

From: [Aarya Deshpande](#)
To: [CSC](#)
Cc: [Rebecca Hildebrandt](#)
Subject: Recommendation to vote for Maydm Internship program funding
Date: Monday, November 21, 2022 5:38:43 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good evening,

My name is Aarya Deshpande, and I am an undergraduate freshman majoring in Computer Sciences at UW-Madison, having just completed my senior year of high school. I was part of Maydm's internship program and given it and its ecosystem's profound impact on me, am writing to strongly recommend the City of Madison vote **in favor** of providing funding to Maydm for its internship program.

By teaching us life lessons and helping us build the necessary skills for the job market, Maydm paved a path for us to enter into internship opportunities in reputed companies. Maydm's weekly meetings included truly exceptional opportunities to connect with subject-matter experts and industry leaders. In addition, Maydm's support system included training for internship interviews and mentorship and helped land students traditionally marginalized in STEM in internships through the close-knit educational programs and mentors that prepared us with STEM skills, guidance, and confidence. I strongly believe Maydm is creating a difference for middle and high school students. Some of the specific highlights of the program are listed below:

- provided sessions that prepared us for internship interviews
- gave us free access to a plethora of Coursera courses to empower us with knowledge and skills
- provided soft skills, including overcoming fear, managing our emotions, and communication skills appropriate for the workplace
- I landed an internship twice at Exact Sciences (a highly reputed global company), thus giving me an opportunity to learn and collaborate with the experts
 - first year: Site Reliability Engineer (closely working with the Data Science team); second year: SAP ERP (software and data processing)
 - these reduced barriers allowed me to succeed, even when the information and expertise were, at times, overwhelming
 - their support and guidance encouraged me to reach out and promote my ideas at Exact Sciences; I analyzed their Cologuard kit used in cancer screening and delivered a presentation of probable pain points and potential innovative solutions, one of which caught the eye of the team and got considered by upper management; despite being a room full of experts, Maydm made me realize that regardless of my age, the insight, perspectives, and skills I brought to the table mattered
 - led me to professional connections, as well as with students and mentors
 - developed time management, prioritization, leadership skills, and self-resourcefulness, with Maydm's added support in defining and achieving

these personal/professional growth skills

- they created an ecosystem for my success and were like an extended family

My story with Maydm started back in the summer of 2019 in their Java program, and within six weeks of hands-on, close-knit, student-centered learning, I developed proficient skills in Java. Prior to that, I had no skills or background in programming nor access to resources such as STEM mentors that they provided us. I developed a life-long student-mentorship relationship with my mentor who, to this day, due to his guidance, is the reason I pursued and got into the National FBLA competition in Chicago for an app for my school as well as initiated my own app project for Alzheimer's (for which I am now collaborating on with a former Emeritus Prof. of Computer Sciences and dementia specialists at UW-Madison)). The internship program that followed created that bridge/path from these gained skills to internships, which was life-changing. (They also took care of our meals during the programs and generously offered scholarships for their programs.) Now in college, I have a strong foundation, confidence, and skills in the computer science/STEM field.

I am hopeful that my story/experience helps the City of Madison vote in favor of funding Maydm's exceptional program.

Aarya Deshpande