

Update on the Innovative Internship Fund and Program

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EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

SENATE FINANCE AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

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STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER
EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA

Why are Internships Important?



Internships bridge the gap between learning and earning by providing "sticky" pathways for students and employers to learn about each other without waiting for entry-level opportunities.



Internships enable students to connect what they are learning in class to the world of work while heightening the relevance of higher education to their career goals.



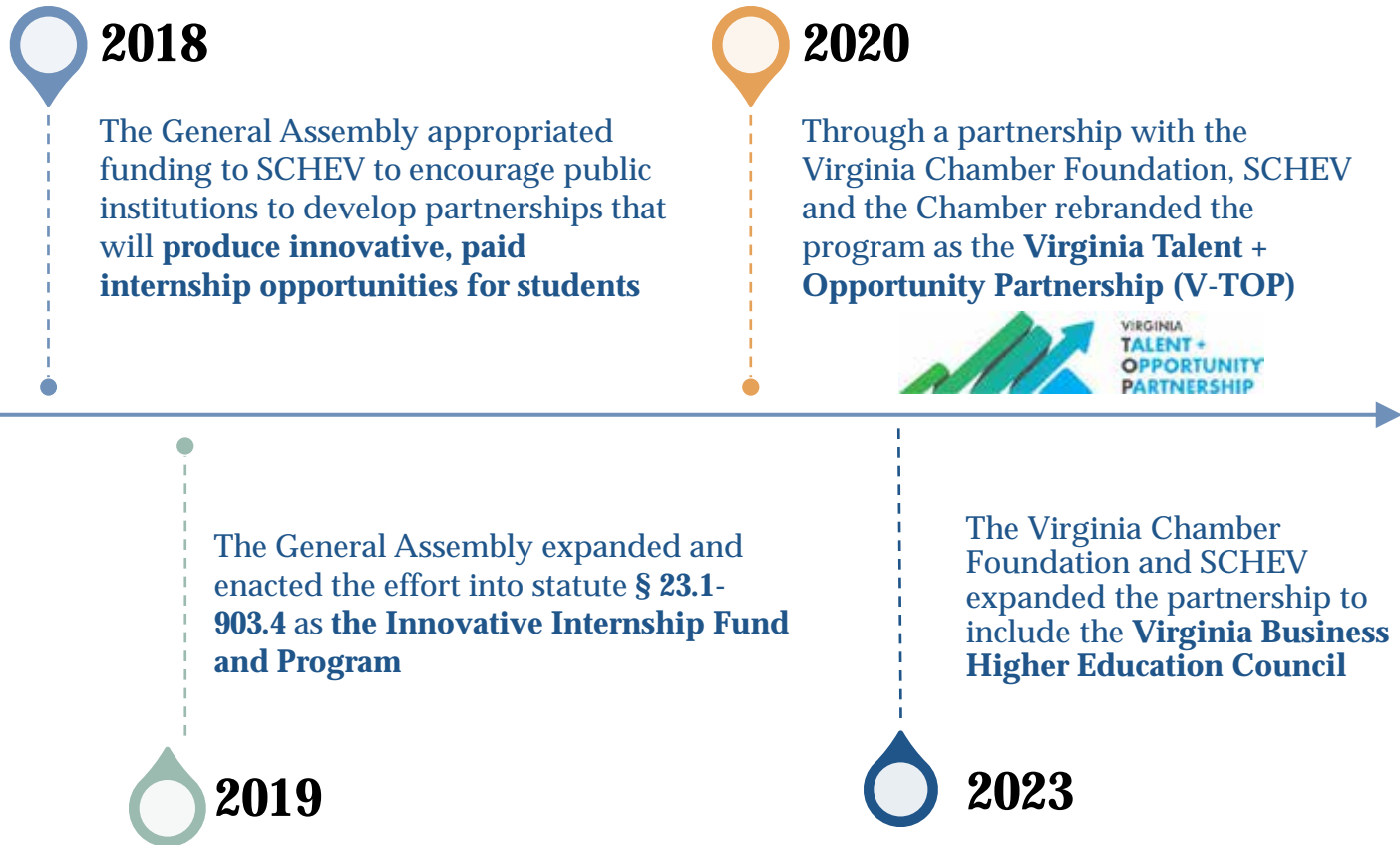
Internships serve as vehicles for preparing Virginia's talent pool, fostering meaningful relationships between higher education institutions and Virginia employers and retaining graduates in Virginia through employment.



