

Building a
REAL LIFE RESUME
in High School



By Karen Joostema, Madeira's Director of Communications



High school students working on Capitol Hill? NIH? NASA Goddard, Shakespeare Theater, Newseum and Voice of America, too? Students at The Madeira School work at these and hundreds of other internship placements as part of their high school program.

For 50 years, Madeira's award-winning Co-Curriculum experiential learning program has provided student internships, similar to those offered by colleges and universities. For five weeks, girls learn from experience in settings beyond the classroom.

"Madeira prepares girls in both the classroom and in the real world," according to Andre Withers, the Assistant Head of School. "Students follow a four-year process, where we combine academic disciplines with experiential internships, and they emerge with an impressive resume gained from three distinct internships."

Skill building starts on campus with emphasis on important areas such as public speaking, resume writing, and team building. Sophomores begin to expand their vision by venturing into local communities to serve others at organizations like Special Olympics, Calleva Farm or Kilmer Center. "My time at Harriet Tubman Elementary School in DC opened my eyes to topics of race, equity, diversity and public education. These issues continue to drive my heart and work today," says Erica Stukel Probst, Madeira Class of 1996.

Juniors have the unique experience of interning on Capitol Hill, gaining valuable perspective on how the government operates. "I know what it is like to be a 16-year old working on Capitol Hill discussing important subjects with important people," says Kemi Adegoroye, Madeira Class of 2009. "Capitol Hill gave me my first experience networking in an office environment and helped prepare me for all the networking I have done since." According to Madeline Alagia, Madeira Class of 2013, "I have always had a passion for politics, but my time in Senator Dianne Feinstein's office completely changed my life. After the internship, I knew I wanted to work on the Hill and one day run for office."

With three years of experience, seniors secure an internship to explore something that might become a career or lifelong interest. "My internship at Amnesty International pushed me out of my comfort zone and gave me the tools to implement changes. I know I will stay involved in fighting for human rights." Says Grace Lee, Madeira Class of 2016.

"All my Co-Curriculum placements turned into summer jobs," according to Avery Miller, Madeira Class of '86. "My Madeira resume helped me get a job with ABC News after college." Adds Adegoroye, "Those internships gave me connections to people that have lasted for years and have led to all sorts of opportunities after Madeira."

What began as a radical idea fifty years ago – preparing girls for a changing world by allowing them to participate in it – has evolved into a transformational program with countless life-changing experiences. And that's what building a resume starting in high school helps accomplish.