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### **From Classroom to Career: Paid STEM Internships for Somerville High School Seniors**

Somerville's growing STEM industry is creating new opportunities, but too many local students still lack a direct pathway into it.

With a rapidly expanding base of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) employers and more than 300 Somerville High School seniors preparing to graduate, the demand for meaningful career exposure has never been greater. During the 2024-2025 school year, 143 Somerville High School students participated in STEM or STEM-aligned Career and Technical Education programs, according to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Yet paid, hands-on STEM internship opportunities remain limited, particularly for seniors ready to take their next step.

At the same time, local STEM employers report ongoing challenges in recruiting early talent, especially young workers from diverse backgrounds who reflect Somerville's community.

To bridge this gap, the MassHire Metro North Workforce Board (MNWB) has been awarded \$200,000 through the City of Somerville's Job Creation and Retention Trust Fund (JCRT) to launch a new paid STEM internship program for Somerville High School seniors.

"This award is an important investment in connecting Somerville youth with in-demand careers in STEM fields," said Chris Albrizio-Lee, MNWB President and CEO. "We thank the Somerville JCRT and look forward to working with our partners and employers to ensure the next generation has the skills, abilities, and knowledge to succeed in tomorrow's workforce."

This initiative will connect students with local STEM employers for 8-week paid internships in the summers of 2026 and 2027, serving 30 youth in total. Interns will gain hands-on technical experience, workplace readiness skills, industry mentorship, transportation assistance, and individualized job coaching while removing financial barriers that often prevent students from participating. Employers can host interns at no direct cost.

Priority will be given to students underrepresented in STEM fields, including first-generation college students, English language learners, and youth from low- to moderate-income households.

By investing in paid work-based learning, we are strengthening the long-term talent pipeline and building a more inclusive economy in Somerville. This model ensures students graduate with real world experience, professional networks, and a clear pathway for postsecondary education, apprenticeships, or entry-level STEM careers.

**Somerville STEM employers interested in hosting an 8-week intern at no direct cost are encouraged to contact Meagan Yeku at [MYeku@masshiremetronorth.org](mailto:MYeku@masshiremetronorth.org).**

***About the MassHire Metro North Workforce Board (MNWB)***

MNWB, incorporated in 1995 as the Metro North Regional Employment Board (REB), is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that serves as the Workforce Development Board (WDB) for the Metro North region of Massachusetts. As one of sixteen local Workforce Development Boards established in Massachusetts by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, MNWB was formed to set local workforce policy, determine how state and federal funds are best used for workforce development, align the needs of employers to the needs of area residents, leverage partnerships to meet the region's workforce needs, and oversee the MassHire Metro North Career Centers (MNCC) where both job search and employer services are provided. Additional information is available at [masshiremetronorth.org](http://masshiremetronorth.org).

***About the City of Somerville's Job Creation and Retention Trust Fund (JCRT)***

Commercial developments over 15,000 square feet are subject to a \$3.10 per square foot linkage fee (as of March 2025) which funds Somerville's Jobs Creation and Retention Trust (JCRT). The Trust is overseen by a nine-member board and works to create and expand employment opportunities for Somerville residents. The trust was created in December 2017 when Somerville City Council approved a zoning amendment that created the linkage fee. Additional information is available at [www.somervillema.gov/departments/programs/job-creation-and-retention-trust-fund-jcrt](http://www.somervillema.gov/departments/programs/job-creation-and-retention-trust-fund-jcrt)

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