



Internships, Fellowships, and Other Work Experience Opportunities in the Federal Government

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May 12, 2011

Congressional Research Service

7-5700

www.crs.gov

98-654

Summary

This report describes Internet resources on major internship, fellowship, and work experience programs within the federal government. It is intended as a selective guide for students of all levels: high school, undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate. This report will be updated annually.

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Introduction

The federal government offers many opportunities for internships, fellowships, and work experiences. However, there is no single centralized source for finding information on every opportunity. This report describes the major and most popular Internet resources for such opportunities and gives applicants a place to begin their search. The Internet resources provided are not exhaustive. Telephone numbers for programs are provided if available.

Applying for an internship or fellowship is similar to applying for admission to a college or university. The application process takes time and effort, often requiring essays and interviews. Applicants should begin their search early and explore what best suits their interests and career goals. Application deadlines and program durations vary from agency to agency. Because competition is stiff in many internship and fellowship programs, with applicants often far exceeding the number of positions available, one should apply to more than one program. Opportunities are generally available in the spring, summer, and fall, with summer positions being the most popular and the most competitive.

The terms “fellowship” and “internship” are sometimes used interchangeably in the names of specific programs. Fellowships are generally intended for persons with advanced degrees or substantial professional experience, and are usually salaried positions lasting nine months to a year or more. Internships, which are either salaried or volunteer short-term arrangements, usually require relatively little experience and are often filled by students.

Although they are sometimes confused with interns, congressional pages are high school students who serve Congress as messengers. For more information on the congressional page system, see the websites of the House and Senate page programs: <http://pageprogram.house.gov> (House) and http://www.senate.gov/reference/reference_index_subjects/Pages_vrd.htm (Senate).

The duties, responsibilities, and salaries (if any) of interns and fellows vary from program to program. Most program responsibilities are substantive in nature and often involve challenging projects. They may range from conducting legislative research for a congressional office to biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health. Some programs or universities that offer academic credit may require the intern/fellow to produce a report on the work experience and obtain evaluations from program supervisors. In addition, some programs lead to federal job placement. Recruitment programs like Presidential Management Fellows and the Congressional Research Service Graduate Recruit Program may offer permanent employment after the successful completion of program requirements. Because program details vary from agency to agency, it is best to consult the appropriate website or to contact the program office directly.

General Government Resources

USA.gov

The federal government's official Web portal provides an A-Z list of all federal agencies and departments.

http://www.usa.gov/Agencies/Federal/All_Agencies/index.shtml

USA.gov also offers a "Federal Government Jobs" website.

http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Work_for_the_Government.shtml

Making The Difference—Federal Internships

The Making the Difference website, a joint initiative of the Office of Personnel Management and a non-profit organization, the Partnership for Public Service, promotes careers in the federal government. The Federal Internships portion of the website includes information on more than 200 federal internship programs.

<http://www.makingthedifference.org/federalinternships>

USA Jobs—Student Jobs

The "student jobs" section of the official U.S. federal government employment website provides students with information on various educational opportunities available within the federal government, including internships, fellowships, apprenticeships, and cooperative programs.

<http://www.usajobs.gov/studentjobs/>

Office of Personnel Management Programs

Executive Order 13562 of December 27, 2010 (<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-33169.pdf>) created the Pathways Programs. The Pathways Programs are comprised of two new programs—the Internship Program and the Recent Graduates Program—and the already existing Presidential Management Fellows Program. The Executive Order also directed the phasing out of two programs—the Student Career Experience Program and the Federal Career Intern Program.

The regulations to implement these new programs are currently being considered, and the programs will be operational in late 2011. Federal agencies will continue to use the Student Career Experience Program and Federal Career Intern Program until they are discontinued when the changeover is complete. For more information, see <http://www.opm.gov/HiringReform/pathways/>.

Internship Program

Created by Executive Order 13562 of December 2010, the Internship Program will provide students in high schools, community colleges, four-year universities, trade schools, career and technical education programs, and other qualifying educational institutions and programs with paid opportunities to explore federal careers while still in school. Participants must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a qualifying program. The Internship Program, which does not yet have a website, will replace the Student Career Experience Program.

