

achieve

...opening a world of possibilities

JUSTICE UP CLOSE

This summer was one of the most eye-opening experiences I have had so far in high school. I spent it interning under the Honorable Judge Susan Breall at the San Francisco Dependency Court. Every day brought something new, something that challenged how I think. Judge Breall works on cases involving child abuse and neglect, and her courtroom showed me how complex the child welfare system really is. It was not just about sitting and watching, it was about learning to understand the weight of the decisions being made, and the real people behind those decisions.

Mornings started with hearings. There were detention hearings, six-month reviews, Marsden hearings, ICWA cases, and others. At first, it felt like a lot, but with the help of a legal dictionary Judge Breall gave us, I slowly started understanding the legal terms and the flow of the court. What stood out to me most was how layered each case was. Nothing was simple. Every case had different people, different stories, and different needs. After court, we would go to Judge Breall's chambers where she would explain the cases and answer our questions. She always made time for us to learn and be curious.

Something I discovered about myself is that I can walk into a professional setting and be just as professional as everyone else in there. I had fallen into

the habit of panicking about asking questions or speaking up, but through this experience, I was able to feel more comfortable doing both of those things. I also discovered how much I care about fairness, and how hard it is to have that in systems such as this. Watching so many families fight to be reunited led me to reflect on my life and what justice is.

There were lighter moments too. We would walk with Judge Breall to pick up coffee and food on the way, and on those occasions, we got a chance to connect as human beings, not judge and intern. I also worked on projects like a teen slang dictionary that I wrote, case notes, and debriefing especially tough cases with Judge Breall, which helped me put in perspective all that I witnessed. Those projects made the experience more comprehensive. It was not merely looking but rather thinking profoundly about what I was observing.

In total, this internship served me better than I could have imagined. I went in looking to learn law, and I did, but also came out with a better sense of who I am and what kind of work I want to do. I thank Judge Breall for the experience of seeing how justice works on the back end. This summer gave me a new sense of purpose, and I will carry that with me going forward.



Johnny Mata
SJND '26



**COLLEGE
TOUR**

achieve juniors tour East Coast colleges and universities: Boston College, Boston University, Brandeis University, Clark University, College of the Holy Cross, Harvard University, Smith College, Trinity College, Wesleyan University

DISCOVERING MY STRENGTHS

This summer, I participated in the six-week JFCS YouthFirst Summer Internship Program in San Mateo. I was excited to gain new knowledge and experience in the work field. At the same time, I completed my Geometry Honors course through my school's self-paced summer program. Balancing both was a challenge, but it taught me how to plan and manage my time effectively.

When I received the email about my placement, I realized I was not very familiar with the JFCS program. That made me curious to learn more, so I reached out to my supervisor, Debbie. She is the San Mateo Office Manager and Food Bank Coordinator, and she supported me by helping manage my schedule and tasks. I also worked with professionals including therapists, administrators, and the YouthFirst Program Director. In total, I completed ten tasks, some short, some more complex.

The longest task took three weeks and involved organizing closed files from the Therapy Program. I checked each client's date of birth and closing date to determine whether the file should be shredded or stored. Other tasks included organizing supplies, cleaning office spaces, and researching Bay Area resources. I completed everything on time thanks to Debbie's guidance and support. This experience showed me that even small tasks can be meaningful and help build valuable skills.

One of the biggest challenges I faced was managing transportation and homework while taking math tests at school twice a week. The testing times conflicted with my mother's work schedule, so I relied on Uber to get there. Although it was expensive, I prioritized my goal of finishing the course to take Honors Algebra 2 next year.

This summer helped me develop communication, organization, and goal-setting skills. I stayed in touch with my teachers, supervisor, and coworkers through email and in person. Planning ahead made it easier to stay flexible, and setting both short- and long-term goals kept me focused and motivated.

I became more aware of my strengths and how I respond to pressure in new environments. My growth was recognized beyond the classroom, and I gained confidence in my ability to handle responsibility. I am grateful for the support and encouragement I received from everyone I worked with.

Overall, I had a productive and rewarding summer. I now see myself pursuing a career where I can work with a team, have flexibility, and continue learning every day. Thank you to JFCS and the **achieve** staff for giving me another meaningful and unforgettable opportunity.



Lesly Sanchez Delgado
MHSB '27

LESSONS BEYOND BOOKS

This summer, I interned at the Celsius and Beyond Summer Camp, which is a place for kids to develop new skills such as robotics, art, philosophy, and engineering, just to name a few. My supervisor was Auritte, the head of the camp, and I assisted with setting up activities for all the different classes. Every week I was assigned to a new class, and each class focused on different skills such as sewing, woodworking, and Lego robotics. As I helped the teachers teach their classes, I also watched and learned along with the children. Auritte was very kind and patient with me and helped to make my experience not only educational but also very enjoyable.

