



The Roger Lehecka Double Discovery Center

Getting community youth to, through, and beyond college



Photo: Macquarie LEADS Mentor with Intern.

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The DDC Fellowship Program

DDC has established a Fellowship Program to expand the Academic Enrichment activities for its high school students. The Fellowship provides an annual stipend to selected Columbia University graduate students. This year, DDC expects to award five Fellowships. Each

semester, the Fellows must design and deliver two academically rigorous courses in the Humanities, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), or the Arts; mentor and supervise at least one Columbia undergraduate assigned to each course as a teaching assistant; and participate in DDC's professional development program wherein instructional specialists will help them to develop and tailor their teaching strategies so that students are engaged and motivated to learn in a rigorous academic setting.

This new program reflects DDC's tradition of leveraging the intellectual resources of Columbia students through meaningful civic engagement, to address the persistent educational disparities that community youth encounter. It also extends and deepens the "Double Discovery" of our mission as we build the teaching skills of Columbia graduate students so that they can effectively impart their content knowledge to our young people through dynamic teaching and learning classrooms. As the Fellows work to enhance the college-readiness of our high school youth, they receive high-quality pedagogical training and improve their teaching practice and confidence. These are essential skills for graduate students interested in a career in academia.

The DDC Fellowship Program is made possible by the generous gift of a long-time DDC supporter. Gifts to DDC enable us to offer academic enrichment and other college-ready programming that make a huge impact on the future of community youth.

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Macquarie LEADS Summer Internship – The Reviews Are In!

In June, we introduced you to the Macquarie LEADS summer internship whereby 11 DDC students were selected to participate in a five-week paid work experience and mentorship program starting on July 8th. Through the internship, students completed projects and assignments as they shadowed and worked alongside staff from Macquarie Group's Advisory, Asset Management, Trading, Finance, Operations and Risk teams in their New York office.

The internship ended on August 8th and the reviews are in! Here's what our students and their Macquarie mentors have to say about this extraordinary opportunity.

- **Nahid Uddin**, DDC student since February 2019, Macquarie Corporate Operations Group, Market Operations Division

I did the elevator pitch workshop and I found it so cool that I was able to apply the skills I learned at Macquarie when I saw AOC in my neighborhood!

- **Jackie Namala**, DDC student since September 2016, Macquarie Financial Management Group, Finance

Perhaps the biggest transformation I have experienced is how I think about higher education. Talking with my Macquarie colleagues about their careers has motivated me to pursue a master's degree. This way, I will have the skills and knowledge needed to advance in my future occupation.

- **Damely Abreu**, DDC student since September 2016, Macquarie Corporate Asset Finance

At the start of the internship, I felt like a complete alien to the environment. The people were different, the setting was different, and I did not know how not to be awkward. Now I feel like I like the corporate world and I most likely will study finance when I go to college and work to advance my communication and public speaking skills.

I have also learned that I have been insecure about my abilities to be successful at a high-quality college or university. The college & career journey has been a really thought-provoking path and at this point, I really want to give it my all and attend a university that is a good fit for me and well-rounded in everything so I can have a variety of options.

- **David Franecki, Macquarie LEADS supervisor and mentor**

I was very impressed with the way that the LEADS interns adapted to their new environment at Macquarie and made contributions to their various teams. Working at a financial services company can be intense at times and this was their first experience in a corporate environment. In just a few weeks, I saw the intern that I mentored go from being a bit tentative at the start, to confidently asking questions, networking with senior leaders and delivering work that made both her and our team proud. I give the LEADS interns a lot of credit for stepping out of their comfort zones and being active members of our firm, and their growth from those efforts was clear.

Macquarie LEADS Summer Internship – Highlights

The goal of LEADS is to help first-generation NYC youth by exposing them to new experiences in the world of work so that they develop skills and dispositions that will help them achieve their educational, professional, and life goals. Macquarie staff members from various divisions are paired with each intern to mentor the students during the summer and throughout the upcoming academic year.

Every year, Macquarie starts the program in the spring with several teambuilding and training activities to prepare mentors and interns for the experience. These pre-program activities include appropriate workplace behavior training for students, Macquarie mentor training co-facilitated with a DDC counselor, a team dinner and theatre show and a sponsored professional attire shopping outing to help students fully prepare for their internship.

On July 8th, students began their 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday work-week. They participated in daily skill-building workshops, collaborated on a group project, completed individual projects to support the work of the Macquarie division to which they were assigned, and participated in weekly critical reflection sessions with a DDC counselor to discuss and document their learning and insights over the week as well as goals for the upcoming week.