Recent Graduates Program

Created by Executive Order 13562 of December 2010, the Recent Graduates Program will provide individuals who have recently graduated from qualifying educational institutions or programs with developmental experiences in the federal government. Participants must have obtained a qualifying degree or completed a qualifying career or technical education program within the preceding two years. Veterans applying to the program who are unable to qualify within the two-year period due to military service may apply within six years of obtaining a qualifying degree or completing a qualifying program. This program does not yet have a website.

Presidential Management Fellows Program

The Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program was created to attract outstanding persons from many academic disciplines to the federal government who are interested in, and committed to careers in, the analysis and management of public policies and programs. As per Executive Order 13562 of December 2010, participants no longer need to be nominated by their educational institution but may apply independently. Applicants must have received, within the preceding two years, a qualifying advanced degree as determined by OPM.

Tel: (202) 606-1040

<http://www.pmf.opm.gov>

Student Educational Employment Program

To be replaced by the Internship Program as part of the Pathways Program in late 2011.

This program offers federal job opportunities to students who are enrolled or have been accepted for enrollment as degree candidates taking at least a half-time academic, technical, or vocational course of study in accredited high schools, technical or vocational schools, two- or four-year colleges or universities, or graduate or professional schools. The program has two components: the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) and the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP).

<http://www.opm.gov/employ/students/index.htm>

Federal Career Intern Program

To be discontinued in late 2011.

This program's goal is to aid agencies in attracting and recruiting top individuals into various occupations at grade levels GS-5, GS-7, and GS-9. Normally, individuals are appointed to two-year internships. Upon successfully completing their internships, interns may be eligible for permanent positions in an agency. Those interested in this program must contact specific agencies directly.

<http://www.opm.gov/careerintern/index.htm>

Executive Branch Opportunities

White House Fellows Program

Intended for young professionals who have demonstrated academic and professional excellence, this program places recipients in Cabinet-level agencies, the Executive Office of the President, the Vice President's office, or in smaller federal agencies for one year. Fellows make domestic and foreign trips to study U.S. policy and take part in roundtable discussions with leaders from the private and public sectors. Applicants must have finished their undergraduate degrees and be working in their chosen fields.

Tel: (202) 395-4522

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/fellows>

White House Internship Program

This program provides unpaid opportunities to learn more about the daily processes of the White House. The competitive program selects about 100 interns every spring, summer, and fall. Each applicant must be a U.S. citizen, enrolled in (or recently graduated from) a college or university, and at least 18 years old on or by the first day of the internship.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/wh-intern.html>

Department of Agriculture

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides undergraduate and graduate students with paid internships in several departmental offices, such as the Food and Nutrition Service, the Foreign Agricultural Service, and the Office of Inspector General. Students work as assistants to scientific, professional, administrative, and technical employees.

<http://www.usda.gov/da/employ/intern.htm>

Department of Commerce

The U.S. Department of Commerce offers a variety of paid and unpaid programs including Commerce Postsecondary Grants Internships and a Workforce Recruitment Program for college students with disabilities. Commerce bureaus and offices with internship programs include the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Census Bureau, and the Patent and Trademark Office.

<http://www.hr.commerce.gov/careers/studentcareeropportunities>

Department of Defense

The Student Summer Contract Program fills numerous positions in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) through private contractors and is limited to current students. The Unsalariated Internship Program allows students to gain experience in a professional setting and offers academic credit for the work performed.

Tel: (703)604-6219

<http://www.whs.mil/HRD/Apply/SpecialEmployment/StudentEmploymentPrograms/Index.cfm>

Department of Education

The U.S. Department of Education offers internships in several departmental offices such as Elementary and Secondary Education, Civil Rights, and Leadership and Teacher Development. These unpaid internships are available year-round. Students must be enrolled in a high school, trade school, technical or vocational institute, junior college, college, university, or other accredited educational institution.

