CONSIDER INTERNING AT A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Just what is a Non-Profit, Anyway?
In a nutshell:

- Non-profit corporations are developed to help people achieve a common purpose. Our nation has a long tradition of people coming together and forming organizations to solve problems and enrich their communities.
- Non-profit and charitable organizations play a vital role in the economic and social well-being of our communities, states and nation. They provide a means for people to contribute time, resources, and expertise for a greater good.
- Non-profits are mostly defined by federal and state law by what they do, or cannot do. On the state level, the term “non-profit” is used to describe corporations that are organized to advance a public or community interest rather than for individual personal or financial gain.
- Non-profits may not distribute earnings or pay dividends: any surplus must be used to further the corporation's organizational purpose.
- Non-profits are permitted to hire paid staff to conduct their organization's activities.

Types of Non-Profit Organizations
What follows is a description of a few of the most common types of Non-Profit Organizations you can consider when searching for an internship. All of them are accurately described as "non-profit," but there are critical differences among them:

1. Charitable Organization or Charity- This is the category people think of most often when they are referring to a non-profit. Groups organized and operated for one or more of the following purposes: charitable, religious, educational, scientific, literary, testing for public safety, fostering national or international amateur sports competition, or the prevention of cruelty to children or animals.
   Examples: Day care centers, colleges, environmental groups, food banks, low-income housing organizations, mental health organizations, museums, and theatre groups. These organizations are further divided into two categories, "public charities" or "private foundations."
   - Public charities- organizations that can demonstrate that a certain part of their support comes from the general public or a unit of government; or organizations formed to raise money for a specific school, hospital, governmental unit or publicly supported charity.
   - Private foundations- organizations that distribute money to fulfill a public purpose. Foundations are subject to different laws and regulations than public charities.

2. Civic Leagues and Social Welfare Organizations- Organizations that are created to further the common good and general welfare of the people of the community.
   Examples: civic groups, downtown improvement associations, and social action organizations.

3. Trade and Professional Associations- Business leagues and trade associations
   Examples: retail merchants, associations, and real estate boards

4. Social and Recreational Clubs- Social and recreational clubs are organized primarily for recreation or pleasure and not for profit. Social clubs may not discriminate against any person on the basis of race or color.
   Examples: hobby clubs, country clubs, garden and variety clubs, amateur hunting, fishing or other sport clubs and similar groups

For more information about NJ non-profit organizations go to: http://www.njnonprofits.org
10 Best Reasons to Intern at a Non-Profit Organization

1. To build a variety of skills. The nonprofit sector loves a generalist. With fewer staff slots than necessary for the work to be done, nonprofits look to interns to multi-task. You may find that your responsibilities include more than just one function. You will build a variety of business and personal skills with multiple responsibilities. Because of that, nonprofits offer the opportunity for interns to learn new skills and gain experience in areas they have yet to tackle.

2. For faster career development. While three corporate employees may be assigned to one project, an intern in a non-profit may find him/herself assigned to three projects. This can lead to faster career development and unparalleled growth opportunities that exist for those looking to grow quickly.

3. For more direct access to decision-makers. Employees at large for-profit corporations rarely get to interact with the top brass, either to show their stuff, learn from the best, or simply get reinvigorated on a regular basis. Not so at nonprofits. The structures are often less hierarchical and interns at nonprofits can take advantage of a smaller internal community.

4. For real world experience. Interning for a nonprofit organization often provides a great deal of practical experience, such as: presenting plans to a board, working with the media, evaluating important projects, and supervising or collaborating with other bright, motivated people.

5. To pursue your personal passions. Why limit your deepest personal interests to your “spare time?” Why not make your personal passions the center of your career? If you love the arts, intern for a museum or symphony. If you feel a strong connection to wildlife or the oceans, intern in conservation. If you love helping people, pick healthcare, education or international relief. Whatever moves you the most, you can be sure there are nonprofits devoted to the same passion.

6. Doing what you love will keep you motivated. Ultimately, if you love what you are doing, it won’t feel like work. If you align your internship with something you are passionate about, which may be easier to do at a non-profit (see #5 above), your performance on the internship will be better since your will be energized and motivated by your passion.

7. To help change things for the better. Interning in the nonprofit sector is entirely about improving peoples’ lives, protecting the planet, supporting the arts, caring for seniors, or educating young people. In a non-profit organization, you are “paid” by the satisfaction of doing something good for the world’s benefit, whether it is saving lives, reducing poverty, making education affordable, bringing enrichment opportunities to children, or some other worthy cause. You know you’ve picked the right career when people you don’t even know thank you for your effort.

