI's internship pilot program can be seen in the ROI Internship Program Logic Model, included in [Appendix A](#).

Methodology

To evaluate the success of this internship pilot program, the ROI team facilitating this project worked closely with [Coeffect](#), a nonprofit consulting firm, to design an evaluation and analyze the data. The evaluation was designed to answer four learning questions, which are outlined in the following table.

Q	Learning Question	Why it Matters
1	Town capacity: Is the Town better able to serve its constituents as a result of hosting the internship program?	For summer internships to be worth it for the Town/County, they must see some positive results for their constituents in addition to benefits for interns.
2	Successes and challenges: What are the successes and challenges of this pilot?	Understanding bright spots and challenges will help ROI adjust the internship program in the future.
3	Intern experience: Are interns enjoying the program and is this a valuable use of their time? What does the experience feel like for them?	It is important that interns find the experience valuable, and that they would recommend this kind of internship to their friends to support recruitment.
4	Recruitment: How can ROI recruit more effectively in future years?	Recruitment and matching applicants to intern roles that work with their schedule was a challenge in 2023. It will be important to get a wider pool of applicants and better navigate scheduling challenges in future years.

To answer these questions, data were collected in four ways.

🎯 Intern applications

All interested students completed a brief application, and shared a paragraph about why they would like to serve as interns for the Town of Tarboro. These responses informed the internship program logic model and research questions asked in interviews at the end of the program.

🎯 Intern interviews

Two of the three interns were interviewed by an ROI team member at the end of the internship. These interviews included questions to understand what the interns did during their internship, what they felt were their biggest contributions to the Town of Tarboro, what they personally gained from their internship, and the bright spots and challenges they experienced. In addition, all three interns participated in a panel conversation facilitated by Na'im at the internship celebration, exploring many of the same questions as well as additional questions from parents and community members.

🎯 Parent interviews

One parent, the father of two of the interns who were siblings, was interviewed at the end of the internship. This interview included questions to understand the parent's perspective on what their high school students gained from the internship and any challenges the parent experienced with the program.

🎯 Supervisor focus group

Three intern supervisors participated in a focus group at the end of the internship program. This focus group included questions to understand supervisors' perspectives on the interns' effectiveness and contribution to running the Town's summer programs.

Discussion guides for the interviews and focus groups named above are included in [Appendix B](#).

Results

Based on the data collected from interns, parents, and supervisors, the internship pilot program succeeded in helping interns build college and career readiness and was an enjoyable and valuable experience. In addition, the interns provided additional hands to the Town of Tarboro that helped the Parks and Recreation department serve its constituents. Overall, the results of the pilot program are encouraging and match ROI's expectations for the project.

Looking at each of our learning questions, ROI learned:

🕒 Intern experience

Interns enjoyed working with the Town over the summer. Parents also felt that the internship experience was valuable, and helped their child build a sense of responsibility and independence.

🕒 Town capacity

The Town was slightly better able to serve its constituents in the areas that interns were placed in. Supervisors agreed that they would have been able to accomplish the same objectives without the interns, but the interns provided additional hands that helped them tackle certain tasks more quickly and/or free up the supervisor to focus on more complex projects.

🕒 Successes and challenges

Interns succeeded at building relevant job and life skills, especially people skills. They enhanced their resumes for applying to college or future employment. Interns also felt the program allowed them to give back to their community and serve as role models. Recruiting interns was a primary challenge. Supervisors also experienced some challenges with finding appropriate tasks for interns in their departments.

🕒 Recruitment

In future years, ROI should begin recruitment for the internship earlier, provide a wider range of potential internship positions, and cultivate more ambassadors (former interns, coaches and educators) to support intern recruitment.

Intern Experience

All of the interns shared that they enjoyed working with the Town over the summer, and this sentiment was supported by their parents and interns.

"I think it was a great experience."

- Intern

"I think it was a good thing for the kids this summer. I think it kind of changed [my kid] to bring them out to be around other people."

- Parent

"They loved it. They really enjoyed it."

- Parent

When asked if they would recommend this internship to other students in the future, each of the three interns agreed. Further, each intern was able to share something that they enjoyed about their work (i.e., working with seniors, setting up athletic fields, maintaining park equipment).

Similarly, when supervisors were asked if they would work with an ROI intern again the following summer, all agreed on the basis that the internship seemed to be a positive experience for students.

"I think it was a good positive experience for them."

