GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT INTERNSHIPS WITH THE SHIRLEY RYAN ABILITYLAB ADAPTIVE SPORTS AND FITNESS PROGRAM AND CLINICAL INPATIENT THERAPEUTIC RECREATION PROGRAM

About the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab Fitness Center

Located in the heart of Chicago's Streeterville neighborhood, the Fitness Center of the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab Adaptive Sports and Fitness Program is the largest single program offered, with an active annual membership of nearly 1000 people living with a physical disability or visual impairment. The 9000 square foot on-site fitness center features a full line of state of the art strength and cardio equipment and offers a variety of specialized fitness classes and one-on-one services.

Interning with the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab Fitness Center provides students with hands-on learning and increasing responsibilities that will help each intern build upon their education and develop a solid foundation on which to build their future goals.

Who will be considered for an internship?

Junior and senior students from undergraduate and students of graduate programs are accepted from a variety of majors, such as:

- Exercise Physiology
- Exercise Science
- Kinesiology
- Other health related fields

What can an intern expect?

Interns with the Fitness Center have many responsibilities, including:

- Covering the fitness center floor and assisting members with machines and adaptive equipment.
- Performing client evaluations, which include comprehensive evaluation of ROM and strength.
- Leading member classes
- Observing special programs such as personal training and functional fitness sessions and assisting the exercise physiologists in creating and implementing exercise programs.
- Attending meetings and educational sessions
- Representing Shirley Ryan AbilityLab's Adaptive Sports and Fitness Program within the hospital and in the community

All interns are required to develop, implement if appropriate, and complete an Internship Project. Projects can encompass a range of topics. Recent projects have included a member incentive program, survey of city accessibility, and creating member educational sessions/programs. Projects will be assigned and must be approved by the intern supervisor and Fitness Center manager.

Fitness Center interns also may have opportunities to assist with research and advanced exercise testing, and work with the Adaptive Sports Program with adults and youth.

Interns will be assigned a supervisor whom s/he will work closely with in addition to being an integral part of the Fitness Center team.

About the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab Adaptive Sports Program

The Shirley Ryan AbilityLab Adaptive Sports Program was established in 1981 and is one of the largest and most comprehensive community based multi-sport, year-round programs in the United States. Hosting programs at facilities throughout the community as well as at our home at the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab Fitness Center, the Adaptive Sports Program is comprised of three program areas:

- Adult Competitive and Recreational Sports – this includes our Military Sports Programs for wounded service personnel
- Junior Competitive Sports
- Caring for Kids, a non-competitive, social program for youth ages 6-17

Accepting an internship with the Adaptive Sports Program at Shirley Ryan AbilityLab will provide students with a comprehensive understanding of adaptive sports programming, program strategizing, planning and management, as well as working with diverse populations.

Who will be considered for an internship?

Applications from junior and senior students from undergraduate and students from graduate programs are considered from a variety of majors, such as:

- Adaptive Physical Education
- Community Recreation
- Kinesiology
- Sports Management
- Therapeutic Recreation
- Other related fields…contact the Sports Program Manager if you are interested in pursuing an internship but do not have a background in one of these areas.

What can an intern expect?

Interns with the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab Adapted Sports Program have a variety of responsibilities, including:

- Assisting Sports Program Coordinator/s in all aspects of program implementation
- Independently leading at least one program under sports coordinator's supervision
- Recruiting and managing volunteers
- Representing the Adapted Sports Program within the hospital and in the community
- Assisting with and traveling to tournaments with sports teams
- Reporting program outcomes and other administrative duties as assigned
- Working weekends, evenings, local and regional travel, which may include overnight stays

In addition to the above responsibilities, Caring for Kids internships follow the guidelines set forth by the NCTRC that requires interns to:

- Commit to a 14-week internship
- Complete a major long-term project enhancing delivery of services provided by Caring for Kids program
- Visit and observe clinical therapies
- Assess participants and lead groups focused on enhancing physical, social and emotional goals
- Caring for Kids interns may also be involved in assisting with Adaptive Sports and Fitness programs

Students accepting an internship with the Caring for Kids program will have a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) as their immediate supervisor who s/he will work closely with while at Shirley Ryan AbilityLab. Students seeking to sit for the NCTRC exam will be given priority for internship openings with the Caring for Kids program.

About the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab Clinical Therapeutic Recreation Program

The Clinical Therapeutic Recreation Program is an integral part of a patient's rehabilitation process while at Shirley Ryan AbilityLab. The team works closely with other allied health professionals to devise treatment objectives that can range from leisure skills training and community reintegration outings, to leisure education sessions and recreational resource awareness. Based on a leisure assessment, a treatment plan is developed to aid the patient's rehabilitation goals and leisure interests. Therapies may involve recreational therapy, music therapy, horticultural therapy, art therapy, and animal-assisted therapy.

