

2023 Georgia County Internship Program Grant Recipient Counties and Interns

Athens-Clarke County



Santiago “Santi” Arbelaez, a rising senior and photography student at the University of Georgia (UGA), interned in Athens-Clarke County. Arbelaez worked in the county’s public information office, where he applied his area of study to video and photography projects. Over the summer, he assisted with the documentation and promotion of facilities, events, programs, staff, and other areas.

Augusta-Richmond County

In Augusta-Richmond County, two interns worked in the human resources department. Kimberly Kelly, a recent Augusta University business administration graduate, and Ruben Alba, a rising senior at Southern New Hampshire University studying psychology, completed hands-on projects with human resources staff.

Throughout the internship, Kelly and Alba worked closely with recruiters to learn about the full recruiting process. They posted open positions using the county applicant tracking system, assisted in new-hire onboarding and orientation, and learned about county benefits and the open enrollment process. They also attended recruitment events and prepared materials or handouts as needed.



Baldwin County



In Baldwin County, rising Georgia College senior and geography major Tanner Adams interned in the GIS department. During his internship, Adams worked to update the Baldwin County Road Database, a web application and map. Adams also created a records management system to facilitate the update, highlighting right-of-way widths, pavement widths, pavement types, and lengths. Additionally, he assisted the GIS department with day-to-day tasks and responsibilities.

Bartow County



Rising Georgia Tech first-year Gracie Pruitt returned to Bartow County for her second year in the engineering department. As a continuation of her previous work for the county, she completed plan reviews of residential drainage and tertiary plans and supported Erosion & Sedimentation inspections at larger developments. She had more independent work on plan reviews and began using GIS to make changes as needed. She also completed field work and collaborated with engineering staff on projects.

Camden County



Chloe Crosby, a rising sophomore at Georgia College & State University pursuing her BBA, completed an internship in the Camden County Planning and Development Department. Crosby completed research and recordkeeping for technical data and assisted with organization and digitization of department records. She also attended a citizen academy and helped plan meetings, providing her real-world experience with zoning and planning.



Ian Pederson, an exercise science major at Kennesaw State University, also interned with Camden County. Pederson worked with Camden County Fire Rescue to create an inventory of equipment and supplies by auditing and organizing equipment across Camden County's ten stations. While organizing equipment and supplies, Pederson also determined which items were in surplus and identified which could be recycled or sold.

Chatham County



Melanie Holland, a public health major at Georgia Southern, worked in Chatham County as a GIS intern. During her internship, she worked with staff to locate critical septic systems and assisted in the development and dissemination of education materials for home and business owners. She also developed, coordinated, and hosted workshops and presentations for homeowners and community members.



Georgia Southern University student Darryl Henderson worked in the human resources department in Chatham County. Henderson, a public health major, learned the ins-and-outs of the Human Resources Department and was able to apply classroom concepts to practical situations. During his time with the county, he helped plan and execute an employee appreciation day and job fair. He also worked in employee relations to survey potential improvements in job applications and employee work-life balance.

Cherokee County



Alison Eltz, a rising sophomore and public policy major at Georgia Tech, interned in Cherokee County’s planning & zoning department. Eltz worked with the planning and zoning department to research accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as a potential solution to the affordable and workforce housing crisis. She completed extensive independent research on ADUs and presented her findings to the Cherokee Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners. Additionally, Eltz developed a draft zoning ordinance to provide for ADUs.

Cobb County



In Cobb County, three interns worked in the solid waste department on the Keep Cobb Beautiful program. Berry College student Holly Bratcher, Emory University student Keiko Huffman, and Columbia University student Quadriyah Williams worked together on the county’s annual litter index. They worked on a sampling protocol and collaborated with neighboring Keep America Beautiful affiliates to conduct the litter index survey throughout the summer. In addition, each student created presentations examining litter’s effect on public health, potential solutions, and litter ordinances in the county.

Columbus-Muscogee County



Destiny Chisolm, a recent Georgia Southwestern communications graduate, interned in Columbus-Muscogee County. Chisolm, who studied communications and emerging media, worked in the human resources department as a Risk Management Intern. Chisolm developed and hosted “Super Safety Day,” a risk and safety awareness community event. Working alongside other county departments and nonprofits, Chisolm coordinated various safety demonstrations for the event. She recruited volunteers, obtained sponsors, and worked with individuals from all levels of government.

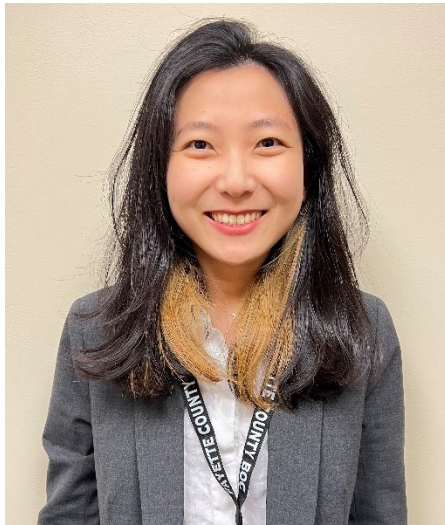
Douglas County



In Douglas County, Elon Mitchell interned with the planning and zoning department. As a master's student at University College Dublin studying regional and urban planning, Mitchell worked on tasks related to Douglas' 2023 Comprehensive Plan where she conducted research across four focus areas: economic and workforce development, greenspace and trails, arts and creative placemaking, and housing. During her internship, Mitchell helped manage the Douglas County Cemetery Commission and conducted field work to update the cemetery database. She also researched the county's public arts master plan, surveyed code violations, and learned technical ArcGIS skills.