During my internship, I gained patience and better communication skills. I also realized that

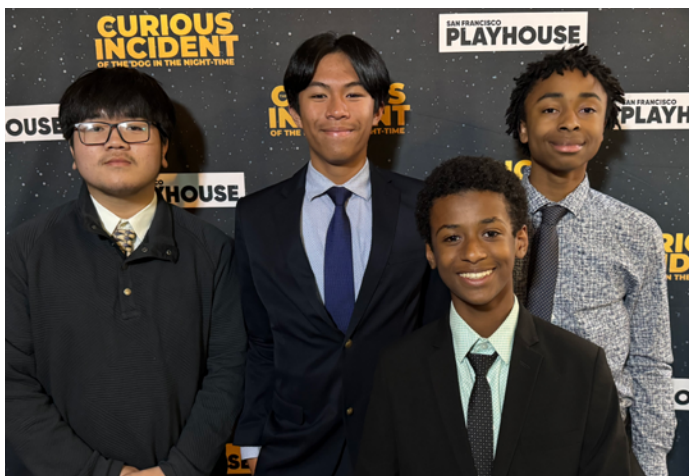
I was actually a pretty fast learner because I changed classes each week and had to adapt and learn the new curriculum rather quickly. I was able to develop the skill presented in each class fast enough that I could teach it to the kids myself with the support and guidance of the staff.

This internship was definitely not what I had expected. At first, I thought it would be a basic summer camp and I would just be watching over kids as they participated in fun activities. I was aware that these kids would be learning new skills, but I did not realize just how much quality education and hands-on experience they would be receiving in such a short amount of time. And I had no idea I would also be learning life-long skills. I now know how to use a sewing machine, a drill, and other tools I know I will use in the future.

In addition to the practical skills I gained, I also improved my communication skills and became a better leader by serving as a guide, teacher, and role model for the students. This summer was unforgettable, and I am grateful to have been given such an amazing opportunity.



William Finau
ARHS '28



Students attending SF Playhouse performance on Curious Incident



Students collecting trash to help preserve Lake Merritt's ecosystem

WIRED FOR SUCCESS

This summer I had the opportunity to intern with UC Berkeley IT Network Services for five weeks. Berkeley IT Network Services plays a crucial role in maintaining and overseeing the Berkeley campus network. They make sure the network provides a safe connection and keeps the network secure and reliable for students, faculty, and staff. During my internship, I worked under two amazing supervisors, Ms. Kellsie and Mr. Daniel, who guided and mentored me with patience and kindness.

My main role as an intern was to assist as a Network Engineer Assistant (NEA). I was trained in the basics of network engineering, shadowing both of my mentors, and learning mostly about Domain Name System (DNS), switches, cables, and ports. I was also able to do hands-on activities such as switch cleanups and cable activations at other locations such as I-House, Evans, and Grimes.

Throughout this experience, I also had the opportunity to interview Berkeley IT staff. Each of them gave great advice based on their own career paths and perspectives. But what I took away from these interviews was to take advantage of every opportunity in tech, whether internships or scholarships.

A JOURNEY SHARED

Getting the **achieve** Scholarship was exciting on its own, but what made it even better was the chance to go on a three-day trip to San Francisco. At first, I did not know what to expect, but it turned out to be one of the most memorable experiences I have ever had. I was able to visit Coit Tower, Galeria de la Raza, and Angel Island. Along the way, I met new people, made friends, and learned lessons not only about history and art, but also about culture and the struggles people faced to reach where they are today.

On the first day, we went to Coit Tower. I had seen pictures and passed by it from far away but never went inside. The view from the top was incredible.



Barbara Navichoque
HNHS '29

You could see the entire city, the Bay Bridge, the Golden Gate Bridge, and rows of houses and buildings. What really stood out to me were the paintings inside the tower. Each one showed a different story about life at that time: farmers working in the fields, people reading newspapers, even a grocery store price list. I never imagined I could learn so much just by looking at paintings.

On the second day, we visited Galeria de la Raza, an art space focused on Latin culture and community.

Even as a high school student, there are many opportunities available, so it is important to take advantage of them. Students can gain so much knowledge from these different experiences.

During my internship, I gained many important skills, both technical and personal. I learned how to navigate through different types of devices and desktops, about firewalls and VPN's security, and how to troubleshoot issues. I also improved my PowerPoint and Excel skills.



Nathan Thewodros
SJND '27

This summer was my first internship and first experience in the workforce. I learned what it is like to commute, manage a schedule, and take on responsibilities on my own. This five-week experience was a real blessing for me. From the moment I arrived, my supervisors treated me like family and made me feel comfortable. They taught me to follow my heart and reminded me that IT can take me to many places. I am truly grateful for their support and patience, which made this a wonderful experience.

The gallery was small, but the meaning behind the art was powerful. The staff spoke about identity, immigration, and Latin culture. Later, we visited an alley of murals. One mural that stood out to me was Women of the Resistance. It felt powerful because it celebrated the strength, resilience, and leadership of women throughout history. It made me feel proud of who I am and gave me confidence in being a woman.