A student accepting an internship with the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab Clinical Therapeutic Recreation Program will gain valuable experience working directly with patients with a variety of disabilities including, spinal cord injury, stroke,

cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment, amputation, cancer, Parkinson's Disease, and auto-immune diseases.

Who will be considered for an internship?

Internships with the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab clinical-based therapeutic recreation program are limited to senior undergraduate and graduate students majoring in therapeutic recreation only and who are seeking to sit for the NRTRC.

Interns are selected by the manager of the Therapeutic Recreation Department. Each intern will have a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) as their immediate supervisor who s/he will work closely with while at Shirley Ryan AbilityLab.

What can an intern expect?

Interns with the Clinical Therapeutic Recreation Department have many responsibilities, including:

- Participating in patient team huddles and working closely with other disciplines to achieve patient goals
- Leading individual and group therapy sessions
- Completing necessary documentation and goal writing
- Assisting with Adaptive Sports and Fitness programs
- Writing inpatient therapeutic recreation assessments, treatments, and evaluations
- Engaging patients in leisure time activities, music, art, and animal assisted therapies

In addition to these responsibilities, interns are required to:

- Attend one Grand Rounds presentation
- Independently arrange a visit to and report on a therapeutic recreation department in another facility
- Prepare and present one case study
- Complete a major long-term project enhancing delivery of services provided by the Clinical Therapeutic Recreation program

Interns are expected to attend all program meetings, meet with their supervisor weekly, and represent the department within the hospital as well as in the community, which may require evening and weekend hours.

General Internship Information

The information below pertains to all Shirley Ryan AbilityLab Adaptive Sports and Fitness Program & Clinical Therapeutic Recreation Program internships.

All Internships:

Require a commitment to:

- A minimum 10 to 12-week placement for Adaptive Sports programs;
- A minimum 12-week placement for Summer internships and 16-week placement for Fall and Spring internships for the Fitness Center Program; OR
- A minimum 14-week placement for Clinical Therapeutic Recreation and Caring for Kids program.
- Working 40 hours per week, including nights and weekends

Are unpaid

All Interns:

- Are required to attend a Shirley Ryan AbilityLab orientation prior to starting internship
- Are required to obtain the following documentation from their student health department or personal physician prior to the start of internship:
  (1) Documentation of two (2) TB tests within the past 12 months. The second TB test must be within three (3) months of the start of the internship OR an X-ray report for positive reactors current within five years and screening for TB symptoms
  (2) Documented history of vaccination or disease from a physician or healthcare facility, or laboratory titer report for Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella, Hepatitis B, (or medical documentation indicating that vaccination is contraindicated).

- Are required to hold current certifications in first aid and CPR
- Are required to secure their own housing. Please note that Shirley Ryan AbilityLab does not provide housing for interns.
- Will be assigned to a supervisor who best fits with their major and goals for the internship.
- Will be provided with office space, clerical support, and computer orientation as part of the internship placement.
- Will be reimbursed for all travel-related expenses directly attributed to work assignments.

Applying for an Internship

To apply for an internship with any one of the three programs, you must:

- Submit a letter of interest either in writing or by email to the manager of your preferred program, and
- Submit a completed Internship Application along with a current resume.

For Adaptive Sports or Fitness internships, EMAIL:

Fitness Program: Ryan McNeal (rmcneal@sralab.org)
Sports Program: Demitra Madden (dmadden@sralab.org)

For Clinical Therapeutic Recreation internships, EMAIL:

Therapeutic Recreation Manager
Mike Wehner (mwehner@sralab.org)

Following a review of the Internship Application and resume, selected candidates will be contacted to schedule an interview. Interviews may be conducted over the phone if an in-person interview cannot be arranged.

Once interviews with all potential candidates are completed, successful candidates will be contacted. This process usually takes place two to six months prior to the start of an individual's desired internship.

If the student has been accepted and has agreed to take the internship, the necessary paperwork will be completed between Shirley Ryan AbilityLab and the college/university. The student will be responsible for participating in the facilitation of this process.

Deadlines for Applications

Fall—June 1. Spring—October 1. Summer—March 1.

Internships are competitive and openings are limited. Only applications received by the deadline are reviewed.

Contacts

If you have additional questions, please address them to the appropriate program lead:

- For Sports, contact Demitra Madden.
- For Fitness, contact Ryan McNeal.
- For Therapeutic Recreation, contact Mike Wehner.