Tel: (202) 260-1333

<http://www.ed.gov/students/prep/job/intern/index.html>

Department of Energy

The Department of Energy (DOE) recruits interns to research positions at DOE labs. These positions cover a range of subjects and career levels, from high school students to faculty members. Positions are paid but do not necessarily lead to DOE employment.

<http://jobs.energy.gov/entry-level-students/student-opportunities>

The DOE Scholars program introduces undergrad, grad, and postgrad students to the missions and operations of the DOE. These are paid positions for enrolled students 18 years and over, lasting either 10 weeks in the summer or 16 weeks during the semester.

<http://orise.ornl.gov/doescholars/>

Department of Health and Human Services

The Department of Health and Human Services's (HHS's) website provides a portal to student programs available in several offices. "Student Programs" at <http://www.hhs.gov/careers/student/index.html> is a listing of internship opportunities and research and training opportunities throughout the department.

The Emerging Leaders Program, described at <http://hhsu.learning.hhs.gov/elp>, is a two-year program designed to let applicants explore fields related to their academic background within HHS. The program involves rotations within departmental agencies during the first year and then a fixed placement the following year. Students must have one or more of the following degrees: bachelor's (with work experience), master's, JD, or Ph.D.

National Institutes of Health

The Summer Internship Program in Biomedical Research is open to students 16 and older who are enrolled in high school, undergraduate, or graduate programs. Positions are in various agency locations nationwide, and stipends are available for the eight-week-plus program. The National Institutes of Health Academy fellowship program is a year-long program with a stipend and is restricted to recent undergraduates. Other programs are available for specific subject areas.
<http://www.training.nih.gov/programs>

Department of Homeland Security

The U. S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) offers a variety of fellowship, scholarship, and internship programs in its agencies, which include Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the Secret Service. Programs include a Summer Law Intern Program, the ICE Student Volunteer Program, the National Security Internship Program and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) College Intern Program. Most, if not all, of the programs require U.S. citizenship, and some require a security clearance.

http://www.dhs.gov/xabout/careers/content_multi_image_0011.shtm

Department of the Interior

The Department of the Interior (DOI) operates three career intern programs, all described at <http://www.doiu.nbc.gov/intern.html>.

The Office of the Secretary Management Intern Program covers functional areas, such as budget administration, financial management, contracting, information management, human resources management, equal employment opportunity, and policy management.

Tel: (202) 208-4699

The Governmentwide Acquisition Management Intern Program is a two-year internship designed to develop federal contract specialists into procurement professionals and future government business leaders.

Tel: (202) 219-2213

The R. Schuyler Leshner Financial Management Career Intern Program is a program designed to develop future DOI financial leaders. At the time of this writing, this program was being redesigned and was not accepting applications.

Department of Justice

The Summer Law Intern Program accepts law students to salaried summer internships throughout the Department of Justice. The Volunteer Legal Recruitment Program offers legal internships to law students in their first through third years. This program is unpaid, with placement in U.S. Attorneys' Offices, the Immigration Courts, and department field offices in cities nationwide, including Washington, DC.

<http://www.justice.gov/oarm/oppls.htm>

Department of State

The department's website provides a portal to available student programs, internships and fellowships. Opportunities range from the Summer Clerical Program to the Thomas Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowships. To help students choose the most appropriate program for them, an online questionnaire is available to aid them.

<http://www.careers.state.gov/student-programs>

Department of Transportation

The department's website lists several student programs including the John A. Volpe Transportation Internship and Volunteer Legal Internships. Minority internship programs are offered by the Federal Aviation Administration and the Federal Highway Administration.

http://www.careers.dot.gov/stu_intern.html

Department of the Treasury

The Department of the Treasury manages the Departmental Offices Summer Internship Program, where students may apply to various Treasury offices. The Treasury also participates in several year-round student employment programs, as listed on their website. Applicants must be 18 years of age or older and enrolled at an accredited college or university.