On the last day, we took a ferry to Angel Island. The ride itself was exciting because we passed by Alcatraz and saw the city from the water. Once we arrived, we walked to the immigration station. We wrote in our journals and shared thoughts about what we were experiencing. During the tour, we saw the actual rooms where Chinese immigrants had been held for weeks or even months. The walls were still carved with Chinese poems, and a speaker translated them into English. Reading and hearing those words made me think deeply about the hardships people faced, and it reminded me how important it is to learn about the difficult parts of history, not only the good ones.

This trip made me appreciate the opportunities I have because of **achieve**. I returned with new friends, new knowledge, and a new perspective. I am grateful for this scholarship and for the chance to experience something so meaningful. I look forward to the new school year, hoping it brings growth, learning, and opportunities to succeed.



Freshman Orientation: Class of 2029 visiting murals in The Mission and touring Angel Island



2025 Summer Internship Providers

- BakarAvenue Wealth Management
- Bank of America
- BEVC
- BRIDGE Housing
- Center for Independent Living
- Compass Family Services
- Exploratorium
- Jewish Community Center of San Francisco
- Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund
- Jewish Family & Children's Services
- Jewish Vocational Services
- KQED
- LBA Realty
- Prado Group
- San Francisco Superior Court/
Unified Family Court
- TEF Design
- UC Berkeley Art Museum
& Pacific Film Archive
- UC Berkeley Data Sciences (BUDS)
- UC Berkeley Girls in Engineering
- UC Berkeley IT Network Operations
- UC Berkeley IT Student Affairs
- UC Berkeley Lawrence Hall of Science
- UC Berkeley Recreational Sports Camps
- UC Berkeley University Development
and Alumni Relations
- UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland
Research Institute
- UCSF Medical Center
- UCSF Institute for Global Health Sciences
- Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital

MEDICINE IN FOCUS

My summer was both chaotic and poetic. Chaotic because it felt like I was still in school. Poetic because, ironically, having so little free time taught me new things about myself. This summer, I balanced a lot: my internship, a research project, **achieve's** college intensives, my home life, and my social life.

Just four days after finishing junior year, I began UCSF's Summer Student Research Program (SSRP), which pairs high school and college students with physicians to complete a research project. I was assigned to Dr. June Tester, a pediatric endocrinologist at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital. I observed both in-person and virtual appointments, which confirmed my aspiration to work in a clinical setting.

With Dr. Tester's guidance, I conducted research focused on patients taking GLP-1 medications like Ozempic. These medications reduce appetite, and Dr. Tester was curious about how that change might affect her patients' diets. I recruited five patients, ages 10–18, and completed three dietary recalls with each. Then, I analyzed the data, focusing on variables like protein, fiber, added sugars, and saturated fats, and turned the results into visual handouts with simple, nutritious meal suggestions. I found that although the medications reduced appetite, patients were still falling short on important nutrients like protein and fiber, while exceeding recommendations for added sugars and saturated fats.

In addition to research, I attended SSRP's didactic sessions, where I learned how to analyze scientific papers and heard medical professionals describe their "day in the life." This experience not only confirmed my passion for science and medicine but also gave me a glimpse into the future I want: becoming a medical student, doing meaningful clinical research, and ultimately working to help others.

All in all, the summer of 2025 was a journey, one where I discovered new parts of myself and began to see my future more clearly. Through my internship, I learned to prioritize, found a love for research, and deepened my passion for medicine. Through the college intensives, I practiced time management, wrote with vulnerability, and allowed myself to dream realistically. This summer gave me confidence in who I am...and who I am becoming.



Angela Leon-Alvarez
HNHS '26

EXPLORING COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

This summer I interned at LBA Realty. Prior to this internship, I did not know much about commercial real estate (CRE). However, after working closely with the LBA team, I learned a lot more.

My daily responsibilities mostly fell into two areas: getting familiar with CRE and helping with analyst work. Nearly every day, I had the opportunity to join meetings with one of the principals or key associates. These 30-minute talks helped me learn about each person's career journey, their department, and most importantly, the valuable life advice they shared. Other than learning about CRE, I was able to learn more about Excel by completing an 8-hour course. This not only enabled me to help with a few projects but also provided me with a lifelong skill I can apply in future jobs. Overall, I was able to assist with analyst work by inputting building specs, gathering market trends, and updating quarterly reports.

During this internship, I also gained other important knowledge and skills. While talking with some of the associates, I was surprised to learn that many of them had not started their careers in real estate or what they had originally studied in college. This discovery made me realize that the world of real estate relates to many other career paths. In addition, I learned the importance of networking, which allowed many of the associates to move into real estate from other careers. I now understand that what someone studies in college is not necessarily what they will do for their entire career.

This internship has confirmed that I want to pursue a career in finance or business, but it also sparked my interest in real estate. I am most proud of strengthening my technical skills, like Excel and Word, and I discovered that I have an ability to communicate with adults easily and readily adapt to different situations. These skills are crucial in both academic and work environments. Overall, this summer was a productive, informative, and enjoyable experience.



Samuel Wu
ARHS '26



201 Filbert Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94133
415.576.8100
www.achieveprogram.org

