



CONGRESSIONAL INTERNSHIPS: INCREASING SOCIOECONOMIC DIVERSITY

Prepared for: College to Congress

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Disclaimer

The author conducted this study as part of the program of professional education at the Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, University of Virginia. This paper is submitted in partial fulfillment of the course requirements for the Master of Public Policy degree. The judgments and conclusions are solely those of the author, and are not necessarily endorsed by the Batten School, by the University of Virginia, or by any other agency.

Honor Statement

On my honor as a student, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized aid on this assignment.

Samantha G. Mori

Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank Kasie Clark, Program Director for College to Congress, for warmly welcoming me to embark on this project and for supporting me throughout the process. I would also like to extend my gratitude to everyone at College to Congress for their feedback, supply of resources, and support in the undertaking of this project. Thank you so much for this wonderful opportunity!

Thank you to my advisors, Professor Lucy Bassett and Professor Leora Friedberg, your guidance has been immensely helpful during this project. Your support and advice throughout this APP journey have made this project a reality.

Thank you to all who were involved in this APP process, especially to my APP partners. Your feedback, edits, and suggestions are greatly appreciated. Thank you for putting in your time and efforts into making this project possible.

Finally, I would like to thank my friends and family for all their support throughout my time at UVA. Thank you all for your unwavering support, especially when I surprised you all by applying to study public policy in graduate school!

ACRONYMS

APAICS – Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies

C2C – College to Congress

CAPAL – Conference on Asian Pacific American Leadership

CBCF – Congressional Black Caucus Foundation

CHCI – Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute

DACA – Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

SES – Socioeconomic Status

WISH – Washington Intern Student Housing

WIHN – Washington Intern Housing Network

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Executive Summary

Low-paying or unpaid congressional internships have perpetuated a system of opportunity only the affluent or politically connected can realistically afford. A summer internship in Washington, D.C. costs on average \$8,500 to pursue, a hefty price tag few can afford. These low or unpaid internship practices have created barriers to entry for those coming from a less wealthy socioeconomic status, such as those eligible for the Pell Grant, with DACA status, or who receive financial aid. This socioeconomic filtering that begins at the internship level further perpetuates difficulties in securing fulltime employment, as those with internship experience are 52 percent more likely to receive a job offer than individuals without Congressional internship experience. College to Congress (C2C) seeks to disrupt these financial barriers to entry and traditional hiring practices that prevent Congress from truly representing the American people.

The high cost and low availability of short-term rental housing in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area is the largest financial barrier to pursuing a congressional internship. Washington, D.C. is the fifth most expensive city in America, with a cost of living about 63 percent above the U.S. average. The high cost of living often makes choosing to work on the Hill an unrealistic dream for college students with limited financial support. C2C covers all associated expenses with an internship on the Hill, in which housing accounts for the largest portion at approximately \$5000 per student. \$10,000 of total student investment goes towards travel, food, clothing, and housing while the other \$16,000 is found in the form of mentorship, career development, and workshops.

Socioeconomic diversity can be increased through adoption of an alternate intern housing option that seeks to minimize costs, without sacrificing quality, to increase the number of interns C2C can accept each internship cycle. The options are as follows:

1. **Housing Partnership with Local Universities (Recommended)**
2. Housing Partnership with Private Providers
3. Housing Stipend

These three alternatives are evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Effectiveness in Increasing Socioeconomic Diversity
2. Costs
3. Sustainability
4. Time to Implement
5. Fostering Community

Based on cost-effectiveness analysis and empirical evaluations, **it is recommended that C2C focus efforts on implementing a housing partnership with local universities**. This option has the greatest cost-savings and potential to increase the number of students C2C is able to accept each internship cycle. University housing is ranked highly for its safety and also fosters a community within the intern cohort as living arrangements encourage interaction. These non-monetary benefits are highly valuable as increasing socioeconomic diversity among Congressional interns, and Congress itself is only possible with a wide range of support and community engagement.

