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In today's world, internship experience is a must when it comes to securing a job immediately after college. Unfortunately, unless students can find a major internship in their hometown, which is unlikely for most students, internship opportunities come hand in hand with the financial burden. Students have to factor in the cost of living which could range from anything from 500 dollars a month in a smaller town to upwards of 800 dollars a month for larger cities such as Los Angeles or New York; both are areas in which many students wish to procure an internship. On top of this is the cost of food, utilities, and travel.

If an internship is paid, these expenses can be manageable. However, many internships are unpaid with employers claiming to "pay" interns invaluable experiences rather than a tangible paycheck. In fact, it seems as though the majority of internships are in fact unpaid, putting students in search of work experience in an incredibly tough position. Few college students are fortunate enough to be able to ask their parents to fully cover rent as well as other monthly expenses for the duration of an internship. Because of this, students either settle on a subpar internship because it's close to home or is forced to work a part-time job in addition to their internship in order to keep a roof over their head and food on the table. Working a part time job on top of an unpaid internship can result in twelve hour days for the student. Working an extra job along with an internship can cause the student not to be able to put forward 100 percent in their internship which can cause the company not to be willing to hire them for a job in the future.

Personally, the prevalence of unpaid internships has prevented me from applying to many jobs that I could have excelled at. Many companies that I would have preferred to work at to gain experience in my field offer unpaid internships, and it is just not possible for me to afford that. While I'm very fortunate to have parents to help me with my college expenses, my family was not in a position to cover my cost of living while working at an unpaid internship.

I'm not alone in this regard. When asked if he would accept an unpaid internship far away from home, Radford University senior, Ross Underwood, says "I wouldn't have money for that. My parents make me support myself."

Unpaid internships put college students who are hardworking and eager to gain more

experience in their field at a severe disadvantage. The resulting problem is that only wealthy students are able to fully take advantage of all available internship opportunities, leading to them having far better resumes and therefore, far better job prospects upon graduating from school.

This practice puts thousands of students each year in a tough position: do they do what's best for their futures or let their money worries control their lives? College students who are only looking to better their lives shouldn't have to live in such a harsh reality.