Students benefit, institutions benefit and employers benefit = Virginia benefits!

How Does Virginia Support Internships?

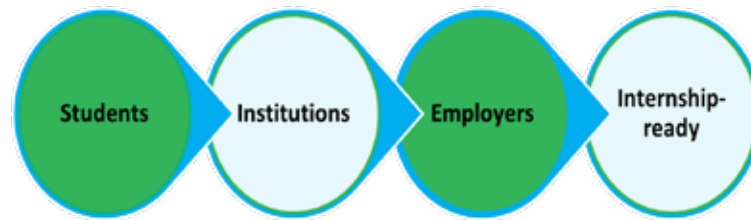
V-TOP Partnership Development



V-TOP is funded through the Commonwealth Innovative Internship Fund (\$5M in FY2023 and \$12M in FY2024).

Goals of V-TOP

- Ensure the most internship-ready students, employers and institutions of higher education



- Every graduate of a Virginia two-year and four-year institution has participated in at least one paid or credit-bearing student internship or work-based learning (WBL) opportunity.

V-TOP's Pioneering Approach

Virginia is leading the way on statewide internship efforts through V-TOP's **eight** unique features:



Comprehensive program involving students, institutions and employers



Statewide commitment by the presidents of public colleges and universities



System-building at the regional level



Statewide staffing agency, with a focus on small businesses



Matching funds for some students' internship wages



Transformation of federal work-study to be more internship-like



Potential impact of SB 1280 (2023) to incorporate internship experiences into degree programs



Significant partnerships with leading business and higher education organizations

V-TOP Student-Readiness Activities

- Developed and launched free [online learning modules](#) for students, including “Developing Career Readiness Skills” and “Student Internship Toolkit” (more than **1,000** users since November 2022).
- Piloted the [Commonwealth of Virginia \(COVA\) Internship Connection](#) summer program in partnership with the Department of Human Resource Management by enhancing state agency internships and [offering professional development](#) to **85** student interns.
- Secured proclamation by Governor Youngkin for July 28, 2022, and July 27, 2023, to be known as Virginia Intern Day.

V-TOP Employer-Readiness Activities

- Awarded Regional Collaborative Grants to **nine** V-TOP (GO Virginia) Regions to build capacity and deploy state-developed internship resources regionally.
- Procured a statewide staffing agency to eliminate intern hiring barriers for Virginia-based small businesses (250 or fewer employees). Since August 2023, **30+** employers are participating in the program with **12** students placed in an internship.
- Allocated matching funds for Virginia-based small businesses (150 or fewer employees) to create paid internships.
- Fostered best practices for mentored internships by acquiring **108** mentorship training slots through Mentor VA for employers, supervisors and students.
- Recognized **100** top employers on Virginia Intern Day on July 27, 2023 (**69%** increase from 2022).

V-TOP Institutional-Readiness Activities

Grants to various institutions (2-year, 4-year, public and private) focused on:

- Strategic planning/Visioning to **nine** institutions (eight public, one private);
- Expanding internship access to underserved students through the transformation of federal work-study.
- Institutional Readiness Student Support and Institutional Data Collection - received **12** responses from four-year public institutions for both grants.
- Professional development to career practitioners or internship coordinators.
- Work-ethic curriculum resources for **three** community colleges via the Mike Rowe Works work ethic certification training.