- Supervisor

The additional training provided to interns—a multi-day Career Readiness Certification and a 90-minute Trauma and Resilience 101 Training—were also valuable experiences. In the interviews, interns identified something they learned from each training and how they applied their knowledge afterward.

Town Capacity

Interviews with interns, parents, and supervisors revealed that the Town was slightly better able to serve its constituents in the areas where interns were placed. Specifically, interns supported the Parks and Recreation department by working in park maintenance and landscaping, setting up for summer athletics programs, preparing food at the E.L. Roberson Senior Center, and supporting cashiers at the Tarboro Community Pool.

Supervisors agreed that they would have been able to accomplish the same objectives without the interns, but the interns provided additional hands that helped them tackle certain tasks more quickly and/or free up the supervisor to focus on more complex projects.

As discussed more in the successes and challenges section below, supervisors acknowledged

“The main thing was just having a couple of extra hands. We only have three normally on our crew, and so having two extra people gives us 66 percent more. So we were able to accomplish some things that we really needed the extra manpower for.”
- Supervisor

“Having our intern in the kitchen [helped them] get them a little bit ahead of the game for each day.”
- Supervisor

“I don't think they were having a hard time. But we helped them out to get it done quicker.”
- Intern

the benefits of having extra hands were sometimes offset by the challenges of finding appropriate tasks to give to interns and overseeing their work. However, on the whole, the supervisors agreed that the interns' contribution balanced out the additional responsibilities and didn't harm their ability to serve the Town of Tarboro well.

Successes

Interns succeeded in building relevant job and life skills from their internship. One common area of growth mentioned by interns and their parents was their sense of responsibility and independence. For each of the interns, this was their first paid job and provided exposure to an environment where they needed to show up on time and

complete tasks to earn a paycheck. Earning their own money enabled interns to have more independence. For example, one intern was able to pay for their own gas and car repairs so they could get to and from their internship.

“I think just the exposure to work and having somebody to answer to is the biggest thing for them.”
- Supervisor

“I can see the difference it made in my kids...it just seemed like they grew up in that situation. They're going to work, they're spending their money, doing that responsibility portion of it. It's just a process that I think was really beneficial to them.”
- Parent

Another common area of growth mentioned by interns, supervisors and parents was building people skills. The internship provided interns with the opportunity to interact with a wide range of people who are customers of the Town's Parks and Recreation department.

“They were able to learn different things about the Town of Tarboro...working with different people, interacting with different people.”
- Parent

“I think [the intern] is such a quiet-natured person. I think interacting with the amount of people they saw daily here forced them to open up a little bit more, and I think that was good for them.”
- Supervisor

Other important benefits named by interns and parents included being able to include the internship on resumes and college applications, having more appreciation for the work that city employees do, and being proud of their contribution to their community. When they were asked about their favorite part of their internship, interns pointed to specific bright spots:

“My favorite part was when we filled in the mulch at different parks. We did it at Braswell and after we finished it we just saw all the little kids come out running and jumping all in it and that was a happy experience.”
- Intern

“My favorite part was the maintenance part. I'm a very hands-on person and being able to make [the playgrounds] look better, make it look safe, I really liked that part.”
- Intern

Interns shared that without this internship program, they wouldn't have been working over the summer. As one intern put it, they would have been “just chillin', playin football.” Another shared, “I have a lot of friends that just sit around the house and don't do anything. This could really benefit them.”

Challenges

Recruitment was a primary challenge for this internship pilot program. Given the timing of the city's approval for the program, ROI couldn't begin recruiting interns until the school year was over and relied on community ambassadors including coach Andrew Harding to get the word out to students. Ultimately ROI had five students apply in 2023, and was able to offer positions to 3 interns.

Supervisors also experienced some challenges with finding appropriate tasks for interns in their departments. For example, two interns had to navigate around morning football practices and worked with the Parks and Recreation department in the afternoons. This proved challenging in some cases, as the department typically tackles more effortful maintenance tasks in the morning, during cooler hours. Supervisors agreed that while they at times had to "try to find stuff for the interns," they were generally able to keep them busy and having the extra capacity was useful.

Recruitment

As mentioned previously, ROI could not begin recruiting interns until the school year was over, and recruitment proved to be a challenge. The primary recommendation from interns, parents, and supervisors related to recruiting was to continue recruiting through Tarboro High School and start the recruitment process earlier. Other suggestions included expanding recruitment to other Edgecombe County high schools, cultivating more ambassadors (former interns, coaches, and educators) to support recruitment, and broadening the departments that interns can work with so the program might appeal to students who have an interest in other kinds of summer roles (e.g., Town planning, police, fire, accounting, etc.).

