UM Financial Education Program
Edited by Emily Pritchard

Holly Wright, Financial Education Program Manager for the UM Financial Education Program, and her team assist the UM community make sound financial decisions about student loans and other personal finances. “We have had an intern for only one semester but our intern allowed us to completely revamp our graphics and publications giving us a unified image for the program.” Read on to find out more about this great program and how students can get involved as interns.

What is the UM Financial Education Program?

“The goal of the Financial Education program is to empower the UM community to make informed financial choices and take action to improve their present and long-term financial well-being. We assist students, employees and alumni at UM, Missoula College and Bitterroot College in learning about student loans and personal finance so they have the tools needed to manage their finances correctly.”

What specific education services do you provide for UM students?

“We assist students in learning about Federal Student Aid (How do you get aid? What types of aid are best? How can you limit the debt you take on?) and personal finance (How do you start budgeting? Where can you find your credit report? How much do you need in an emergency fund?).”

What do you like about working for this program?

“I have been working for the UM Financial Education Program since January 2014. I love being a part of a solution to a large problem. Student loan debt effects so many individuals and there are so many people who are uninformed of the ways to handle their student loans; it’s exciting to have some of the answers to the questions they are asking.”

How does having UM student interns help your program?

“We have had an intern for only one semester, but our intern allowed us to completely revamp our graphics and publications giving us a unified image for the program. She worked efficiently and thoroughly to make sure that we achieved the image we wanted but also added her expertise and creativity at appropriate instances.”

Impressive! What was her schedule like?

“Our intern worked about 3 hours per week for the semester. Her schedule was flexible to fit around her classes and workload.”
What is the work environment like for a student intern with the UM Financial Education Program?

“We started this internship with the understanding that our intern would be full-fledged member of the team; their ideas are treated as important, I take their comments into consideration just like I would any other of my staff members. Giving them that sense of belonging allows them to be more creative and confident in the tasks I assign to them.”

Do you have any advice for students seeking internships or other experiences in your field?

“Get involved with an internship that will allow you to gain experience for the job you want in the future. Simply having a degree isn’t enough anymore, you need to have some amount of experience going into a job search so that you can distinguish yourself from the other applicants.”

How do you advertise your internship opportunities?

“We advertised to students in the majors that pertained to the internship. The Media Arts majors have the graphics skills that we needed for this position so we contacted the Media Arts majors when we were searching for applicants for this position. We’ve only had one intern and that position was a credit-only internship.”

Would you recommend hosting an intern to other companies/organizations?

“Yes! Our intern was able to provide us with good services and in exchange we were able to help her with her professional development and familiarity with many other services provided to students on campus.”

Where can students go for more information about the UM Financial Education Program?

“Our front desk is located in GrizCentral and students are welcome to stop by to set up an appointment or get a question answered. We can also be reached at 406-243-6016 or FinancialEducation@umontana.edu or online at http://www.umt.edu/financial-education/ “