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## **INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITY**

**Received – 12/1/05**

### **Internships at FairVote**

WE ARE CURRENTLY ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR SPRING SEMESTER & SUMMER INTERNS.

Founded in 1992, FairVote is recognized as a national leader in electoral systems reform. Our mission is based upon the belief that electoral systems can be reformed at all levels of government in order to increase vitality in our democracy, ensure fairer representation of our society's diversity in elected bodies, and assist local state and national governments in their efforts toward solving the complex issues facing our nation.

We maintain a comprehensive website with a wide array of public education materials. We provide legal assistance in voting rights cases, and hold workshops in communities and at conferences around the United States. Throughout the nation our experts are called upon to provide analysis and commentary to all types of media outlets including CNN, NPR, FOX, etc.

Because we are a relatively small organization -- we typically have four to eight full-time staff members in our Takoma Park, Maryland office -- interns assume a great deal of responsibility. We have real flexibility in having interns work on areas they are most interested in -- be it research, activism, website, writing or creating materials.

FairVote offers internships to undergraduate students, graduate students, and law students. We have also had recent graduates intern with us.

We offer internships at all points during the year, and have no fixed deadlines for applying. We offer unpaid full-time and part-time internships, although most summer internships are full-time. Our summer internships are the most competitive. We are willing to work with interns to meet requirements for receiving academic credit and/or outside funding for internships.

We accept resumes and writing samples at any point during the year, which you may send to us at (by email, postal, or fax): FairVote-The Center For Voting and Democracy, 6930 Carroll Ave., Suite 610, Takoma Park, MD 20912. You may fax information to us at: 301-270-4133; or you may e-mail it to [hr@fairvote.org](mailto:hr@fairvote.org). Applications should consist of a cover letter (indicating which programs you are interested in applying for), a current resume, and a writing sample (no more than five pages). \*NO CALLS PLEASE\*

Below are a number of internship job descriptions, outlining a number of intern positions. Note that these are guidelines for internships and that interns may take on responsibilities for more than one internship position. FairVote staff members are assigned to each internship program area, and interns work closely with those staff members. On occasion, there are opportunities for interns to develop their own project areas outside those outlined below.

Please specify in your cover letter the internship position(s) that interest you. All the below internships are based in our national, Takoma Park, Maryland (Washington, DC).

**IRV for America-** Interns in this program area would work towards the promotion of instant run-off voting throughout the country. IRV is a voting method that corrects the defects in plurality elections and two-round runoff elections, the two most widely used voting systems in the country. Primary duties for an internship in this area include election research & analysis and outreach to college student governments. An internship in this program would also involve working to implement instant runoff voting for student government elections in colleges, universities, and high schools, and would involve organizing, making contacts on campuses, and assisting other student leaders. Some aspects of the project include preparing sample op-eds for student newspapers; creating news releases for campus newspaper editors, and working with national student groups to gain support.

**Program for Representative Government -** We are active in seeking fair racial and minority representation, and this area of our work focuses on full representation voting systems as solutions to voting rights and redistricting issues. Interns will work within the civil rights and voting rights communities; including with chapters of the NAACP, ACLU, MALDEF, LULAC, Asian American and Hispanic organizations and many others. Interns in this area would also do outreach work and elections research and analysis, as well as comparing elections in the United States with how systems are used in other countries, conducting research on organizations that are using proportional representation and research election issues like plurality winners in cities, states, and other areas.

**Right To Vote Initiative -** The Center For Voting and Democracy is actively lobbying to gain support for H.J. Res 28, a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution to add a right to vote. An intern with the Right To Vote Initiative will help in lobbying efforts for this amendment and assist in efforts to promote other electoral reforms such as same-day voter registration, provisional ballot standardization and improvement to voting machinery. The intern will have the opportunity to develop advocacy materials, draft press releases, help organize state-based lobbying groups and build support through outreach. As a benefit the intern should walk away from this experience with a better understanding of the legislative process and the constitutional reform movement.

**Voting and Democracy Research Center -** An intern in this program would work on researching the competitiveness of elections, various aspects of presidential races, and demographics and partisanship in redistricting. See our report on "Monopoly Politics" as an example of some of this kind of work. Internships in this division are based substantially on analyzing election results to identify problems, as well as make projections.

**Presidential Elections Reform Program -**Fair Vote's Presidential Elections Reform Program supports reforms to provide voters with more exposure to candidates, to encourage a more inclusive nomination schedule and, above all, to adhere to the principle of one person, one vote through a nationwide popular vote for president. Our initial program focus is on seeking a national vote for president through constitutional change and action in the states. Interns will assist in research, outreach, website drafting, and other tasks relating to presidential elections reform.

**Assistant to the Director -** Interns in this are would work closely with FairVote executive director Rob Richie on a range of program management and development work. On development, the position

concentrates on fundraising; identifying new sources of funding; new grants; exploring resources at the DC Foundation Center and identifying potential individual donors. Interns working in this area have the opportunity to help develop and assemble project proposals for foundation funding, as well as help tend to our membership base. A great skill to develop for anyone interested in non-profit work. Excellent experience for someone interested in working more in the non-profit world.

Communications & Press Assistant- In seeking to spread our message of electoral reform, the Communications Assistant will help forge important connections to influential individuals and groups across the political spectrum. Interns will conduct outreach to both major and minor political parties, "good government" groups, local and state government officials, election administrators, and more. In addition, they will compile press contacts, maintain our database, write press releases, assemble publicity materials, organize press conferences, and assist with mailings to local and major media. This is a position open to creative thought and new ideas for FairVote's overall communications strategy.

Technology & E-Organizing Assistant- Interns will assist the Communications Director with technical and creative tasks including website modifications, flash animation development, graphic design, development of multimedia visuals and production of printed publicity materials. Applicants should possess a solid understanding of Photoshop, MS Access, MySQL, and web-development languages and tools. Knowledge of Macromedia Flash and experience with VHS to .mpg conversion a plus. The Website / E-Organizing Assistant will develop critical technical skills in addition to gaining exposure to policy issues, and will learn much about maintaining the Communications infrastructure of a nonprofit organization.

Legal Interns- This internship position is for law students with an interest in the Voting Rights Act, redistricting, and other areas of election law. Areas of work include legislative drafting, statutory and state constitutional analysis of obstacles to reform, tracking and analyzing the impact of recent decisions on our work, researching pending voting rights lawsuits, developing our Voting Rights Act, Section 2 amicus brief, and more relating to voting rights and election law.