Next Steps

Given the initial success of this pilot, ROI intends to continue this program in the summer of 2024. Opportunities for program evolution identified through the conversations held with interns, parents, and supervisors are listed below:

🕒 Provide greater variety of internship options

Expand the number of Town departments offering part-time summer internships to provide more internship opportunities and a wider variety of work. Ideally next year the Town can offer 6-10 internship positions across multiple departments.

"I know currently we're the only department that has part-time [interns]. Maybe coordinate with some of the other departments to try to see if they can create a summer part-time position... Maybe you have a kid who's looking to go into finance in the future. They might want to learn something more in the office and get their feet wet with that type of thing... instead of just physical labor."

– Supervisor

🕒 Recruit earlier in the spring

Begin recruitment earlier, so students can apply before the end of the school year. In addition, consider if recruitment should target specific student groups that might face particularly high barriers to gaining work experience (e.g., youth with juvenile justice system involvement, youth in alternative high school, or youth with disabilities). Ideally, ROI can get 10-15 applicants for its next summer internship cohort in 2024.

🕒 Continue to engage alumni

ROI and the Town will facilitate another end-of-program celebration highlighting intern accomplishments. ROI will also engage former interns to serve as ambassadors for the program and on ROI's Community Accountability Board.

In addition, opportunities exist to improve the internship evaluation process in the future.

○ **Learning questions:** Given what was learned during this first year, ROI may adjust the learning questions prioritized in 2024. Suggested learning questions for next year include:

- ⊙ How has the Town's capacity to serve its constituents changed in the areas where interns were engaged? When and where did interns increase capacity, and when and where did they limit capacity?
- ⊙ Are interns enjoying the program?
- ⊙ How has the internship impacted interns' sense of independence and self-esteem?
- ⊙ Are interns developing job and life skills as a result of participating in this internship? If so, which skills?

○ **Data collection:** Collecting data through interviews with interns and parents, and a supervisor focus group, worked well in 2023. Some adjustments to consider for 2024 include:

- ⊙ Scheduling interviews with interns and parents before the program celebration, so the celebration can provide an opportunity to follow up with any who we haven't yet reached.
- ⊙ Consider adding a survey for interns to complete exploring job and life skills. Ideally, this survey is administered at an in-person training towards the end of the internship to promote a high response rate. Areas of job and life skills to consider can be found in the following toolkits:
 - [LeadLocal Internship Evaluation Guide](#)
 - [University of Minnesota Internship Toolkit for Employers](#)
 - [Society for Human Resource Management Student Internship Evaluation](#)
 - [National Association of Colleges and Employers \(NACE\) Career Readiness Competencies](#)
- ⊙ Follow up with the 2023 interns in 2024, asking how their experience impacted them and their plans for the future. Given the very small sample size (three interns) this need not be a formal evaluation, but allows ROI to maintain these relationships and begin to understand whether these internships are influencing students' longer-term plans and goals.

THANK YOU

ROI would like to thank all of the interns who participated in this project, their parents, and the supervisors at the Town of Tarboro who provided coaching and guidance. Without their willingness to try something new, this pilot program would not have been possible.

This project would also not have been possible without the support and commitment of ROI's ambassadors, and leaders at the Town of Tarboro and Edgecombe County Public Schools, including:

- ⊙ Na'im Akbar
- ⊙ Andrew Harding
- ⊙ Travis Stigge
- ⊙ Troy Lewis
- ⊙ The Tarboro Town Council, who funded this project

