



C I T Y O F
RENO
Memorandum

DATE: July 16, 2026

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Jackie Bryant, City Manager 

FROM: Cynthia Esparza, Director
Noemi Gomez, Community Relationships Manager

DEPT: Community Engagement and Services Department

SUBJECT: City of Reno Internship Program

In recent years, staff expanded internship opportunities with several educational institutions. These efforts created a pathway for high school and college students to gain experience in public service while directly supporting department operations, City programs, and community initiatives. The following is a summary of the support provided and future planning.

Washoe County School District (WCSD) Internships

For the 2025–2026 academic year, the City hosted 11 interns representing from Washoe County School District (WCSD) through the WCSD Career and Technical Education (CTE) program. Participating schools included the Academy of Arts, Careers and Technology (AACT), Debbie Smith Career Technical Academy, Earl Wooster High School, Galena High School, Hug High School, Reno High School, Robert McQueen High School, and Truckee Meadows Community College High School.

This partnership provided students with direct access to municipal government, allowing them to gain practical experience and develop professional and leadership skills, while earning academic school credits. Participating students supported work across several City departments and divisions, including:

- Arts and Culture, Public Works
- Licensing and Code Enforcement
- City Clerk's Office
- Community Engagement and Services

- Maintenance and Operations
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Safety Dispatch

Interns provided administrative support and completed several tasks, including creating mailers and marketing materials for Business Licensing; supporting the review of special activity permits and assisting with event planning for Parks and Recreation; and updating records, organizing data, and conducting research for Code Enforcement, among other department projects. The program was supported by 10 staff supervisors who, in addition to professional guidance, provided mentorship support.

In total, interns completed 660 hours, equivalent to an estimated \$38,000 based on entry-level administrative support. While there is no direct cost to the City, there is an administrative investment related to collaborating with WCSD, coordination with participating departments, intern onboarding, training, and intern supervision.

The internship program for this year ended in June 2026, and as a result of the initiative, one graduating student accepted a part-time role with the City.

Future Planning

Based on this year's success, staff and WCSD agreed to continue the program for the 2026-2027 academic school year. Reno staff also recently presented a program overview to the City of Sparks and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office, who are considering starting a similar program.

Similarly, this summer marks the second year a Dean's Future Scholars Youth Career intern, in partnership with the University of Nevada, is hosted by Community Engagement and Services, and there may be opportunities to expand this program in the future citywide. This summer's intern is tasked with creating a youth civic engagement activity book for future community distribution.

Additionally, Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) contacted staff seeking to establish a similar credit-based internship, and staff are exploring commencing this program in the Fall 2026 semester.

These partnerships benefit organizations and communities by developing future public sector interest with a new generation, provide additional administrative support to staff, and strengthen community engagement and trust through meaningful exposure to local government.