Tel: (202)927-4800

<http://www.treasury.gov/careers/hq-careers/Pages/SummerInternshipILF.aspx>

Judicial Branch Opportunities

Supreme Court Fellows Program

This program places individuals for a calendar year in the U.S. Supreme Court, the Federal Judicial Center, the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, or the U.S. Sentencing Commission. The paid fellowships are open to individuals from various professions and academic backgrounds. Applicants must have at least one postgraduate degree, two or more years of exceptional professional experience, and multidisciplinary training and experience, including understanding of the judicial process.

Tel: (202) 479-3415

<http://www.supremecourt.gov/fellows/default.aspx>

Judicial Intern Program

This program is geared toward advanced undergraduates and graduating college seniors interested in law, management, or social sciences. Interns work in the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Chief Justice. Internships are offered in the fall, spring, and summer and are unpaid.

Tel: (202) 479-3415

<http://www.supremecourt.gov/jobs/jip/jip.aspx>

Legislative Branch Opportunities

U.S. Congress

Internships are available in many Members' Washington, DC, and district or state offices, as well as in congressional committees' offices. Internships are generally unpaid and offered year-round. Applications are often found at each individual Member's or committee's website, or candidates may contact the desired office directly. For lists of Member and committee websites and office contact information, see the following Senate and House of Representatives Home Pages.

Senate: <http://www.senate.gov>

House of Representatives: <http://www.house.gov>

Fellowships in congressional offices are offered by many organizations—such as the American Political Science Association (APSA), the American Psychological Association, and the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers—which give persons exposure to public policy and the legislative process. Placement for these fellowships is generally not done through the Members' or committees' offices but instead through the sponsoring organizations.

Because there is no centralized listing of all available congressional fellowships, finding them via the Web is best done by searching on the phrase “congressional fellowship.” Some well-known fellowship programs offered by professional organizations include the APSA Congressional Fellowships, http://www.apsanet.org/content_3031.cfm; the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science and Technology Policy Fellowships, <http://fellowships.aaas.org/>; and the Brookings Institution's Legis Congressional Fellowships, <http://www.brookings.edu/execed/fellowships.aspx>.

Examples of government-run fellowship programs that place some of their fellows in congressional offices include the Department of Energy's Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship Program, <http://science.energy.gov/wdts/einstein/>, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship Program, <http://www.seagrant.noaa.gov/knauss/index.html>. The House of Representatives recently began a two-year fellowship program for disabled veterans, the Wounded Warrior Fellowship Program, which is described at <http://cao.house.gov/wwp-about.shtml>.

Several congressional fellowship programs, such as those sponsored by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation and the Women's Research and Education Institute, are described in the “Minority Opportunities” section of this report. Some congressional fellowships are listed on the “Additional Opportunities for Students” page of USAJobs.gov at <http://www.usajobs.gov/StudentJobs/AdditionalOpportunitiesForStudents.asp>.

Congressional Budget Office

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) provides Congress with budget-related information and explains possible budget ramifications of proposed bills reported by congressional committees. College students and recent college graduates can apply for paid 10-week summer internships, in which they work on analyses in CBO's various divisions. CBO also offers paid Economic Policy Fellowships for applicants with Ph.Ds.

Tel: (202) 226-2628

Internships website: <http://www.cbo.gov/employment/intern.cfm>

Fellowships website: <http://www.cbo.gov/employment/fellowships.cfm>

Congressional Research Service

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) provides research and analysis in all policy issue areas upon request to Members and committees. In partnership with seven organizations and historically black colleges and universities CRS offers a limited number of paid summer internships to outstanding minority students. Volunteer internship opportunities are available year-round but are available primarily to graduate students, postgraduate students, faculty, and other professionals. In addition, CRS offers special hiring and recruitment programs under the Presidential Management Fellows Program, Graduate Recruit Program, Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies Summer Internship Program, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) Cooperative Education program, and Law Recruit Program. U.S. citizenship is required for all programs.