APPENDIX A: ROI Internship Program Logic Model

ROI Town of Tarboro Internship Logic Model

What is Needed?		What is Created?		What is Sustained?	
Resources	Activities	Outputs	SHORT TERM Outcomes 1-3 YEARS	LONG TERM Outcomes 4-6 YEARS	Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Na'im Akbar: Ambassador with strong community relationships • Andrew Harding: Ambassador with strong relationships, especially at Tarboro High/football team • Travis Stigge: Parks & Rec Director, strong commitment to internship experience + experienced mentor • Other ECPS relationships • Support from Troy Lewis (Tarboro Town Manager) and Eric Evans (County Manager) • Support from Town Council • Funding from Town • ROI processes • ROI resilience training framework/ curriculum + trainers • ROI systems map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town of Tarboro employs 3 interns for a 2-month internship, part-time (20-25 hours per week). Paid at \$10.50 per hour • Recruitment - ROI conducts through Ambassadors • Andy checks in with interns once a week • ROI coordinates with Town and County to shape internship, write MOU, etc. • ROI conducts trauma-informed training for interns • ROI conducts a celebration for the interns with local stakeholders at the end of the internship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 interns complete Town of Tarboro program in Summer 2023 at 20-25 hours per week • Town gets 60-70 more hours per week delivering services • 3 interns complete ROI resilience training • Lessons learned report to inform next iteration of internship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of interns report that this internship improved their ability to pursue college or future jobs • 100% of interns report that the internship helped them clarify their career goals • Over 50% of Parks & Rec supervisors report improvement in interns' employability • Over 75% of Parks & Rec supervisors report that the internship improved their ability to serve their constituents • Interns feel that they are giving back to the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tarboro + Edgecombe County combine to employ at least 15 high schoolers over the summer by 2028 • The Tarboro + Edgecombe County internships are established as part of the respective budgets • Interns use the experience to help them achieve career and educational goals • Internships are seen as a good opportunity by students: at least 50 students apply for each • Employers (not just Town/County) are more likely to have confidence in hiring graduates of this program • Interns continue to build in-demand job skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth in rural innovation: Edgecombe is getting noticed by employers as an innovator in preparing its citizens for the workforce, and attracting employers to the region • Just policies and institutions: The Town and County see value in hiring high schoolers and make it part of their accepted practice • Structural Social Change: The internships become a model for other rural communities

APPENDIX B: Data Collection Tools

Intern Interviews

Context & Timing: On or near the end-of-internship celebration scheduled for 8/24.

Introduction: Hello [student], my name is Graham, and I work with the Rural Opportunity Institute. I would like to spend the next 15-20 minutes talking with you about your summer internship experience. The information you provide in this interview will help us understand the impact you and your fellow interns have made, the benefits of this experience for interns, and identify ways we can improve the experience for students in the coming year.

Before we start, I want to emphasize that your story will remain confidential. If we come to any question you do not wish to answer, you can simply say "pass." I will be recording this discussion so we can transcribe what you share, but the recordings will not contain any identifying information beyond what you tell me. The recording will be transcribed, anonymized to remove any identifying information, and all recordings will be deleted after transcription is complete. The data from this group will be combined with information gathered from parents and your employers before presenting these results to the Town of Tarboro and the school district. Your name and other identifying characteristics will not be tied to your responses.

Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

Questions:

Q	Question	Learning Priority
1	Tell us the story of what you did in your internship. Probing questions to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were your tasks and the projects you worked on? • What did the internship experience feel like? • Did you like this internship? 	3. Are interns enjoying the program / is this a valuable use of their time? What does the experience feel like for them?
2	What are the most important things you think you and your other interns accomplished for the Town?	1. Is the Town / County better able to serve its constituents as a result of hosting the internship program?
3	What were the most important things you gained from this internship? Probing questions to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has this internship helped you clarify your career goals? Why or why not? • Did this internship help you build any important job or life skills? What skills? • Has this impacted your self-esteem or confidence? How so? • Do you think this internship will help you pursue college or other jobs in the future? Why or why not? • Did you feel like you were giving back to your community in your internship? 	3. Are interns enjoying the program / is this a valuable use of their time? What does the experience feel like for them?
4	What was one highlight or the bright spot you experienced during your internship? Tell us about that.	2. What are the successes and challenges of this pilot?

Q	Question	Learning Priority
5	What were some of the challenges you experienced during your internship? Probing questions to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you feel about your onboarding to the position? • How was your relationship with your supervisor? 	2. What are the successes and challenges of this pilot?
6	During this internship, we offered two trainings: A multi-day Career Readiness Certification training, and a 90-minute Trauma and Resilience 101 Training. Do you think those trainings were a good use of your internship time? Why or why not?	2. What are the successes and challenges of this pilot?
7	One of the things that was difficult for us this year was recruiting enough students interested in interning with the Town. What advice would you give us to recruit students better next year?	4. How can we recruit more effectively in future years?
8	Is there anything else you'd like to share with us?	N/A

Parent Interviews

Context & Timing: On or near the end-of-internship celebration scheduled for 8/24.

Introduction: Hello [parent name], my name is Graham, and I work with the Rural Opportunity Institute. I would like to spend the next 10-15 minutes talking with you about your student's summer internship experience. The information you provide in this interview will help us understand the impact our interns have made, the benefits for interns, and identify ways we can improve the experience for student and parents in the coming year.

