Homeless Prenatal Program | http://homelessprenatal.org

- Emma Brenner-Bryant (American Studies, 2016)
- Housing Intern
- Full-time, 39 hours per week
- Unpaid but receiving Career Center Internship Grant

**What do you do as an intern at this organization?**
As the housing intern, I led open workshops orienting our clients to the Bay Area housing search process and taught them about budgeting, credit and tenant rights. I worked as a case manager, helping clients complete applications for the HPP rental assistance program. I also worked triage shifts, where I assessed walk-in clients, identified their needs and provided them with further resources and case management. I made follow-up calls, attended city-wide meetings about homelessness to determine which applicants would receive city funding, helped write a grant, and edited PowerPoint presentations.

**How did you find your internship?**
I found my internship after asking a former co-worker about non-profits in the Bay Area where I could do more direct service work. A friend who has been a long-time HPP volunteer also recommended them. I contacted the volunteer coordinator with my resume and application and asked about an internship. She sent my resume to the staff, and the housing manager contacted me with interest.

**What do you enjoy most about your internship?**
I loved the direct contact with clients because it allowed me to hear the stories of the population I was working with, which inspired me to keep moving forward with the work. I also felt incredibly lucky to have worked in an environment that is so full of love. HPP is a perfect example of social justice work done from a place of love. Many of the staff are ex-clients who were assisted by the programs we provided, so there is a huge community full of gratitude, and I felt welcome as soon as I arrived.

**What do you find challenging?**
Direct service work can take an incredible emotional toll in a way I had not expected. The clients tended to be incredibly disadvantaged and disempowered by existing systems. Many had been in the social welfare system for years and were frustrated by rising prices in San Francisco due to increasing gentrification. Many dealt with huge issues, such as domestic violence, addiction, depression, etc. While hearing stories was inspiring and powerful, it could also be depressing. It was a challenge to develop a routine that allowed me to practice self-care, but luckily I had the support of the staff along the way.

**What advice would you offer to someone who wants to make the most of an internship like yours?**
I would start reaching out to the organization as early as possible (I began the internship search as soon as I got back from winter break). Create an email of interest with a resume attached. HPP loves to find young people who are passionate about social justice, public health, social work, etc., and they are always on the lookout for more volunteers. Be aware that they will not be able to pay you, so start looking for grants if you will need financial assistance.

**About the Organization**
Homeless Prenatal Program; San Francisco, CA

The Homeless Prenatal Program (HPP) is an award-winning Family Resource Center. For 25 years, HPP has provided poor and homeless families the ability to end childhood poverty. Built on a foundation of supportive, nonjudgmental case management, we empower families, particularly mothers motivated by pregnancy/parenthood, to recognize their strengths and trust in their capacity to transform their lives.