Fayette County

In the Fayette State Court, two interns worked with Judge Jason Thompson. Law students Zilin (Jocelyn) Zhao (Emory University) and Bassem Amercani (Georgia State University) each received cases of their own to work on from start to finish. They analyzed arguments, researched the applicable law, and prepared orders for the Judge.





In Fayette County's Solicitor General's Office, Sara Anis Ali, a rising sophomore studying political science at UGA, assisted in the prosecution of misdemeanor cases. She helped build case files for prosecutors and managed and prepared court calendars. Ali helped generate accusation forms, sorted filings, and created and sent back responses to discovery motions. Additionally, she worked with staff on opening and closing cases and ensuring that case files had the correct, updated paperwork.



Rising Berry College senior Patrick Knight returned to Fayette County for his second year as an intern with the water system department. An environmental science major, Knight continued training in the Water Quality Laboratory and conducted regular field samples. This summer, Knight participated in more hands-on projects and independent work. He completed iron and manganese testing in county lakes and prepped for PFAS sampling in the lab.



Elizabeth Harding and Taylor Blumenthal, two John Marshall Law School students, interned with the GA Public Defender Council in Fayette County. During their internships, Harding and Blumenthal participated in all aspects of court proceedings for indigent felony cases. They wrote motions, met with clients and their families, and advocated on clients' behalf before the court.

Glynn County



Halee Pierce, a rising senior studying business at the College of Coastal Georgia, interned in Glynn County. Pierce, a business major, worked in the communications department. During her time with the county, she developed an original idea to create a yearlong communications document to include historic county information and fun facts. Additionally, Pierce updated social media posting schedules, monitored trends, and created original content and graphics.

Chloe Crosby, a rising sophomore at Georgia College & State University, also interned with Glynn County. Crosby worked in the county finance department and assisted with the creation of a five-year capital improvement plan (CIP). She also worked on building out a special purpose local option sales tax (SPLOST) interface for the public that illustrates individual project details.

Also in Glynn County, College of Coastal Georgia senior and criminal justice major Maddie Morgan worked as an intern in the police department. Over the internship, Morgan helped develop a more robust training division. She created presentations for training, assisted with lesson plan development, reviewed policies and procedures for training, and helped with training modules and Patrol School curriculum development. She also participated in a ride along with officers where she learned about officer duties and responsibilities on the road.



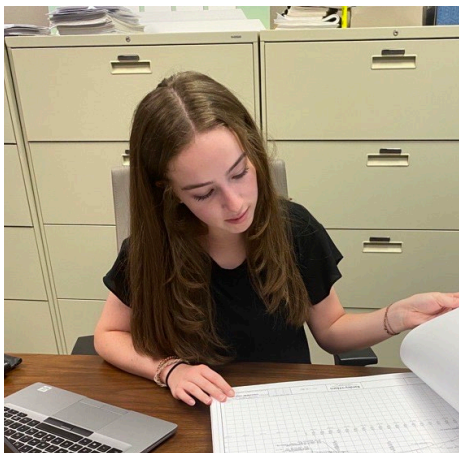
Henry County



Augusta University student Kierra Howard interned with Henry County Parks and Recreation. Howard established conservation efforts needed at Nash Farm, a 204-acre park in the county. She researched and identified ideal habitat conditions for local species of plants and animals, as well as collected soil and water samples. Howard also coordinated programs to encourage the public to enjoy Nash Farm.

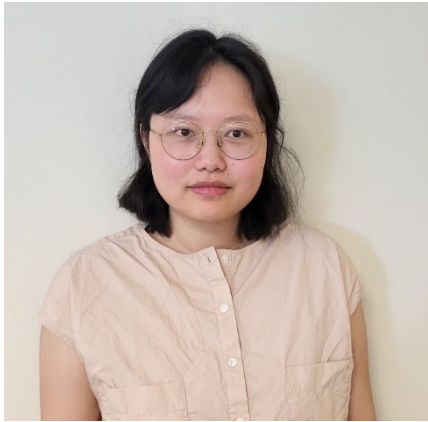


In the planning and zoning department, rising Howard University junior and community development major Thomas McDaniel worked on the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC). During his internship, McDaniel collaborated with county planners to identify code inconsistencies and make suggestions. Upon identifying inconsistencies, McDaniel worked on writing updated ULDC amendments. McDaniel also managed and updated zoning records, drafted documents, and answered questions received from the public. He also learned how to write and send out zoning verification letters to developers.