Problem Definition

Congressional internship experience is a valuable opportunity that many university students wish to obtain. However, unpaid or low paying congressional internships have created barriers to entry for those with a lower socioeconomic status. A major limitation to socioeconomic diversity among Congressional interns is the high cost and low availability of housing in the Washington, D.C. area. Washington, D.C. is the fifth most expensive city in America, with a cost of living about 63 percent above the U.S. average (Burrows, 2019). These socioeconomic barriers are reflected in Congress itself, with only 2 percent of Congress represented by the working class. As congressional internships serve as a direct pipeline to full-time employment opportunities and elected office, it is crucial that socioeconomic diversity is increased among aspiring policymakers as they hold key insight into the problems many Americans face.

Background

To fully understand the challenges unpaid and low-paid internships pose to prospective interns and Congressional offices, one must understand the role and economic burden of socioeconomic status in pursuing internships on Capitol Hill. The common practice of unpaid internships on the Hill is known to many as the first barrier in pursuing an internship in a Congressional office. However, summer internships for college students on Capitol Hill were once accessible to all interested eligible students.

History of Congressional Internships

In the United States, the modern-day concept of internships has origins in the government. In 1935, thirty students were selected and moved to Washington, D.C. for a year-long program where they were trained to be the next generation of public servants (Desai, 2018). Internships made their permanent mark in 1973 when the Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) Internship was authorized by a House resolution (Gangitano, 2018). The program provided funding for congressional offices to hire two interns per year interested in exploring opportunities on the Hill (Gangitano, 2018). Approximately 300 summer interns were supported each year by the LBJ Internship Program, with living stipends at \$500 a month at the start of the program, the equivalent of \$2,700 today (Desai, 2018). The LBJ funding was adjusted for inflation and not only supported prospective interns, but also congressional offices where they were staffed. The living stipend and internship was a “pipeline that brought kids of modest means to the Hill” where they were able to learn the ins and outs of Congress, and set a foundation for interested students to potentially return as full-time staffers, policymakers, or politicians (Desai, 2018). The program lasted from 1974 till 1994, until a widespread reduction of staffers during the Clinton era led to the end of the LBJ internship program (Gangitano, 2018).

Elimination of the LBJ Internship Program

Eliminating the LBJ Internship program forced offices to look within their own budgets to pay their interns (O'Hanlon, 1994). Available funds varied from office to office, as each has a different combination of office space, funding, and internship start dates. This unequal distribution of resources led to a decrease in the number of paid interns hired, and eventually led to a norm of unpaid internships. Clinton's termination of the internship program was meant to represent the equivalent of eliminating 452 full-time staff over the next two fiscal years (O'Hanlon, 1994).

Furthermore, from 1993 to 1994, House Speaker Thomas S. Foley cut the congressional budget by 4 percent, further confirming that the LBJ internship program would not be appropriated funding (Gangitano, 2018). The continued downsizing of staff not only encouraged offices to pay their interns less, if at all, but also led to an official change in intern status by the Congress Accountability Act of 1995 (Desai, 2018). This change that codified minimum wage and other labor protections for staff, now specifically excluded interns from the definition.

Current Status of Congress-wide Internship Funding

In September of 2018, the House and Senate passed a “minibus” spending bill that allocated a total of \$13.8 million for interns on the Hill (Thulin, 2018). While the breakdown of internship funding is not yet subject to a firm set of rules, offices may vary in the number of interns they hire and the pay rates offered. However, with the anticipation of all offices offering paid summer internships, this is a dramatic increase from only 10 percent of Congressional offices, House and Senate combined, offering paid internships (“Facts & Figure,” 2019). The implementation of paid summer internships is anticipated to increase diversity, socioeconomic background, and bring in a talented pool of potential staffers. While the allocation of internship funding is a step forward, Congressional offices need to be actively aware of maintaining equity and equal opportunity among the summer interns they hire. It is important to note that as of the upcoming 2020 intern cycle, the funding has not yet been confirmed or distributed. Internship funding is so vital to increasing socioeconomic status among congressional interns and disrupting traditional hiring pipelines that advantage wealthy or politically-connected individuals. The following sections outline financial barriers that have prevented equal representation for those from lower SES.

