

OSA Research and Organizing Fellow

An Internship with the Ohio Student Association

Ohio Student Association (OSA) and the **UC Chapter of the AAUP** are co-sponsoring a summer internship for a UC graduate student. This internship involves working with OSA from June 1 to August 15, 2017, and will entail on-the-ground community organizing combined with research for our upcoming student debt campaign.

BACKGROUND

Ohio Student Association works to help unleash the power of young people through grassroots campaigns and leadership development. We have fought for racial, economic, and environmental justice and trained hundreds of young people as community organizers since 2012. In 2016 we registered 25,000 voters and created ways for people to build political power beyond elections. For more on our past initiatives and victories, check out our annual report [here](#).

This summer we are laying the foundation for a campaign to win student debt relief in Ohio. The Debt Liberation campaign will not only put pressure on elected officials to combat outrageous debt, it will also provide immediate relief for low-income graduates by enrolling them in the under-utilized federal Pay As You Earn (PAYE) plan, which President Obama expanded in 2014. OSA will launch a drive to enroll students in Income-Driven Repayment (IDR) plans, part of a federal program to make it easier for college graduates to repay their loans based on their financial situations. Though 22 million people qualify for IDR plans, only 2 million have enrolled nationwide, and hundreds of thousands of students in Ohio qualify for enrollment. We believe the higher education debt crisis is also an economic crisis, and we plan to strike back against it by developing a state-based model that enrolls people in IDR plans and trains those enrollees to organize their fellow students for Debt Liberation. The goal is to create a model similar to the Enroll America program that encouraged people to sign up for health insurance. This initiative intends to increase enrollment in IDR plans and empower people to take on the issue of student debt and poverty by getting involved in a public pressure campaign. The Debt Liberation initiative will be a gateway toward

deeper civic engagement among young people in Ohio.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK

A summer intern will help OSA do the vital work of laying the foundation for this Debt Liberation campaign by recruiting volunteers for the leadership team and doing policy research to develop the campaign.

This person would have five main responsibilities:

1. Research student debt relief policies and state-based models for Income Driven Repayment (IDR) plans
2. Work the local and national partners to identify the impact of state-based interventions for student debt relief in Ohio
3. Draft a policy paper and campaign plan on how to address student debt problem with state-based debt relief programs
4. Recruit volunteer leaders to implement the campaign plan
5. Lead "Get Out The Debt" events where we educate people on their options around student debt relief

The intern would be working under the direct supervision of the Organizing Director at OSA. Work priorities in these areas may be shifted in consultation with OSA staff. This internship will run from June 1st to August 15th, for a workload of 15-20 hours/week. The intern will be paid a stipend of \$4,000.

SKILLS & EXPECTATIONS

The successful candidate will have the following skills:

- Interest in or history in activism, specifically activism in minority communities
- History in building teams and working on campaigns
- Ability to conduct interviews with constituents
- Ability to recruit potential leaders for the Debt liberation core team
- Strong written and oral abilities
- Ability to work independently and self-directed

Apart of their training, the intern will also attend the Ohio Organizing Collaborative's Weeklong Organizing Intensive, which will give them the skills they need to organize and mobilize around the issue of student debt.

This intern will be part of our weekly staff support calls where we check in on each other's projects and get help where needed. They will have weekly check-ins with the campaign leadership team, which will include OSA's Organizing Director. The intern and the Organizing Director will come up with a plan for the intern's experience together at the beginning of the internship and will set expectations of support and accountability.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please email your resume and cover letter to Mr. Prentiss Harvey at prentiss@ohorganizing.org and Dr. James Canfield at canfiejs@ucmail.uc.edu. The deadline for application is **April 30, 2017**.