**Presentation to South Sound Partners in Philanthropy Meeting, March 1, 2017**

Good morning and thank you for having me.

Who I am: position, in my 7th year at Evergreen, hail from Cleveland, OH where I was a nonprofit fair housing practitioner for over 6 years. PhD in…

About the MPA Program—any grads in the audience?

The MISSION of the MPA Program:

Our students, faculty and staff create learning communities to explore and implement socially just, democratic public service. We

* *think* critically and creatively;
* *communicate* effectively;
* *work* collaboratively;
* *embrace* diversity;
* *value* fairness and equity;
* *advocate* powerfully on behalf of the public; and
* *imagine* new possibilities and accomplish positive change in our workplaces and in our communities.

We have 3 concentrations…sometimes require an internship.

Over the past 6 years, MPA students have completed over 70 graduate internships in nonprofit organizations, a majority of which were in Thurston County.

Today I will be speaking about MPA Program internships; Evergreen’s other grad programs may have other stipulations.

I was asked to speak on 2 topics:

1. Incorporating interns short-term into your nonprofit
2. Do’s & Don’ts that make for a good internship experience for graduate students

--my talk will be a blending of these two topics and, hopefully, will be of use.

I have a feeling many of you already have a process in place for internships. Who has sponsored an MPA student intern? Would you share your experience?

I will frame my talk in terms of 3 broad categories of how to ensure a great experience for all:

* **First, interns are different than volunteers.**
  + Interns are paying tuition to work for free your organization.
  + Your organization is their classroom and, as graduate students, they expect some “heft” to the internship experience, which results in your organization getting some important “heftier” work accomplished.
  + Successful internships link one of our interns to a staff member who has the time and energy to devote to mentoring the intern and helping in educating that intern to the work of the organization.
* **Second, ability and expectations:**
  + Remember that graduate interns are not like undergraduate interns necessarily, particularly when it comes to experience.
    - For example, an intern making a career shift and has more leadership expertise than your staff.
  + Take the time to interview the intern, or at least review their resume and have an email conversation to discover their strengths and expectations, as well as making clear your expectations.
  + Plan ahead for graduate internships when writing grants, launching new initiatives, etc. We have had MPA students complete 1-year internships.
  + There is demand for our MPA Interns, and so the position you have may not get filled, especially given that paid internships tend to take priority.
  + With that said, MPA grads who want to intern at a nonprofit organization are banking on experiential learning, not financial gain.
* **Third, time considerations:**
  + Please keep in mind that students are on an academic calendar. Some students have been very stressed out because they get put on a task (such as last-minute event planning details) in week 9 or 10 of the quarter, when final projects and presentations are due.
  + Also, MPA students often have full-time jobs, and so a 5-10/hour per week internship is more likely to be filled than 20-40 hours.
  + Some effective strategies:
    - Planning for an internship that spans more than one quarter;
    - Have the internship be project-based with flex time;
    - Allowing an intern to work offsite rather than be in the office.
  + Do not assume they have a bevy of resources available from their institution. For example, we do not have student travel funds, so attending the annual conference may not be financially possible for them. Is there another opportunity for the intern?

My final bit of advice for incorporating graduate interns into your organizations is to create thoughtful, well-planned internship experiences that will benefit both the intern and the organization.