In Henry County's SPLOST department, Georgia Tech civil engineering student Ansley Mathis shadowed staff and assisted with reviewing transportation plans. She also learned how to review environmental assessment documents. With the SPLOST department staff, Mathis worked on plan review and developed a checklist based on FHWA and GDOT guidelines. In the future, the checklist will be used to streamline reviews in the SPLOST department.

Georgia Southern computer engineering student Bryston Mabros and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College livestock production student Haley Garland shadowed, studied, and documented the work processes of the Henry County Stormwater department. Through their research, they created a standard of operations manual to use for streamlining workflow and customer service response time. They compiled links to manuals and design tools, researched inspection and maintenance requirements, and assisted with field inspections.



Xier Che, a rising senior studying service design at Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), worked in the transportation planning department in Henry County. Che's major summer project was developing a wayfinding plan for Henry County Trails. The wayfinding plan provides the necessary specifications for colors, fonts, font sizes, heights, dimensions, etc. to construct Henry Trails wayfinding signs. At the beginning of her internship, Che completed in-depth research into other wayfinding plans and did field work to observe Henry County's built and natural environment. Che then took her research and used her design background to complete a wayfinding plan document with specifications for trail signage and designs.

Macon-Bibb County



In Macon-Bibb County, Mercer University Law student Charlie Ward worked in the Office of the Circuit Public Defender. Ward completed research, interpretation, and management of client case files. He also conducted client counseling interviews in county jails to provide them with essential information about their cases and gather details to best represent them in court. Ward also engaged with office staff, observed court proceedings, and practiced paper and digital case management.

In Macon-Bibb's County Attorney Office, Stephen McCarthy and Virginia Calhoun worked alongside assistant county attorneys. McCarthy and Calhoun, both Mercer University Law students, assisted with both the legislation and litigation components of the county attorney's office. Calhoun worked on litigation with alcohol hearings, as well as conducted title searches and prepped case files. McCarthy worked on contracts, lease agreements, and ordinances and resolutions.



McDuffie County



Cameron Ivey, a rising junior studying biology at Morehouse College, interned with the GIS department in McDuffie County. Ivey generated a GIS-based map of manholes, water valves, and water and sewer lines in the county. He also reviewed the current GIS platform, documented specific data needs, and collected and entered new information as necessary. Ivey worked with the web GIS provider to ensure that his data was coordinated and correct, and collaborated with the GIS contractor to ensure functionality, usability, and efficiency of the GIS system.



Thomas Wilkerson, a rising senior studying political science at UGA, also interned in McDuffie County. As a Process Improvement Intern, he worked on a much-needed review and revamp of procedures and processes related to county services. Wilkerson completed a community strength and needs analysis and developed and initiated a plan for a website for Thomson-McDuffie County services. He helped to make government interaction smoother for residents by creating an online repository of information and digital forms and cleaning up confusing language in ordinances.

Meriwether County



Elizabeth Peters, a rising sophomore at Georgia College, interned with Meriwether County in the Probate Court. Peters, who studies political science, assisted in hearing civil and criminal cases in probate and superior courts. Peters also conducted research and prepared files for court proceedings. She also completed a major reorganization of the court law library.

Monroe County



Janasia Lewis, a recent cinema and media arts production graduate from Georgia Gwinnett College, interned with Monroe County. During her internship, Lewis created a documentary short detailing the history of Monroe County and the historic Hubbard Alumni Association. The video shares the heritage of the African American community in the county and includes highlights of various locations around the county. Lewis independently recorded footage, edited, and finalized the film for exhibition at the Monroe County Forsythia Festival.

Paulding County



Alena Wiggins, an accounting student at UGA, interned in Paulding County. While working in the finance department, Wiggins helped create a consolidated capital plan for the county. Prior to her internship, Paulding lacked an updated capital plan that included strategic goals for all departments. Wiggins reviewed existing county master plans, interviewed county organizations, and established a set of strategic goals. Wiggins also completed research into funding needs and the operating impact of the capital plan.

Rockdale County



Lexi Cook interned with Rockdale County. During the internship, Cook planned and implemented a substance abuse program to support Rockdale County drug free workplace initiatives. She assessed the current workplace and existing resources and created a proposal for needed resources. Cook also created a communication plan for education and training of employees and made necessary plans for the sustainability and continuation of the program.

Troup County

In Troup County, two interns completed an internship with the State Court Public Defender's Office. Tayah Buchannon, a recent Jacksonville State University criminal justice graduate, and Xavier Maddox, a current Howard University political science student, assisted with a clean-up to address cases accumulated during the pandemic. They both helped to plan and execute the clean-up process, as well as assist with court and case file preparation.





In Troup County's Solicitor General's Office, Mercer Law student Tyler Meadows returned for his second year as an intern. This year, Meadows had more hands-on experience with case files and observing criminal and jury trial procedure. Meadows hopes to continue his work with the county as he continues his legal career.

Warren County



In Warren County, rising UGA senior and risk management major Prabhtej Sarao worked in the technology department. During the internship, Sarao assisted with the implementation of the asset management system for Warren County. He added items into the system, installed new computers and software, and updated the county website as needed. Sarao also edited county websites and spreadsheets, assisted county employees who faced computer difficulties, and collaborated with staff on new ideas, including new websites and apps.