8. To meet talented and passionate people. Nonprofits employ interesting people. It is a common misconception that nonprofits have to settle for only those employees willing to work long hours for low pay. Nonprofits often get to choose between the best and the brightest candidates and can afford to be picky about who they choose to employ. While interning for a non-profit, you will have the opportunity to surround yourself with some of the most amazing people you will ever know. One way of improving yourself is to seek the company of people who are the best in the world. Get to know the people who sit on the organization’s Board of Directors because they share the same goals and often bridge the gap to the for-profit world.

9. To meet dedicated people who share your interests. Interning in the nonprofit sector brings you in daily contact with people who are there for the same reasons you are - to make a difference. Management isn’t focused on stock prices or corporate takeovers; they are focused on achieving a mission that is measured by people educated, lives saved, art created, habitats protected, or diseases cured. From the “corner office” to staff in the field, nonprofit organizations are teams in the best sense of the word - people dedicated to a mission.

10. Because every day is a surprise. Working or interning in the nonprofit sector is rarely a routine task. One day you could be helping with a fundraising event and the next you may be designing a website or recruiting volunteers. The benefit to this array of responsibilities is that they will strengthen your resume but
more importantly, will assist you in narrowing down your desired career path.
(Adapted from several non-profit and internship sources.)

SEARCHING FOR NON-PROFIT SITES IN NORTHERN NEW JERSEY
To begin your search, consider the following links to familiarize yourself with some of the many agencies/organizations in the area. This is not a comprehensive list but a place to start your exploration of non-profit organizations and programs. These examples may generate ideas and assist you as you search for potential internship sites that are convenient to your location and interests.

VolunteerMatch
Volunteer Match is designed to recruit volunteers - sometimes for individual/short term projects, other times for ongoing support that might align with internships. This site can be helpful for identifying agencies or programs of interest - then visit their webpage or call them to find out whether they might consider you for an internship!

United Way of Northern New Jersey
United Way focuses on the building blocks for a good life: a quality EDUCATION that leads to a stable job, enough INCOME to support a family through retirement, and good HEALTH. We aim to create long-lasting community change in these areas by addressing the underlying causes of the most significant local issues.

United Way of Essex and West Hudson
Founded in 1923, the United Way of Essex and West Hudson is a non-profit organization that seeks to address the root causes of community concerns by aligning resources to best meet the needs of individuals, children, and families through its service-area.

NJ Community Resources
This page provides useful information about social services available in New Jersey - and the offices/agencies that provide those services.

Center for Non-Profits
The Center for Non-Profits is the only umbrella organization for all New Jersey 501(c)(3)s. Find links here to many types of community service agencies and other non-profit organizations.

NJ Adult Communities
Interested in working with aging adults? This site provides a list of assisted living facilities throughout New Jersey. These sites include both for-profit and not-for-profit residences offering a varying degree of services to residents.

Big Brothers Big Sisters Newark
The Big Brothers Big Sisters Mission is to help children reach their potential through professionally supported, one-to-one relationships with measurable impact.

JSDD's Wae Center
A nonprofit organization and alternative learning center. JSDD's WAE (Wellness, Art & Enrichment) helps individuals with disabilities find the spark within by providing an environment for participants to learn, create, express themselves, and foster meaningful relationships.

Visiting Nurse Association
Visiting Nurse Association delivers home health services to residents of Morris County and neighboring communities who want to return home safely following hospitalization or need a helping hand to remain in the comfort of home due to an illness, disability or advanced age.

Daughters of Israel
CenteDaughters of Israel is a multi-faceted, state-of-the-art, skilled nursing facility offering the most modern and comprehensive services including long-term care, sub-acute rehabilitation, memory care, hospice/palliative care, respite stays and living with assistance. They provide quality care for 300 residents, which include varied levels of healthcare as well as a full array of social, recreational, and social programming.

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**Children's Day Nursery and Family Center**
The mission of Children’s Day Nursery and Family Center is to improve the quality of life for at-risk children and their families through the seamless delivery of child and family system driven programs that respond to and respect diversity, culture, and unique needs.

**Montclair Citadel**
For 120 years, The Montclair Citadel Salvation Army provides housing for families in need, feeds the homeless through a hot meal program, and provides emergency assistance, among other services.

**Jubilee Center**
Programming at the Jubilee Center helps meet the needs of young people. Academic support services are at the core of services to children, as well as providing nutritious daily meals, health and wellness activities, positive recreational activities and a summer program.

**Goodwill Rescue Mission**
Programs of the Goodwill rescue mission include food, clothing, shelter, training and education for North Jersey's urban poor, providing a feeding program and drop in center, among other services and resources.

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