<http://www.loc.gov/crsinfo/opportunities/op-internships.html>

Government Accountability Office

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) is a congressional auditing and investigative agency that makes recommendations for more effective government operations. College students who are U.S. citizens may be chosen to serve as paid or volunteer interns, generally for 10-12 weeks.

Tel: (202) 512-5811

<http://www.gao.gov/careers/student.html>

Library of Congress

The Library of Congress offers unpaid and paid internship, fellowship, and volunteer opportunities in several departments such as the American Folklife Center, the Conservation Division, and the Hispanic Division. Opportunities include the Junior Fellows Summer Intern Program, <http://www.loc.gov/hr/jrfellows/>, which offers a stipend.

For more information, go to <http://www.loc.gov/hr/employment/index.php>, then choose "Internships, Fellowship & Volunteer Programs."

Other Opportunities

Environmental Protection Agency

In addition to programs for graduate and postgraduate students, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) offers paid summer employment for high school students through the Student Summer Employment Program. Internships, fellowships, and other positions for all educational levels are available in Washington, DC, laboratories, and at regional EPA locations. Applicants must be 16 years of age or older and enrolled at an accredited institution.

<http://www.epa.gov/careers/index.html>

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) website offers two lists of fellowships, internships, research, and educational opportunities. For students, options range from Applied Physics Laboratory Internship Project to the Marshall Robotics Academy summer internship program. For educators or faculty, options range from the NASA Administrator's Fellowship Project to the Kennedy Space Center Intern Project.

<http://www.nasa.gov/offices/education/programs/index.html>

Smithsonian Fellowship & Internship Programs

The Smithsonian Institution provides various fellowship and internship programs and academic appointments within its museums and research institutes. Program descriptions are available on the Smithsonian Opportunities for Research and Study website.

Tel: (202) 633-7070

<http://www.si.edu/ofg/intern.htm>

United States Agency for International Development

USAID has several internship programs: the Paid Student Internship Program, Volunteer Student Internship program, Internships in the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, the Office of the General Counsel, the Office of Transition Initiatives and other Regional Bureaus abroad. These internships are open to undergraduate and graduate students. USAID also offers Fellowship opportunities for more advanced applicants.

<http://www.usaid.gov/careers/studentprograms.html>

The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars

The center's internship program provides unpaid opportunities in the Washington, DC, area to college students and postgraduates. Students are placed within the public (including the federal government), private, and nonprofit sectors. Several internship programs are available for minority applicants. Financial assistance is also available. The Washington Center is one of several organizations that place interns in the Washington area. Others include the Washington Internship Institute, <http://www.wiicdc.org>; the Fund for American Studies, <http://www.tfas.org>; and the National Internship Program, <http://www.nationalinternship.com>.

Tel: (202) 238-7900
<http://www.twc.edu>

Minority Opportunities

Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies

The Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS) offers paid and unpaid internship and fellowship opportunities to Asian Pacific Americans to encourage participation in the political process. Selected students work with a congressional office or government agency in Washington, DC.

Tel: (202) 296-9200

Internships website: http://www.apaics.org/index.php/pages/programs/summer_internships

Fellowships website: <http://www.apaics.org/index.php/pages/programs/fellowships>

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Internship and Fellowship Programs

The Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF) offers a Congressional Internship Program, including a specialized communications internship program, as well as two fellowship programs: the Congressional Fellows Program and the Louis Stokes Urban Health Policy Fellows Program. Both fellows programs aim to provide research and policy analysis opportunities for persons with graduate or professional degrees. All CBCF programs include either a salary or a stipend and housing.

Tel: (202) 263-2800

<http://www.cbcfinc.org/cbcf-internships.html>

Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Internship and Fellowship Programs

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) Summer Internship Program provides undergraduates with the opportunity to work in congressional offices. Interns receive housing, round-trip transportation, and a stipend. The CHCI Public Policy Fellowship Program provides graduate students, or recent college graduates, with the opportunity to obtain experience in public policy. The range of placements includes congressional offices, federal agencies, media, business federal affairs offices, advocacy groups, and government-related institutions. Fellows receive round-trip transportation and a stipend.

