**Science Advocacy Internship**

**Name of Agency/Organization:** National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives ([NPSC](http://www.npscoalition.org/))

**Purpose & Mission of Organization:**

The NPSC is a large nonprofit professional organization that promotes the application of validated, science-based findings to wide-scale, effective implementation of prevention practices and science-informed public policymaking. Prevention Science addresses individual and societal problems before they develop and encourages a wellness approach to positive childhood, adolescent, family and community outcomes.  It informs decision makers as to what practices are most effective and cost beneficial to ensure that children and adolescents lead healthy and successful lives. From a prevention position, the NPSC addresses several areas of concern, in particular adverse social determinants of health (e.g., economic instability, racism/racist practices, inequities, trauma) that increase risk for mental and behavioral health problems, academic struggles, juvenile and criminal justice involvement, as well as major chronic illnesses (e.g., asthma, diabetes, obesity, heart disease) that originate in childhood and become compounded in adulthood. We are comprised of prominent scientists (across disciplines), educators, community stakeholders, practitioners and clinicians, policy makers, advocates, and foundation representatives. We work in a nonpartisan manner with Congressional offices, Caucuses, federal agency administrators (e.g., NIH, SAMHSA, ONDCP, ACF, and CDC), and like-minded groups and organizations. Overall, we aim to encourage an understanding and acceptance by public and private sectors of the evidence generated by Prevention Science and related fields, thus leading to public health policies that support the scaling and sustainment of best practices.

**Brief Description & Proposed Approach:**

This internship will allow an undergraduate or graduate student to tailor their scope of work according to their interests and needs for professional development. The purpose of this position is to expand public and legislators’ awareness and commitment to leveraging evidence-based prevention approaches for reducing social ills (e.g., crime, poverty, trauma) and saving significant taxpayer dollars. Depending on the student’s skill level, whether undergraduate or graduate, tasks may include disseminating information on social media and the website, as well as writing blogs, op-eds, policy statements, and a newsletter. Additional activities may include helping to organize congressional briefings and mapping the prevention science body of knowledge to legislative agendas to direct advocacy activities. The student will be expected to work with a range of senior prevention scientists to translate bodies of research into brief products that are readable by a lay audience; as such, there are tremendous opportunities for enhancing one’s skill set and network.

**Learning Objectives:**

By the end of the internship, the student will be able to:

* Gain hands-on experience applying skills learned to contribute to a nonprofit organization’s mission and goals.
* Demonstrate broad knowledge of how prevention science can benefit society.
* Identify effective communication strategies and utilize that knowledge to serve various target audiences.
* Discuss rationales for policies that are in alignment with the organization’s mission and goals.
* Apply outreach techniques to strengthen the capacity of a nonprofit organization.
* Make data-driven recommendations for improving communication and outreach strategies.
* Accomplish work that can contribute to a career e-portfolio.

**Activities may include:**

* Simplifying key messages and disseminating prevention-science reports or products published by the coalition, affiliated organizations, and/or outside organizations via social media, the website, and monthly newsletter.
* Supporting the generation of new content or products (e.g., blogs, op-eds, or policy briefs) alongside voluntary coalition members and committees, who range in expertise.
* Sharing prevention-science materials with legislative offices that are relevant to current legislative priorities.
	+ Attend and/or co-plan congressional briefings or other NPSC events that aim to increase awareness on topics relevant to our mission.
	+ Share information with legislative offices via social media.
* Producing monthly reports on communication activities with data-driven recommendations for strategy development and improvement (leveraging tools such as Google Analytics and Facebook Insights).
* Acting as a liaison by redirecting relevant information to appropriate point persons in the coalition (e.g., grant opportunities to the Treasurer, policy updates to the Co-Directors).
* Facilitating connections with prospective members or affiliate organizations.
	+ Enhancing collaborative efforts by articulating organizational objectives with potential partners/affiliates.
	+ Strengthening the NPSC’s capacity to carry out objectives by facilitating new member outreach and increasing collaboration among existing members.
* Increase the organization’s visibility via a comprehensive communications strategy.
* Other activities may be suggested or requested, based on UG/Grad status, skill level, and interest of the internt.

**Skills needed by the applicant:**

* Completed pre-requisite coursework in communication studies or a behavioral sciences major (e.g., psychology, social work, prevention science, public policy, etc.).
* Strong research, written and oral communication skills.
* An interest in educating the public about prevention science
* Experience in word processing software (e.g. Microsoft word, Excel and PowerPoint), newsletter software (e.g. constant contact), social media platforms (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn), and other software used for publication purposes and database management.
* Strong time management and organizational skills
* Strong attention to detail (e.g., entering data accurately, tracking activities and accomplishments, etc.)

**Anticipated time commitment needed for one student (hours per week):** 10-15 hours per week, reported monthly

**Compensation:**  This is an unpaid position for credit hours or other provisions offered by the sponsoring institution.

**Expected START DATE:** Flexible

**Expected DURATION:** At least one semester

**Organization URL (includes links to Facebook and Twitter):** [www.npscoalition.org](http://www.npscoalition.org); #npscoalition.org

**Application Procedure:** Submit a resume or curriculum vitae and cover letter to Dr. Diana Fishbein at dfishbein@psu.edu. Applications are reviewed year round.