Cost of Living in Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C. is the fifth most expensive city in the United States (Burrows, 2019). Housing prices itself have increased by 36 percent just between 2010 and 2015, and almost as much as 103 percent since 1970 (Josephson, 2015). Securing reasonably priced accommodation itself is highly competitive, as many interns resort to marketplaces such as Craigslist in seeking summer housing. Furthermore, the cost of food in Washington is above the national average, with an estimated minimum of \$12.29 a day (Josephson, 2015). This low estimation is not sustainable as price is prioritized over quality and nutritional value. Washington D.C. transportation costs are extremely high as price ranges are based on distance and number of stops, unlike other cities such as New York. A metro and bus card for 28 days costs \$237, while a one-day unlimited pass costs \$14.50 (Josephson, 2015). These prices add up, especially for an unpaid, or low-paid interns who rely heavily on Washington’s public transportation to get to Capitol Hill. The ever-increasing costs, coupled with the already high cost of living is yet another important aggravating factor that contributes to the socioeconomic disparity of summer interns in Congress.

Housing Costs in the Washington, D.C. Area

The cost of housing in the Washington, D.C. area is notoriously expensive, and expected to continue to quickly increase. As the fifth most expensive city in the United States, D.C. is at high risk of pricing out residents and severely under-providing affordable housing options (Burrows, 2019). Affordable housing is defined as, housing that costs “less than 30 percent of a household’s income” for those earning up to “80 percent of the region’s median income” (Cohen, 2019). A “low-income” household of four in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area would be a household that earned \$97,050 a year (Cohen, 2019). The average American household earned \$61,937 annually (Guzman, 2019). The median rental cost of a one-bedroom apartment in D.C. is approximately \$2,150 while a median two-bedroom cost \$2,850 – the second most expensive rental prices on the

East Coast (Acitelli, 2019). Washington, D.C. also leads in the rate of neighborhood gentrification and displacement of low-income residents (Cohen, 2019). Approximately 14 percent of D.C. renters have salaries over \$150,000 and the movement of large businesses, such as Amazon, to the region will only exacerbate the housing situation. A study conducted by the Urban Institute concluded that due to population growth, the Washington metropolitan region would need to produce 374,000 new housing units by 2030 (Turner, 2019).

The financial barriers for those of less affluent SES in pursuing a congressional internship in Washington, D.C. are just one of the many barriers to increasing socioeconomic diversity. The following section will outline the current state of socioeconomic diversity in Congress and explore the importance and value added. Specific diversity increasing attempts are also explored both within the context of congressional interns and in the higher education setting.

Literature Review

Why Socioeconomic Diversity is Important

Socioeconomic status (SES) is a “combination of education, income, and occupation” as well as “financial security, and subjective perceptions of social status” and class (“Education and Socioeconomic,” n.d.). SES also encompasses opportunities and privileges from educational opportunities to career advancement. Social class is a strong factor in vocational development. Racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic status often appear together as barriers to an individual’s career aspirations and achievements (Blustein, 2013). SES is especially critical as individuals may “self-normalize” to appear middle-class (“Education and Socioeconomic,” n.d.). This self-normalization manifests in the form of attempting to dress and act in ways that maintain an appearance of coming from a wealthier background. The self-normalization is harmful as it perpetuates feelings of inferiority and inability to access the same level of skills and support as peers. Individuals with lower SES also have less opportunities to network or connect with those of high social or career standing that may be key to getting a foot in the door. This perpetuates a cycle of beliefs or avoidance behaviors that hinder motivation towards career achieving goals. This type of low “career-related self-efficacy” is more prevalent among those of lower SES as many more barriers to access and opportunities exist compared to those from wealthier backgrounds (“Education and Socioeconomic,” n.d.; Betz and Taylor, 2001).

Socioeconomic diversity is important in organizations because it encourages tolerance and the ability to see and address different viewpoints. It must be acknowledged that SES tends to have overlap with racial diversity and is often conflated together. The triangulation of race, gender, and SES has perpetuated stereotypes such as correlating blackness with poverty, Asians with the successful Model Minority Myth story, and gender-based discrimination (Keith and Brown, 2009). Figure 1 below provides a visual outlining racial triangulation with the y-axis “superior” and “inferior” scale implying socioeconomic and general status. These harmful stereotypes have pitted communities against one another while erasing the individuality that comprises each unique community. The interrelations of race, gender, and SES affects societal views, social status, and vocational attainments as access to opportunities, networks, and career advancement are dependent on them. Having socioeconomic diversity as a valued component of an organization requires a similar intentionality and awareness as efforts to increase racial diversity. This is as not to “tokenize” individuals and reach set quotas solely on the grounds that someone is from a certain background.

