



Student Projects: Information for Prospective Mentors

Thank you for considering mentoring a student from Commonwealth School

Students in grades nine through eleven have one week off from classes to devote full-time to a project of their own choosing. Project Week is an integral part of the academic year and provides students with opportunities to develop greater independence and responsibility. It is their chance to seriously explore interests beyond those that they pursue here at Commonwealth.

Time Commitment

Students must perform five days of work for at least five hours each day. Each student is required to have a mentor within the organization who helps the student during Project Week. The mentor does not need to be present for every moment of the student's work time, but is encouraged to meet with the student before Project Week and to check in throughout the week to see how they are adjusting. This can be a completely virtual relationship, no need to meet in person.

Project Structure

Projects often take the form of internships. Many students are curious about the professional world and are happy to perform routine tasks in a work environment. Such responsibilities afford students the opportunity to experience an average work week of, for example, a practicing lawyer, engineer or architect. Students might assist multiple people in a given office over the course of a week, which offers exposure to different work styles and facets of the industry. We hope mentors will also invite students to observe a presentation, planning meeting, site visit, or other such opportunity to view their work in action. The observation can also be virtual.

Goals and Expectations

Students are instructed to think about their goals and expectations for their project before they begin. A clear, explicit definition of expectations on the part of both the student and the mentor, and a willingness to be frank with each other in adjusting those expectations as circumstances dictate, help both mentor and student to feel the arrangement is successful.

Mentors are *not* asked to evaluate performance or write a report.

Recent project locations and topics include:

- Massachusetts General Hospital: Neurological research
- Office of U.S. Representative Seth Moulton
- Teaching English in Changsha, China
- Carraig Dulra Organic & Permaculture Farm, Ireland
- CrossFit Iron Spider: Physical conditioning
- Austin Scarlett, fashion designer
- Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics
- Green Street Studios: Dance and theatrical swordfighting
- Suffolk County Probate and Family Court
- La Morra Restaurant, Brookline: Pastry and dessert cuisine
- MIT: Robot and Artificial Intelligence development
- Fidelity Investments

We are deeply grateful to the adults who take the time to make these experiences possible for our students. Thank you again for your time and consideration.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

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