



# Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Internship Program



Photo Credit: Eric Colton

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) Internship Program is designed for motivated college students and recent graduates seeking professional work experience and exposure to opportunities in local government. This program is designed to provide challenging work experiences that are unique to Midpen in its mission to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land for protection and public use and enjoyment. Under the guidance of mentors, interns complete department specific projects to develop their administrative and analytical knowledge, skills, and abilities. Interns can expect to work alongside and learn from seasoned Midpen employees and contribute their talents to a variety of projects. Our interns often gain full-time employment in the public sector after completing their internship.

As part of a larger community, Midpen partners with the local cities and counties through the NextGen Silicon Valley Regional Internship Program. Interns will get a chance to attend professional development workshops and networking events specific to the public sector. Overall, the Midpen internship program strives to educate, attract and retain talent to contribute to the legacy of open space protection and outdoor recreation. It is also proving to be an effective tool in furthering the agency's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion goals, establishing a recruitment pipeline for entry-level positions, and providing project and program level support for the agency.

## ABOUT US

Midpen helps plants, animals, and people thrive throughout the greater Santa Cruz Mountains region by preserving a greenbelt of more than 70,000 acres of public open space with more than 250 miles of trails in 27 extraordinary open space preserves, permanently protected for natural resource conservation and ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education. Our mission is “to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land in perpetuity; protect and restore the natural environment; and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.” Midpen is a public agency with a focused mission that guides our work, and where every employee makes an impact.

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# Find your path...

Midpen hosts about 10 interns annually, from majors that include Biology, Business Administration, Computer Science, Ecology, Engineering, Public Administration, Communications, Environmental Science, Environmental Studies, GIS, Geography, Graphic Design, Journalism, Information Technology, Management Information Systems, Marketing, Park Management, Land Use/Planning, Policy/Government, Resource Management, and many others.



## INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTIONS

### Natural Resources Department

The **Wildlife Biology & Water Quality Intern** assists with essential projects and programs like the wildlife camera program, mountain lion collaring project, and wildlife monitoring, including purple martin monitoring at Mt. Thayer, California red-legged frog monitoring and monitoring to support capital and routine work. The intern will also assist with reviewing and preparing permits for outside researchers. Training will be provided in a variety of wildlife identification and field survey techniques as well as desktop review of wildlife imagery and data entry and management.

The **Conservation Biology Intern** assists with essential projects and programs like the Conservation Grazing Program, Mitigation and Monitoring Programs, and capital improvement projects as a biological monitor. Training will be provided in a variety of natural resource identification and field survey techniques. In addition, the incumbent will assist with the Request for Qualifications and Proposals and/or Requests for Bids process as needed.

### Human Resources Department

The **Human Resources (HR) Intern** gains valuable work experience and exposure to various HR functions and the public sector, including: recruitment, selection and retention activities; onboarding and offboarding employees; staff training, staff development and recognition; research of employee benefits; HR metrics and demographics tracking, analysis and reporting; policy research; assistance with compensation studies; data entry into the Human Resources Information System (HRIS) and employee/customer service. Interns participate in the HR functions in the lifecycle of Midpen employees and provide a myriad of HR support. The interns will receive feedback, coaching and practical experience needed to advance as a professional in Human Resources.

### Engineering & Construction (E&C) Department

The **E&C Intern** - Under close guidance of seasoned project management staff, the E&C Intern would support professional level engineering and construction project management activities, including the design and implementation of capital improvement and natural resource preservation and protection projects; coordinate project related assignments with other Midpen staff, outside consultants, contractors and regulatory agencies; assist with bidding process and construction efforts; and perform related work as required.

# Find your passion...

## INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTIONS, CONTINUED

### Planning Department

The Planning Department typically brings on two planning interns each year. The **Planning interns** are trained to conduct data collection/entry and site verification and photo documentation in the field (50% - 60%), assisting Midpen Planners and GIS staff with critical projects such as the Trail Information Project and Historic Resources Library/Database. The Planning Interns will also work on a broad range of duties, responsibilities and assignments balancing field work, online research and analysis, the application of computer and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) skills, and support and public meetings to round out their exposure to Planning.

### Public Affairs Department

Interns are engaged with supporting outreach and event planning; editorial planning; digital content management; and public/media relations planning. Interns will learn and practice project management skills; strategic content creation; interviewing skills; and public engagement strategies.

The **summer/fall Public Affairs intern** work on a wide variety of assignments and projects, including: research and writing for publications; creating social media posts and campaigns; creating and updating website content; drafting, proofreading and production of various informational materials; and special 50th Anniversary projects, including working directly with graphic designers.

The **winter/spring Public Affairs intern** work on a wide variety of assignments and projects, including: research and writing for publications; creating social media posts and campaigns; creating and updating website content; drafting, proofreading and production of various informational materials; and supporting governmental relations projects.