Rather, it is selecting qualified individuals who have additional barriers to access opportunities and using their background to diversity and help expand the perspective and understanding of those currently in the organization.

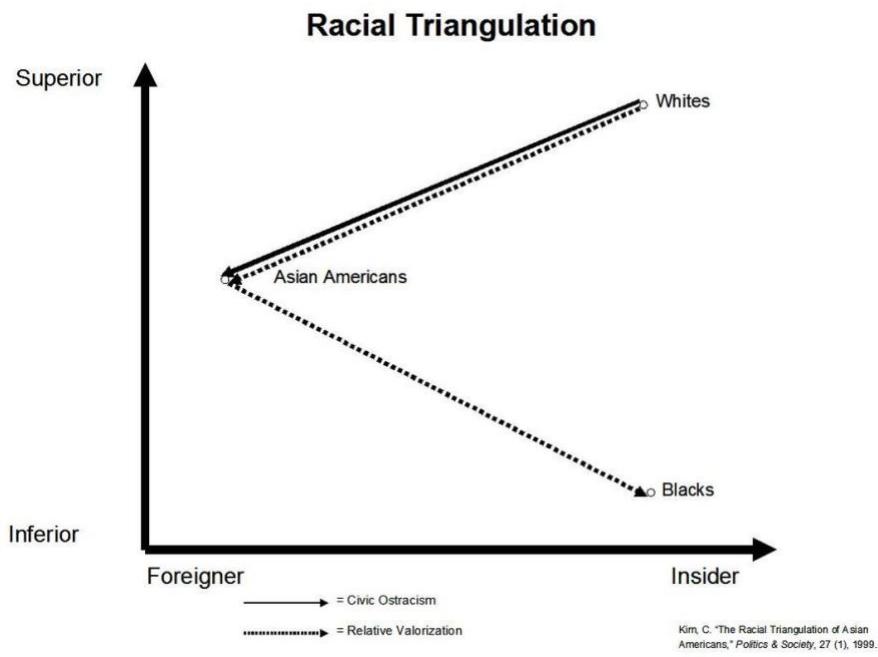


Figure 1: Racial Triangulation and SES

Socioeconomic Diversity in Congress

While Congress does not explicitly publish the background of representatives, current SES of Congressmen and Congresswomen are far above the national average. The 2009 median net worth for a member is estimated at US \$800,000, six times the value of an average American family (Carnes, 2012). In all three branches of the federal government, millionaires account for a large majority. However, in the United States, millionaires account for less than 3 percent of the general public while the working class comprises approximately half of the country (Carnes, 2018). Even at state and local level governments, the working class is severely under-represented in elected office. Less than 4 percent of candidates running for state and local office were from working-class backgrounds (Carnes, 2018). The severe underrepresentation is not because individuals from less affluent backgrounds are less qualified, as found in multiple randomized controlled trials and surveys between 1945 and 2008 on votes earned from working class and white-collar candidates (Carnes, 2018). The main reasons for such a large discrepancy in socioeconomic diversity is due to the personal burdens and lack of support from interest groups and political parties in launching political careers. White-collar candidates are typically deemed more favorable to large campaign funding groups and viewed as a better return of investment. This could be due to a tendency to support those who see most similarly to donors as they will be the strongest advocates for relevant policy and legislation interests.

Congress has a historically underrepresented those of lower SES working class, women, and minorities. Take the 112th Congress for example, representation by women was at only 17 percent as displayed below in Figure 2 (Sharp, 2011). These gaps between current congressional makeup and the general U.S. highlight the need for increases in racial diversity and gender equality. However,

these statistics clearly lack reporting regarding socioeconomic backgrounds. SES is a primary indicator for future career ability, and a major component in gaining access or connections to staff in Congress. The socioeconomic makeup of Congressmen and women today is reflective in the representatives' path to office. Over 70 percent of House members were employed in law, private practice, business, and other high-achieving professions after attending private or elite colleges (Chinoy and Ma, 2019). Furthermore, fewer than 5 percent of representatives referenced blue-collar or service jobs in their past, a strong indicator that job opportunities are greatly in favor of wealthy, well-connected individuals (Chinoy and Ma, 2019). These statistics highlight that the current systems in place have led to the creation of obstacles and barriers that prevent a true representation of the American people.

