

Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU): NM Workforce GRO Internships

Legislative Finance Committee (LFC)

Dr. James Johnston, ENMU President

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Thanks for the opportunity to present today!

ENMU views paid internships as a win for both students and New Mexico—reducing financial barriers, increasing the likelihood graduates remain in the state, and helping employers build the workforce they need.

One Eastern, One Family, Equals Student Success



ENMU Experiences and Results

- **Need for Regional Comprehensive access to Workforce development funds**
- **Breadth of use of funds across the ENMU System**
- **Success to date**
- **Future plans and activities**



Need for Regional Comprehensive Access to Workforce Development Funds

- **Opportunities to grow internships**
- **Needs of students to participate in internships**
- **Increase students' marketable job skills**
- **Connect to New Mexico jobs**



Breadth of use of funds across the ENMU System

- **Increased participation in internship opportunities**
- **Expand hands-on workforce development programming to**
 - **Support regional employment needs (CDL, women in automotive, small engine, manufacturing safety training, journeyman training construction etc.)**
 - **Address critical healthcare and first responder shortages (EMT all levels, Swift water rescue, EMT internships, OTA internships, Nursing internships,**
 - **High-demand aviation and drone sectors**
 - **Community and Professional Development (early childhood development classes, real estate CE classes, lifeguard training)**



ENMU Internships 2025-2026

441 paid internships across Communication Disorders, Nursing, Counseling, Social Work, Criminal Justice, Agriculture, Business, Career Technical Education, Digital Filmmaking, Music, Anthropology, Culinary Arts, Health and Physical Education, and the Hospitality Industry in 2025-26.



2025-2026 Summary Preliminary Internship Data*

Number of Internships awarded	441
Total \$ Awarded	\$1,296,240
Number of Students Awarded	348
% Females	85.6%
Average Age	31.7
% of Students Completing Internships	96.8%
Students Completing Internship who Completed Degree	49.3%
Students Completing degree who are employed	80.1%
% employed in NM	69.9%
* Official NM GRO Workforce Data is not due until July 31, 2026	



2025-2026 Summary Preliminary Internship Data

Internships Based on Approved Implementation Plan FY25 – Fall 2025, Spring 2026, Summer 2026

Internship Area	Number of Students	Female (n)	Average Age	Amount (\$)	Completed Internship (n)	Graduated (n)	Employed / Accepted Graduate School (Y/N) Yes =1 No=0
Health Care, Mental and Social Health, Social Services, and Related Professions	311	275	32.6	\$1,217,280	301	148	123
Science, Technology, Engineering, Math and Related Professions	5	3	26.4	\$12,570	5	0	0
Accounting, Finance, Management, Marketing and Personal Financial Planning and related Professions	4	2	23.3	\$9,900	4	0	0
Arts, Entertainment, Hospitality, and Media Management and related Professions	28	16	25.7	\$56,490	27	18	10
Total	348	296		\$1,296,240	337	166	133



Employer Feedback on Interns

“... has demonstrated steady growth in her clinical skills throughout her fieldwork experience. She has shown increased confidence and ability to implement evidence-based early intervention strategies within sessions. She continues to develop her clinical judgment and demonstrates a strong willingness to learn, consistently applying feedback to enhance her performance”

“... has grown and learned so much since the first session, and I am proud of all of her hard work. My client's parents and clients enjoy working with her. Please let me know if you have any questions or need me to do anything”. “I do plan to have her as part of our team, as she would make a lovely addition to our growing team!”



DETAILED FINDINGS FROM THE 2025 STATE OPPORTUNITY INDEX



This national report concludes that paid work-based learning should be viewed as a workforce development strategy—not simply an educational enhancement. States that invest in paid internships and apprenticeships help students complete *meaningful* work experiences, improve employment and earnings outcomes, strengthen employer talent pipelines, and increase workforce participation in high-demand fields (June 2026).

<https://www.strada.org/reports/work-based-learning-who-gets-paid>



ENMU Workforce GRO Internships: Complements Behavioral Health Reform

- **Placing ENMU students in internships with rural healthcare providers, schools, community organizations, and public agencies directly addresses Region 9 and state workforce shortage priorities**
- **ENMU's Workforce GRO internship program is not only preparing students for careers—it supports New Mexico's Behavioral Health Reform and Investment Act by developing the workforce needed to achieve the state's behavioral health goals.**



2026-2027 ENMU Implementation Plan

373 students will receive paid internships.

Approximately \$3,500 per student, demonstrating efficient use of state funds.

Over 85% of placements again concentrated in high-demand workforce fields, particularly healthcare and behavioral health.

A commitment to measuring outcomes, including internship completion, graduation, and graduate retention within the state.



Future plans and activities

- **One Eastern progress to date**
 - Administrative alignment
 - Curricular alignment, advising, concurrent enrollment, and transfer
- **HLC Quality Initiative for Portales**
 - **The Greyhound Connection: Connecting Students to Career Success**
 - First Year Experience
 - Course-by-course job skills
 - Advising (professional and academic)
 - Career Services reimagined
 - Alumni Affairs and networking
 - Tracking into career—invested in post-program completion tracking systems to enhance accountability reporting



In closing...

- **Excited about the opportunities this funding presents**
- **Remain dedicated to serving the needs of our communities**
- **We look forward to input from the committee**