### Information Systems and Technology (IST) Department

The **IST intern** is exposed to government information technology. They gain applicable experience to prepare them for an IT Technician job. This intern will also participate in new cybersecurity projects, software integration and provide hands-on helpdesk support. In addition, they will be exposed to contracting and overall IT management processes. The move to the new administrative office required additional IT systems and assets to manage the 'smart' building, providing additional IT learning opportunities.

The **GIS Intern** would gain experience in cartography, data collection/management, web/software support, and customer service by performing entry level GIS services that support Midpen operations and projects. The GIS Intern would support the GIS mapping and data entry needs of Vision Plan and Measure AA projects and of field-related programs, including the tracking of fuel and vegetation treatment related to the Wildland Fire Resiliency and Integrated Pest Management Programs.



# What you bring...

## Eligibility

- Internships are open to applications from current students or recent graduates (within the last 12 months).
- Interns work 20 – 40 hours per week, which will extend up to a total of 950 hours over a 6-9-month period. This is a non-benefited position.
- Interns at Midpen have flexible hours to work around class schedules.
- Summer and Fall internships are offered depending on department specific projects.
- Work schedules designed to meet project and student needs (fully on site or hybrid available depending on position).



Interns and Supervisors at the 2023 Midpen Networking Event



# Join our team...

- Competitive hourly pay rate
- Exposure to local government
- Access to an organization that values diverse perspectives and new ideas
- Flexible work schedule (allows for independence and flexibility)
- Variety of work (field, on-site and remote work)
- Experience Midpen culture & mission
- Multi-department engagement
- Field of study work exposure
- Academic and professional growth
- Internship is supplemented with training and external educational sessions
- Access to a network of professionals in the field of local government



- Enriching on-the-job experience
- Professional networking access
- Expands knowledge on how Midpen delivers services to the public
- Provides opportunities for public engagement
- Access to certain benefits:
  - Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
  - 24 hours of sick leave
  - Commute incentive (bike and carpool)

## HOW TO APPLY:

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- Midpen Intern Positions are posted throughout the year on Cal Opps - [www.calopps.org](http://www.calopps.org).
- An online application, cover letter, resume and supplemental questionnaire is required in order to be considered for the internship.
- If you don't see an internship opportunity that you are interested in, create a personal profile and sign up for future notifications of available jobs matching your employment search criteria.



Photo Credit: Edward Reed



Photo Credit: Peggy Davis



Photo Credit: Elodie Sharp

# Intern testimonials

**Hannah Liu, Natural Resources Intern '22**  
**BA in Molecular & Cell Biology**  
**UC Berkeley (Graduate '21)**



"The Midpen internship was a huge game-changer for me. I was able to work with incredibly talented and passionate people. The internship gave me a sense of what I want to do in the future—working with ecology and conservation. I also really got to know the inside operations of a public agency. Coming from college, I wanted to make a tangible impact in conservation. At Midpen, I learned how to make that happen through natural resource management and stewardship. For example, I had the amazing opportunity to help manage a wildlife camera study, and design and implement a conservation plan for protected songbirds. Anyone wanting to make an impact will find this internship incredibly rewarding."

**Kevin Chang, Planning Intern '22/'23**  
**BS in Environmental Science**  
**University of Oregon (Graduate '22)**

"My time as a Planning Intern at Midpen has showed me how it feels to be in an amazing work environment and how to be a true professional. I've really enjoyed the wide variety of projects I've been involved in and the balance of working in the field and in the office. Being able to support the values that Midpen holds has truly made my internship a great experience!"



**Giselle Beld, Planning Intern '22/'23**  
**BS in City & Regional Planning**  
**Cal Poly SLO (Graduate '22)**

"It has been a pleasure being a part of Midpen's internship program and Planning Department! I joined Midpen as a recent graduate hoping to learn and experience open space planning. While I primarily worked on the Trail Information Systems Project to enhance public knowledge and access of existing trails, I was pleasantly surprised by the variety of work I was involved in! From carrying out projects to coordinating across departments, I learned a great amount and enjoyed developing professional skills. I leave this internship experience enthused about open space planning, grateful for the people I met, and with respect for Midpen's guiding mission."



**Harry Crane, Information Systems & Technology Intern '22/'23**  
**BS in Business, MIS**  
**San Jose State University**  
**(Graduate '23)**

"Working at Midpen was a dream come true for me, as it allowed me to pursue my passions in a supportive and innovative environment, alongside colleagues who shared my commitment to making a positive impact on the world."



**Hima Tammineni, Public Affairs Intern '23**  
**BS in Microbiology**  
**Purdue University**  
**(Graduate '22)**

"My internship at Midpen has felt tailored to my goals and needs. I have been able to work on projects that excite me and grow skills that will serve me in my future career. "