Completed the work for the Council of Presidents
Workgroup on Data Governance

State-Level Milestones

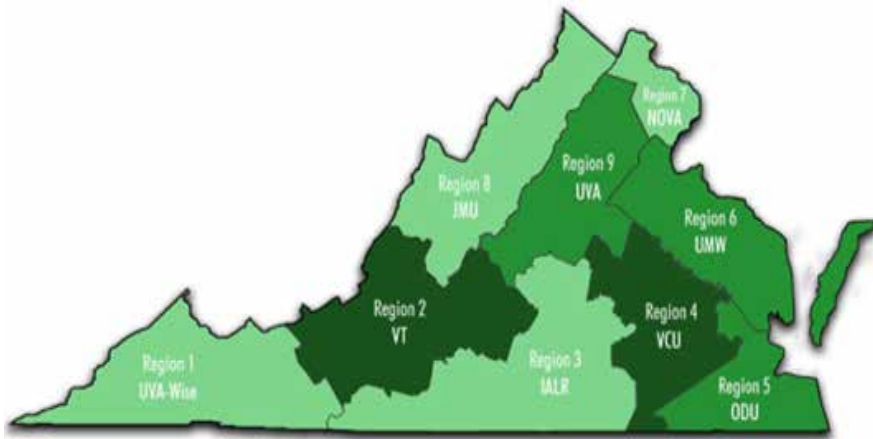
- Established baseline data outcomes to measure success: SCHEV/V-TOP conducted a credit-bearing internship outcomes report from 2020-2022.
 - AY19-20 (**22,946**), AY20-21 (**19,455**), and AY 21-22 (**21,228**)
- Collaborated with the Department of Human Resource Management to pilot (successfully) the Commonwealth of Virginia (COVA) summer program.
- Expanded SCHEV staff capacity, hiring **two** new full-time staff: Fiscal Services Specialist and Work-Based Learning Analyst.
- Increased state and national awareness by presenting at over **35** conferences/workshops/large scale events including:
 - VA Chamber/VBHEC annual Education & Workforce Conference
 - Southern Association of Colleges and Employers (SoACE)
 - VCCS Hire Education Conference
 - Virginia Association of Colleges and Employers
 - Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium (MERC) podcast

V-TOP Regional Approach

Regional Model

The resources developed at the state-level are available through regional grantees.

Regional grantees are based on the GO (Growth and Opportunity) Virginia model and are mostly led by public institutions.



Activities in Regions



Annual regional work-based learning events (e.g., internship summits, college “jams”)



Employer information sessions, webinars and virtual office hours



Employer coffee chats and lunch-and-learns for small and minority businesses



Internship and early-career expo events



Regional roundtables hosted by the Virginia Business Higher Education Council (VBHEC)

V-TOP Major Expenditures



Employer Readiness

\$250,000

**Small-to-Midsize
business grant
program to partially
offset the cost of
creating new
internships**



Institutional Readiness

\$1,000,000

**State funding to
institutions to help
create/expand
internship
opportunities**



Student Readiness

1,000+ users

**Free online career-
readiness and student
internship toolkit
modules**

Next Steps for 2024

Expand internal capacity to scale V-TOP

- Hire additional V-TOP Staff – Associate for Work-Based Learning Initiative
- Expand the Commonwealth of Virginia (COVA) Connection Internship program and involve state agencies and student interns.

Address data collection needs and legislative outcomes

- Compile and complete the credit-bearing internship report for AY 2022-2023
- Complete the Annual Progress Report in collaboration with the Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement § 23.1-903.4
- Explore student survey options: National Survey of College Internships (NSCI), National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE).
- Monitor the outcomes and recommendations of the SB 1280 Workgroup (2023; Dunnivant)

Increase engagement in the following areas:

- **125** students utilizing the statewide staffing agency
- **200** employer nominations for V-TOP's Top employers for interns awards
- Employer, student and institution internship mentoring activities in collaboration with Mentor Virginia
- Regional engagement with area employers
- Development, launch and use of career champions online learning modules
- **~\$4 million** in grant resources to institutions for internship-focused strategic planning and implementation; internship data collection; and student support to increase access (i.e., housing and transportation internship barriers)

Evaluate initiatives and outcomes using external evaluator

- Utilize Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium (MERC) resources and recommendations
- Support agreed-upon talent pathways and definitions for internships and work-based learning experiences