



PAID COLLEGE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM WILL CONTINUE FOR SECOND YEAR, ENGAGING STUDENTS FROM UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN ART MUSEUMS

New York, NY—September 12, 2019—The Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) today announced that it will continue its paid internship program for a second year. A pilot initiative launched by AAMD last year, the program’s goal is to engage undergraduate students from underrepresented backgrounds and nurture their career opportunities in the art museum field—while providing the stipend necessary to support these students’ expenses. In its first year, ten students were selected and provided with a 12-week long, paid internship at selected AAMD member museums, offering each intern exposure to a range of museum departments. Based on positive feedback from both participating interns and member art museums, AAMD has committed to continue the program for another year.

“We are excited to continue our internship program after a successful pilot year, which demonstrates the value of connecting students with art museums and supporting their opportunities to learn about museum careers,” said Christine Anagnos, AAMD’s Executive Director. “Providing paid summer internships to students is an important step in addressing the persistent limitations on access to job-related experience, and particularly the disproportionate effect these limitations have on people of Asian, Black, Hispanic, Native American, or multiracial backgrounds. Supporting a diverse pipeline of people entering the field will enrich and enliven the next generation of art museum professionals.”

As in the first year, AAMD will select 10 member art museums to host one intern each; interns will then be paired with host museums in their home or university town. Each intern will be assigned to work on at least one defined project, so that they will be able to see the culmination of their work at the end of the summer. The program is only available to undergraduate students in their sophomore, junior, or senior years, to provide opportunity for students who have begun to solidify their academic interests and potential career path. The application process to be a host institution for the program will open this fall, with internships beginning in spring or summer 2019; interns will receive a stipend of \$6,300 over 12 weeks.

“Thanks to AAMD’s internship program, the McNay leaned even further into its noble mission this summer of engaging a diverse community in the discovery and enjoyment of the visual arts,” said Richard Aste, Director of the McNay Art Museum, in San Antonio. “Our intern, Grey Gamboa, brought a vital voice to the table, ensuring the summer exhibition *Transamerica/n: Gender, Identity, Appearance Today* represented the broad, beautiful spectrum of gender authentically throughout. His input and participation in all related exhibition programming was invaluable, and our staff learned as much from him as he did from us.”

Each intern in AAMD’s program is also paired with a mentor—a member of the host museum’s senior leadership team—who is responsible for directing their activities and providing overall counsel on their professional development. Because mentors can be so crucial to the development of a person’s career, this approach encourages the kind of long-term relationship-building that is often essential to an individual’s success in the field. During the term of their internship, mentors ensure that there are opportunities for conversation, feedback, direction, and questions. Mentors will also help support their intern’s professional networking at selected museum field conferences during and after their internship period, with support for travel expenses also provided by the program.

Aylen Mercado, who graduated from Rhodes College in May 2019, interned at the Mississippi Museum of Art during the summer 2019. She said that the internship was “an opportunity to not only step deeper into a career in art museums but also to learn from the innovative art and community work going on in Mississippi,” through the Museum’s Center for Art and Public Exchange (CAPE) initiative. As a result Aylen said, “My studies, combined with my time interning at MMA and the people I have met, have made me feel more confident about pursuing a PhD that combines sociology and art.”

AAMD will continue to assess outcomes from the program, to inform future planning and development, including written reports assessing the program, the goals, and the outcomes, to be submitted by both interns and the host museums. Museums will also be asked to provide a performance review of the intern, and interns will be asked to provide a self-assessment.

The first year of this program was supported by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional financial and logistical support was provided by AAMD and participating member museums.

About AAMD

The Association of Art Museum Directors advances the profession by cultivating leadership capabilities of directors, advocating for the field, and fostering excellence in art museums. An agile, issues-driven organization, AAMD has three desired outcomes: engagement, leadership, and shared learning. Further information about AAMD’s professional practice guidelines and position papers is available at www.aamd.org.



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