

"Everyone wants to think of education as an equalizer — the place where upward mobility gets started," said Greg J. Duncan, an economist at the University of California, Irvine. "But on virtually every measure we have, the gaps between high- and low-income kids are widening. It's very disheartening."

Our First Newsletter...

Welcome to Advantage Points!

We appreciate the tremendous enthusiasm, interest and support that so many people have shown for STEM Advantage and the students we will mentor, prepare and inspire to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math.

We're official!

STEM Advantage recently received 501(c)(3) non-profit designation

it Not only does this make us an official public benefit charity, but it also means that donations are tax deductible.

We can accept your gifts through our new website as well, so please visit www.stemadvantage.org

Internships

We are working with Fox Group, DIRECTV, SpaceX, Toyota Financial Services, and a few others to be announced soon to provide internships to our first group of students. I don't know about you, but I want to go back to school and be a STEM Advantage intern! Thank you to these companies for the tremendous response we have received from their CIO's and talent acquisition leaders to our program. We even have companies in Orange County and Pasadena who want to provide internships when we expand to those areas.

It is hard for companies today to find candidates trained in STEM majors who can fill their growing science, technology and engineering positions. By partnering with STEM Advantage, they are helping to inspire high achieving, pre-screened, qualified college students to choose STEM majors. In addition, they are helping to prepare them for STEM-related jobs upon graduation by gaining relevant and practical real-world experience. Participation in this program adds the additional support from the university and mentors to complement their existing internship programs while providing a diverse pipeline of candidates who have interned at their company prior to graduation.

If you are interested in providing a paid IT-related internship for one or two students, and are located within a reasonable driving distance from Cal State Dominguez Hills, please contact Cindy McKenzie at cindy@stemadvantage.org.

Mentorships

Showing interest, mentoring, and encouraging students can make a significant difference. Thank you to executives from Fox Entertainment, Sony Pictures, Toyota Financial Services, Ernst & Young, Über Geek Girl (founder Jessica DeVita is awesome and a role model for young women!), Alvarez and Marshall, and others who have agreed to be mentors.

Mentoring is a way to give back to your professional community and share your wealth of wisdom with someone who will use it to launch their STEM-related career. The time commitment is small, but the impact is enormous and can last a lifetime for students and you. (and yours'). We are looking for both senior leaders and recent college graduates, in STEM related fields. We believe this combination can provide the optimal assistance and guidance to our students as they go through our program.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please contact Michelle Elkins at michelle@stemadvantage.org.

Student Selection Timeline

We are very excited to soon kick-off our pilot with Cal State Dominguez Hills! We are working closely with Dr. Mohsen Beheshti, Chair of Computer Science, to integrate with the academic calendar.

Here's our general timeline:

- February – discuss program, including requirements to apply and maintain participation, with students enrolled full-time in the BS of Computer Science or BA of Computer Technology program
- February 28 – applications due
- March – review applications, conduct interviews and select students
- March 31 – announce students selected for the pilot

- April – pair up mentors and mentees and hold kick-off dinner
- May – conduct IT Career and Personal Development Curriculum Workshop: Workplace Etiquette for pilot students; open to all students enrolled in the Computer Science/Technology programs
- June – begin internships
- September – receive full scholarship for one year, renewable based on maintaining requirements to stay in program

The Wine House Welcome

We set the bar high for future events with the success of our first fundraiser at Upstairs 2 Restaurant (above The Wine House) in Los Angeles. Many thanks to our enthusiastic guests who joined us on December 4th, to learn more about STEM Advantage. (already covered this) More than 50 people attended and enjoyed wonderful appetizers such as sea bass sliders, seafood salad cocktails, fresh shrimp, sumptuous flatbreads, a wide range of cheeses and of course a great selection of red and white wine provided by the chef and amazing staff at Upstairs 2 Restaurant.

COMING SOON

Stay tuned as we'll soon announce our first annual Spring fundraiser to support full scholarships for the students in our pilot. We have a very cool venue in mind and will finalize more details. Look for a Save the Date email.

Thanks again for supporting STEM Advantage. For more information, please visit our website at www.stemadvantage.org.