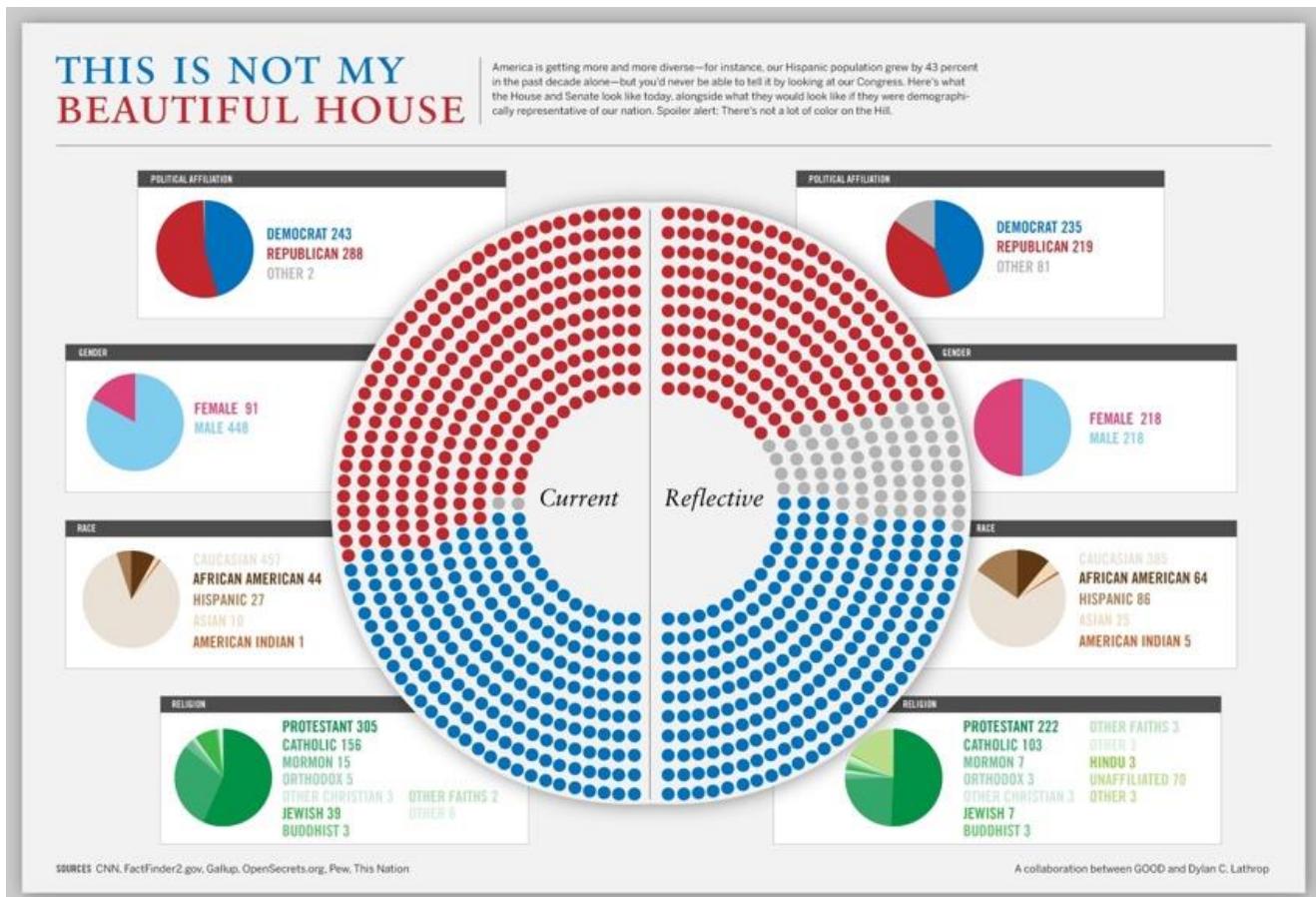


Figure 2: 112th Congress Demographics vs. Actual U.S. Demographics (Sources: CNN, FactFinder2.gov, Gallup, OpenSecrets.org, Pew, This Nation)