Tel: (800) 392-3532 or (202) 543-1771

Internships website: <http://www.chci.org/internships>

Fellowships website: <http://www.chci.org/fellowships>

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities National Internship Program

The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) National Internship Program (HNIP) recruits undergraduate and graduate students from all academic majors for paid summer and semester internships at federal agencies and private companies in Washington, DC and throughout the country. Interns may also receive round-trip transportation and housing.

Tel: (202) 467-0893

<http://www.hacu.net/hacu/HNIP.asp>

Minority Access Internship Program

This is a paid internship program for undergraduate and graduate students. Applicants are selected by federal agencies and other participating organizations in the Washington, DC area. Interns may receive assistance with housing and travel expenses.

Tel: (301) 779-7100

http://minorityaccess.org/intern_program_04.htm

Morris K. Udall and Stewart L. Udall Foundation Native American Congressional Summer Internship Program

The foundation offers Native American students the opportunity to work in congressional offices, federal agencies, or the White House for ten weeks. Interns receive round-trip transportation, housing, and a stipend.

Tel: (520) 901-8500

<http://www.udall.gov/OurPrograms/NACInternship/NACInternship.aspx>

Women's Research and Education Institute Congressional Fellowship Program

The program provides graduate and post-graduate students the opportunity to work for nine months in congressional offices as legislative aides on policy issues that affect women.

Tel: (703) 812-7990

<http://www.wrei.org/Fellows.htm>

Bibliography

This selective bibliography lists more sources of information on internships, fellowships, and summer job opportunities. The publications can be used to find additional work experience opportunities, both inside and outside the federal government. These works may be available in local libraries or school or college guidance offices. Annotations identify publications that are issued annually. Other publications are updated irregularly; check with publishers for information on the latest editions.

The Best 109 Internships (Princeton Review). 9th ed. New York: Random House, Inc., 2003.

Information is given on more than 20,000 internship opportunities in such areas as law, television, advertising, sports, computers, journalism, music, health care, publishing, finance, education, and the environment.

Congressional Intern Handbook: a Guide for Interns and Newcomers to Capitol Hill. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Management Foundation, 2006.

Described as a “nuts-and-bolts guide to working in a Congressional office,” this publication includes a chapter on “Finding a job or another internship” on Capitol Hill. This handbook is used in many congressional offices.

Encyclopedia of Associations. Farmington Hills, MI: Gale Cengage. Annual.

This publication can be used to locate organizations by subject area. When standard internship directories contain no entries for internships in a specific field, relevant groups listed in this publication may be able to suggest contacts for internship opportunities. This work can be found in many libraries in print, on CD-ROM, or in the *Associations Unlimited* subscription database.

Insider’s Guide to Political Internships: What to Do Once You’re In the Door. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2002.

This publication provides advice on “surviving and thriving” in political internships, including on Capitol Hill and in congressional district offices.

The Internship Bible (Princeton Review). New York: Random House, Inc. Annual.

This publication provides information on more than 100,000 internships on almost every field of study. It can be found at most bookstores.

Peterson’s Internships. Lawrenceville, NJ: Peterson’s. Annual.

Listed here are profiles of internship opportunities across the United States and abroad. It includes indexes by geographic area, field of interest, and employer name. This work is generally available in bookstores.

Summer Jobs in the U.S.A. Lawrenceville, NJ: Peterson’s. Annual.

Provided in this directory are state-by-state listings of more than 55,000 summer work experiences available to students, teachers, and others in a variety of fields. The index includes access to opportunities for interns and volunteers.

Vault Guide to Top Internships. New York, NY: Vault. Annual.

This directory profiles internship programs at over 750 companies, organizations and government agencies. Some of this information is also available on the internship portion of the Vault website at <http://www.vault.com/wps/portal/usa/internshiplanding>.

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Acknowledgments

Human Capital Management Specialist Celia Rivas-Mendive provided assistance on this report.