A few highlights from the Macquarie LEADS Summer Internship Program according to the interns were:

- Team building with mentors at Chelsea Piers
- Volunteering together with Macquarie's technology staff at OATS (Older Adults Technology Services)
- Career and college panel discussions
- Budgeting, debt and credit workshops facilitated by Macquarie staff
- Project management training
- Professional presentation seminars with communications experts
- Field trips to The United Nations, led by Columbia University alumni who now work at UN Women, the Department of State and the World Bank; and to the LinkedIn New York office to learn about professional networking

No wonder LEADS is getting such enthusiastic feedback!

Jailyssa Torres, DDC student since 2019 and Macquarie Intern in Corporate Affairs, sums it up very well:

All the interns and I can testify that this internship has truly been beneficial and has helped kick start our professional careers. I walk away with pride as I now know how to network, budget, send a professional email and understand more about business etiquette. Thank you Macquarie and thank you to my wonderful mentor!

DDC Student Spotlight: Jailyssa Torres, DDC student since 2019, Rising Senior, and her mother, Mrs. Dominga Torres

When I enrolled in DDC last year, I was only interested in a SAT prep class. I was totally surprised when I realized the vast resources that DDC offers students, from college preparation workshops, to STEM classes, to family events and seminars on building resilience and self-confidence.

I was also very astonished with the college tours that DDC hosted for us at no charge! I went to the DDC Washington DC tour last year – visiting Georgetown, Howard and American universities. This was my first college trip and in fact, my first time away from home. Walking on these campuses, meeting the students, engaging with the college staff, college felt realer than ever. Georgetown is now on my list for next year!

My DDC counselor prepared me so well for the application process. She gave me a spreadsheet listing all of the different colleges and helped me lay out all of the many steps that I need to complete and finalize my list of colleges. It is a very complicated process – a student cannot do it alone. My school does not have the resources to guide every student through the application. We have two college counselors for some 300 or 400 students, which is why I'm very appreciative for my DDC counselor.

I learned at DDC that I need to take everything into consideration for every single school I am interested in – courses, location, demographics, and costs. For example, I need to investigate how well the programs match my interests; and how they will help me in the long run with my career and my professional life. I now know that I have to be fully prepared for each of my college choices, I cannot choose a college just because it has a beautiful campus – this used to be my mentality in middle school!

Through DDC, I was able to be a part of Macquarie LEADS and intern at Macquarie Group, a global independent investment bank with financial services, asset management, advisory, and capital solutions. I had the privilege to work with the Corporate Affairs team within the Financial Management Group (FMG), where I received mentoring from an experienced editor and journalist. Macquarie LEADS summer internship taught me the importance of networking, collaboration, budgeting, project and other Microsoft skills. This summer was one of my best summers yet because it confirmed my passions and my career choices.

Both DDC and Macquarie LEADS stress the importance of staying open minded. When you have the slightest interest in a subject, DDC pushes you to go for it, and then they discuss with you the different career opportunities in that field and they help you set benchmarks for yourself. I learned a lot about time management and goal setting. Goal setting is a crucial skill not only for my high school career but for life. If you can set goals for yourself and focus on reaching them, you already have a firsthand advantage on someone who doesn't.

I already took two classes at DDC: "Understanding Race through the Written Word" and "Crime, Poverty and Social Inequalities." We did community service projects – it is about giving back, bringing change to your community, getting up and helping people. The classes were extremely insightful and opened my eyes on poverty. Poverty can be systemic – a cycle so hard to escape from that it affects families over generations.

I plan to do more classes this year at DDC: writing, history, human rights. I am interested in business, marketing, team building, and communications. DDC opened my eyes to so many opportunities and taught me the skills to seize them, which in turn opened so many doors.

Going to DDC has triggered a positive chain reaction with many opportunities and has helped me develop into a well-rounded student.

Jailyssa's mother, Mrs. Dominga Torres

DDC prepares your child to tackle real world challenges that come from being a part of a diverse society. It teaches them to understand the world but also to become practical pioneers to change the world into a better world.

The program targets the whole individual – education, self-acceptance, stress management, family involvement etc. As a parent, especially as a single parent, I appreciate that DDC puts such emphasis and resources to help develop a well-rounded person, instead of just an academically successful person.

Jailyssa has developed a self-confidence that I have never seen before. She now interacts with other people with confidence, I am amazed at the level of fluidity and surety that emanates from her conversations with professionals.

My best DDC memory so far was attending Jailyssa's presentation as an intern at Macquarie. Witnessing her growth in that moment was just truly wonderful! I was overcome with emotion and I couldn't contain my tears. I saw her going from quietly keeping to herself, to watching her speak to a crowd of professionals. I was so proud of her achievement and so thankful that DDC provided this opportunity!

Calling all DDC Alumni and Former Volunteers! We want to hear from you!

Click on this link to reconnect:

<https://ddc.college.columbia.edu/ddc-alumni-and-former-volunteers>

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