Figure 2 above provides a visual where “current” refers to the demographic makeup of the 112th Congress while the “reflective” portion displays Congressional representation in the equivalent of United States demographics. While there is still much to be achieved, significant increases in representation by women and minorities have been observed throughout the years. In 2000, the 106th Congress was 12.5 percent women, the 111th Congress of 2010 had 17.9 percent women, and the current 116th Congress is 23.7 percent women (Manning and Brudnick, 2019). Not only are there more women seated in Congress, but there also are a record number of “firsts” in minority women representatives, many of which have roots or experience in blue-collar jobs (Newburger, 2019). Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is one of those women, who has not been shy about her working-class

background. In fact, less than a year before her election into office, Ocasio-Cortez was still bartending in New York (Panetta, 2018). “Women like me aren’t supposed to run for office, I wasn’t born to a wealthy of powerful family” is how one of her campaign videos opens (Ocasio-Cortez, 2018). Candidates like Ocasio-Cortez not only represent a socioeconomic demographic, they also serve as the voices for these too often marginalized populations. Congress people who were not traditionally represented are increasing in number and recognize the important of diverse voices. Their interests in facilitating diversity and acknowledgement of the additional struggles to come into office brings light to the inequalities congressional interns also face in pursuing internships.

Existing Scholarship Programs for Congressional Interns

In addition to College to Congress, other summer intern focused programs exist that seek to primarily increase racial diversity. Programs such as the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS), Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI), and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF) work to encourage students from diverse backgrounds to pursue a career in public service. Each organization caters towards a specific racial group and provides scholarship funding or stipends, in addition to mentorship and career development resources (“Congressional Internship,” n.d.).

Case Study: APAICS

APAICS programming focuses on enhancing the political pipeline for Asian Pacific Americans through developing young leaders in public policy at the local, state, and federal levels (“Mission,” n.d.). It is a racial diversity focused congressional internship program that like C2C, places interns in congressional offices. APAICS is open to DACA students as well. There is no SES requirement or related question in the application for this highly competitive program. Applicants are vetted based on “evidence of leadership and leadership potential” and “community involvement,” factors which are more difficult for those of lower SES to achieve (“Mission,” n.d.). The 8-week summer internship program provides domestic roundtrip transportation, and a \$2,500 stipend for those selected. While the provision of a stipend lifts some financial burden, students are still responsible for over 70 percent of the cost of pursuing congressional experience.

The number of APAICS participants varies year by year depending on funding received from sponsors but generally 15 to 20 students are selected. APAICS also has a year-long fellowship program for college graduates that has led to fulltime employment in congressional offices (“Congressional Internship,” n.d.). A highly connected alumni network, congressional sponsors, and positive reputation has cleared a path for many aspiring policymakers. The race specific programming has success in disrupting the traditional hiring pipeline by increasing opportunity for those who may not have been able to get a foot in the door. Despite these successes in racial diversity, APAICS’s reach may not extend to lower SES populations as knowledge of the program is primarily spread among already connected wealthier networks. Similar race specific scholarship programs in Washington, D.C. have acknowledged a struggle to reach lower SES populations and those from underrepresented minority groups (Wong, 2018).

Increasing Socioeconomic Diversity

While there is limited data on student-focused governmental programs aimed at increasing socioeconomic diversity, other sectors have made specific attempts to increase socioeconomic diversity. Higher education in particular has stressed a commitment to providing opportunities for various SES, students with disabilities, and students from various racial backgrounds.

Case Study: Amherst College

Many universities have attempted to increase diversity of SES in their student populations for various reasons. However, none have succeeded as well as Amherst College, a private liberal arts college, in reaching and increasing socioeconomic diversity. Amherst utilizes a comprehensive mix of tools in reaching students of lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and a strong commitment to sustainability and diversity (Rubin, 2011). Most notable is Amherst's need-blind admission policy. This policy guarantees financial aid dependent on need to accepted students and has proven to be highly successful. For example, in 2010, 18 percent of the student body received Pell Grants, and still maintained a 96 percent graduation rate, on par with that of Harvard and Princeton ("Financial Aid," n.d.). Amherst's success in recruiting and maintaining a diverse socioeconomic student body can be attributed to specialized recruitment efforts that led to a more diverse applicant pool, and broadening definitions of merit to allow for increased financial aid (Rubin, 2011). Furthermore, the competitive retention and graduation rate display that students from lower SES households do just as well as others in higher education, and that access to opportunities is a compounding barrier of prevention. As C2C's target application pool are students from lower SES with an interest in pursuing a career on the Hill, similar strategic efforts can be implemented especially in regard to breaking down barriers to access. As C2C is an all-expenses paid congressional internship, looking within the budget to allocate additional funds for more students can be done by looking for cost-savings in the most expensive category, housing.

