Students Get Internships to Encourage Family Activities and Family Meals

Eat, Play, Love — and Help Beat America’s Obesity Problem

WASHINGTON D.C. – The biggest threat posed by obesity in America is to young people. So it makes sense to enlist young people to help meet the challenge.

That is exactly what three national organizations concerned about the obesity problem are doing. The Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation (HWCF), United Way Worldwide, and Saatchi & Saatchi are co-sponsoring summer internships for university students. Two students have won a national competition — called “Eat, Play Love” — for internships this summer to help build a community to curb childhood obesity by promoting healthy active lifestyles and healthy eating among American families.

The interns will support marketing strategies on behalf of the Together Counts™ campaign, a national initiative encouraging families to engage in physical activities together and eat meals together to help counter obesity and promote good health. The Together Counts campaign brand was created by Saatchi & Saatchi.

The Eat, Play, Love internship competition was administered by the Center for Management Communication at the Marshall School of Business (University of Southern California).

"USC was honored to develop this unique social media campaign student competition, the first of its kind to bring together professionals in the for-profit and non-profit sectors to engage in the fight against child obesity,” said Professor Jerry Giaquinta of the Marshall School of Business. “It truly brought out the best and brightest in students across the country."

The grand-prize winning student – Thea Hughes of University of California at Riverside – earns a highly coveted paid summer internship plus a $2,500 cash prize. Runner-up Jasmita Saini of Cedar Crest College in Pennsylvania receives a $1000 award, plus an unpaid “virtual internship” with United Way Worldwide. The competition was open to two students from each of about two dozen institutions across the country.
“The **Together Counts** campaign will succeed based largely on the participation of young people, so it makes sense to enlist them in planning the effort,” said HWCF executive director Lisa Gable. “The winning students will help make sure that we reach young people in a way they can relate to.”

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**The Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation** brings together 160 retailers, food and beverage manufacturers, restaurants, sporting goods and insurance companies, a professional sports organization, NGOs, trade associations, and the U.S. Army aimed at doing their part to help families reduce obesity, especially childhood obesity.

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