

WASD

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INTERNSHIPS

Welcome
to
1st Grade

NYAH DAMIANO

FIRST-GRADE CLASSROOM

- Hands-on experience
- Real-life applications
- Career-readiness

PROFILE

NYAH DAMIANO

Nyah Damiano learns skills as an intern in a first-grade classroom



Junior Nyah Damiano really likes children and has wondered if she would like being an elementary-school teacher, so she chose to intern at the Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center. She was excited to be placed in Stephanie Zechman's first-grade classroom. And Mrs. Zechman's students enjoy having Nyah in class. When she enters the room, little voices joyfully call out her name to welcome her.

Nyah says her favorite part of being in Mrs. Zechman's class is interacting with the students. "Nyah is warm and friendly," Mrs. Zechman says. "She communicates well with my students and appears to enjoy her time in our classroom."

Nyah's responsibilities include supervising Daily Five activities

(small-group work), working one-on-one, reading with students, and helping students with individual projects.

"It is wonderful to have the extra set of hands, especially at the times when more than one student requires one-on-one attention," Mrs. Zechman comments. "The children, particularly the girls, do love having Nyah's help in our classroom."

Nyah was surprised at how advanced the students are with math and reading, since they are only in first grade. She says that the experience has taught her that every child is different and that they all learn in their own way;

some are very independent, while others need more assistance. But she loves them all and has decided that teaching is the right career choice for her.

Mrs. Zechman is happy with the internship program. "I believe this is definitely a worthwhile program," she says. "It's wonderful for high school students to have the opportunity that only many college sophomores and juniors have as education majors. It is a great way for students to have hands-on experience in deciding if this profession is right for them."

Nyah is thoroughly enjoying her time in the classroom and has committed to interning again next year; she hopes to be placed with Mrs. Zechman again.

Outside the classroom, Nyah plays field hockey and manages the wrestling team. She is also a member of Big Spartan/Little Spartan and the Latin Club and sings with the chorale.



BUILDING CAREER- READINESS

➔ **Hands-On
Experience**

➔ **Real-Life
Applications**

➔ **Career-Readiness**

"It is important for students to intern to gain insight into careers and opportunities that are steadily growing and redefining the workforce."

-Peter Beck



ABOUT

THE WYOMISSING AREA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Wyomissing Area Senior High School Internship Program is part of an initiative from the Pennsylvania Department of Education called Pennsylvania Career Readiness. The goals of the Internship Program, which has been in development for the last year, are to:

- provide students with the opportunity for career exploration and hands-on field experience before choosing a career or postsecondary area of concentration;
- give interns exposure to the professional expectations of the "working world";
- connect academic applications to practical skills; and
- meaningfully extend every academic department's existing curriculum.

For the 2019 spring session, ten student interns are working with mentors in internal placements throughout the school district. As teacher and Internship Coordinator Peter Beck explains, "This pilot year will provide valuable data and feedback to enhance the experience for next year's interns."

Internships expose students to real-world careers in their field of interest. "It is important for students to intern to gain insight into careers and opportunities that are steadily growing and redefining the workforce, such as computer science, STEM applications, mathematics, engineering, business, finance, and medicine, among many others," Mr. Beck comments. "If students can gain practical experience through a dynamic internship program, our hope is they'll be more prepared to enter the work force or a postsecondary academic setting."

Mr. Beck continues, "Conversely, if a student is undecided about their focus, this program affords them the opportunity to explore potential careers before committing money and time to a potentially fruitless endeavor."

In addition to hands-on work with a mentor, each student-intern is required to submit weekly experience journals, conduct two professional interviews, and review two relevant professional journals per semester. The assignments are not necessarily designed for writing, but more as an activity for further engagement in their selected field.

There are no academic prerequisites for participation. Students who are interested in participating should speak with their counselor.