Before we start, I want to emphasize that this interview is completely confidential, and your participation is voluntary. If we come to any question you do not wish to answer, you can simply say "pass." I will be recording these interviews so we can transcribe them, but the recordings will not contain any identifying information and your comments will be combined with information gathered from interns and their employers before presenting these results to the Town of Tarboro and the school district. Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

Questions:

Q	Question	Learning Priority
1	What did your student share with you about their experience as an intern? Probing questions to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did your student feel about their internship? Did they like the internship? 	3. Are interns enjoying the program / is this a valuable use of their time? What does the experience feel like for them?
2	What were the most important things your student gained from this internship? Probing questions to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has this internship helped them clarify their career goals? Why or why not? Did this internship help them build any important job or life skills? Do you think this internship will help them pursue college or other jobs in the future? Why or why not? 	3. Are interns enjoying the program / is this a valuable use of their time? What does the experience feel like for them?

Q	Question	Learning Priority
6	What were some of the bright spots and challenges for you as a parent during your child's internship? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did your student get to the internship? Was transportation and/or the timing of the internship a challenge? 	2. What are the successes and challenges of this pilot?
7	During this internship, we offered two trainings: A multi-day Career Readiness Certification training, and a 90-minute Trauma and Resilience 101 Training. Did your student share anything with you about these trainings? If so, what did they say?	2. What are the successes and challenges of this pilot?
8	One of the things that was difficult for us this year was recruiting enough students interested in interning with the Town. How did your student get involved in this internship? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did they hear about the internship? Did you have to persuade them to participate? What advice would you give us to recruit students better next year? 	4. How can we recruit more effectively in future years?
6	Is there anything else you'd like to share with us?	N/A

Town Employee Focus Group

Context & Timing: Early August, before the end-of-internship celebration on 8/24.

Focus Group Introduction: Hello ____! My name is Graham, and I work with the Rural Opportunity Institute. I would like to spend the next 10-15 minutes talking with you about your experience working with ROI interns this summer. The information you provide in this interview will help us understand the impact our interns have made, the benefits for interns, and identify ways we can improve the experience for students and employers in the coming year.

Before we start, I want to emphasize that this interview is completely confidential, and your participation is voluntary. If we come to any question you do not wish to answer, you can simply say “pass.” I will be recording these interviews so we can transcribe them, but the recordings will not contain any identifying information and your comments will be combined with information gathered from interns and their parents before sharing these results to the Town of Tarboro and the school district. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Questions:

Q	Question	Learning Priority
1	What did your student share with you about their experience as an intern? Probing questions to con	N/A - contextual information
2	What were the most important things your student gained from this internship? Probing questions to consider	N/A - contextual information
3	What are the most important things your interns helped your team accomplish this summer?	1. Is the Town / County better able to serve its constituents as a result of hosting the internship program?
4	How did having interns affect your team's ability to serve your constituents?	1. Is the Town / County better able to serve its constituents as a result of hosting the internship program?

Q	Question	Learning Priority
5	How would you rate your intern's overall performance this summer?	1. Is the Town / County better able to serve its constituents as a result of hosting the internship program?
6	What were the most important things your interns gained from this internship?	3. Are interns enjoying the program / is this a valuable use of their time? What does the experience feel like for them?
7	How do you think the job experience your interns gained this summer will impact their employability in the future?	3. Are interns enjoying the program / is this a valuable use of their time? What does the experience feel like for them?
8	What were the most important things you personally gained (if anything) from working with or around interns?	2. What are the successes and challenges of this pilot?
9	What were some of the challenges you experienced while working with interns this summer?	2. What are the successes and challenges of this pilot?
10	This summer we offered two trainings to ROI Interns: A multi-day Career Readiness Certification training, and a 90-minute Trauma and Resilience 101 Training. Did participating in these trainings get in the way of your interns performing their job duties?	2. What are the successes and challenges of this pilot?
11	Would you want to work with an ROI intern again next summer? Why or why not?	2. What are the successes and challenges of this pilot?
12	Would you say the pros of extra workers outweighed the burden of scheduling and mentoring?	2. What are the successes and challenges of this pilot?
13	One of the things that was difficult for us this year was recruiting enough students interested in interning with the Town. What advice would you give us to recruit students more effectively next year?	2. What are the successes and challenges of this pilot?
14	Is there anything else you'd like to share with us?	N/A



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