The APAICS and Amherst College case studies outline successful implementation and retainment of diversity targeted actions. Though each example utilized different approaches, in uptake, retainment, and programming, the various techniques can serve as a springboard for C2C. Having proper monetary funding, and support networks for students is a common trait among the two case studies that imply that increasing SES diversity will require money to maintain. As C2C provides qualified students with all-expenses paid congressional internships, increasing socioeconomic diversity will be evaluated based on the following criteria below.

Criteria for Evaluation

The various alternatives aimed at increasing socioeconomic diversity among congressional interns will be analyzed based on the following criteria.

1. Effectiveness in Increasing Socioeconomic Diversity
2. Costs
3. Sustainability
4. Time to Implement
5. Fostering Community

The three housing alternatives will be evaluated using these criteria to analyze the most cost efficient and timely recommendation. Reaching the target audiences of eligible students is extremely important and the first step towards achieving socioeconomic diversity as it makes it known to students that these opportunities are available. The criteria above serve as specific measures as they identify both monetary and non-monetary effects on both the organization and congressional interns. The tradeoffs that exist such as those between costs, and sustainability, or student independence versus freedom will be identified. Non-monetary benefits will be given and weighted

on a monetary scale to allow for comparison and incorporation in the cost-effectiveness evaluation. Non-monetary benefits include: financial freedom, safety, community, neighborhood, and other (See Appendix A). This evaluation will serve as the basis of the recommendation delivered in the final section of this report. The five criteria are defined in detail below.

Effectiveness in Increasing Socioeconomic Diversity

The most important criterion for success is whether or not the various alternatives increase socioeconomic diversity among congressional interns, and eventually full-time staff as well. As C2C requires applicants to meet one of the following: Pell Grant eligibility, DACA status, receipt of federal financial aid for students with disabilities, an increase in uptake and reach of students will indicate immediate changes in socioeconomic diversity among congressional interns. C2C works with over 70 congressional sponsors and has the potential to introduce the importance of a socioeconomically diverse office to current representatives (“Facts & Figures,” n.d.). Through measuring both the number of applicants and the number of accepted students, C2C will be able to track their reach and ability to support interns. Tracking the number of accepted students per cycle is a direct indicator of injecting a socioeconomically diverse intern class into various congressional offices. As effectiveness relies heavily on the presence of socioeconomically diverse interns, this criterion also tracks the potential for C2C to expand their programming.

Costs

Economic and financial costs will be evaluated in the following categories:

1. Direct costs of program implementation
2. Administrative costs of program implementation
3. Indirect costs to client, partners, and/or interns

Direct costs of program implementation will be evaluated through cost-effective analysis among the various alternatives. Costs will be calculated based on C2C’s 9-week summer internship length annually, in net present value with a base year of 2020. Administrative costs will be compared to current C2C operating costs in addition to the additional costs and benefits housing partners are estimated to encounter. The direct cost of the various housing alternatives as well as their potential savings will be considered when determining cost-effectiveness. Cost-effectiveness will be calculated based upon each alternative’s associated housing costs per student and compared across at an individual intern level. Calculations will be done assuming an intern class of ten students. This will be displayed as monetary costs for each housing option.

Sustainability

The longevity of the various alternatives will be considered based on provider availability and the potential for a long-term guaranteed availability for intern housing contract. This criterion will be measured on a scale of low, medium, and high in terms of sustainability and upkeep of the housing alternative.

Time to Implement

Estimated implementation times of the various alternatives will be measured on a scale of low, medium, and high. This criterion will consider the creation of partnerships with housing providers to the start date of physically providing intern accommodations.

Fostering Community

This criterion will be measured on a scale of low, medium, and high. While many non-monetary benefits are important, fostering community is of particular importance as it embodies a support network of like-minded peers. As a large majority of C2C benefits, approximately \$16,000, come in the form of career development and networking opportunities, a community among the intern cohort is of extreme value. Having a supportive community of peers going through similar experiences not only serves as a strong network, but also fosters a community of belonging in spaces where students of lower socioeconomic status are traditionally not present.

Alternatives

These alternatives serve to disrupt traditional hiring practices that prevent socioeconomically diverse representation. The three alternatives are listed below:

1. Housing Partnerships with Local Universities
2. Housing Partnerships with D.C.- based Private Housing Providers
3. Housing Subsidy Stipend

Projected Outcomes of Alternatives

Overview

College to Congress (C2C) summer internship funding and support currently consists of various development and professional assistance. C2C invests over \$26,000 into each student in addition to providing future support in securing post-graduation full-time positions (“What we Offer,” (n.d.). \$10,000 of the total goes towards travel, food, clothing, and housing while the rest is found in the form of career development skills and mentorship (Gangitano, 2018). C2C currently selected and arranges intern housing. As housing costs account for the largest portion of the \$10,000 allotment (roughly \$5,000 per student), these three alternatives will be explored for potential cost savings and the possibility of expanding the number of C2C interns accepted each cycle.

C2C historically has partnered with Washington Intern Student Housing (WISH) to provide housing for summer interns. WISH has various apartments and houses in the DC area for student and interns only, with arrangements from single to quads (“WISH Housing,” n.d.). C2C interns are required to work a nine-week internship of approximately 40 hours a week (“Facts & Figure,” n.d.). As seen below, various locations are available for interns through WISH Housing.

Row Houses & Apartments	John Jackson House		
Session 1: May – August	Session 1:		
May 2 – August 15	May 2 – August 15	Quad	\$5,040
Quad		Quad	\$5,040
Triple	\$5,465	Triple	\$5,465
Double	\$6,000	Double	\$6,000
Single	\$7,860	Single	\$7,860

Figure 3: WISH Housing Summer Rates

Discussions of provisions and terms with potential partners should begin a year before the intern class arrives to allow for the establishment of a long-lasting and sustainable housing partnership.

C2C should also explore the possibility of implementing a stipend style housing subsidy for intern housing supplemented with information guides on Washington, D.C.

Option 1: Housing Partnerships with Local Universities

Overview

Through expanding housing partnerships with local Universities, C2C could potentially increase the number of room units available for interns while incorporating additional benefits such as a meal plan and university shuttles. The selected universities in bold are the recommended options based upon location, price, and accessibility.

Universities and Colleges
American University
Boston University Washington Center
Catholic University of America
Gallaudet University
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Howard University and International Dorms
The American Studies Program (Christian)
Thompson-Markwood Hall (Females Only)
Trinity Washington University

Effectiveness in Increasing Socioeconomic Diversity

This option should be moderately effective in increasing socioeconomic diversity among congressional summer interns. University dormitory style housing is a safe and affordable option for temporary housing in the summer. With a wide range of availabilities given the many local schools, the potential for allowing more students of lower socioeconomic backgrounds into the congressional internship program is greatly increased. Based on monetary costs of housing alone, C2C would be able to accept approximately two additional students per internship cycle. The next section will go into the details of this calculation.

Financial and Economic Costs

C2C currently invests approximately \$5,000 per intern in WISH intern housing each summer (“Rates,” n.d.). Using the George Washington University summer dormitory rental prices, ranging from \$266 a week per person to \$434 a week per person, C2C would be predicted to spend between \$2,394 to \$3,906 per person on housing (“Individuals Housing,” n.d.). The range of prices depends on the room style, location, and size. Similar weekly housing prices are available at other D.C. Universities in the area. Cost savings on intern housing with comparable amenities and benefits to current practices are estimated to be in the range of \$1,094 to \$2,606.

Based on a university dormitory average housing cost of \$3,150 per student over a nine-week period, it is estimated that \$1,850 will be saved per student. Displayed below is the cost savings estimation

for this alternative. Additional amenities in such as access to a dining hall, gym, and university shuttles can also be included at low cost totaling to less than \$5,000 for a nine-week living period.

	Average Cost Per Student	Number of Students	Total Cost	Total Savings
Option 1: University Housing	\$3,150	10	\$31,500	\$18,500

Sustainability

This option scores high on sustainability as local universities offer summer housing for interns every summer. C2C could further increase securing dormitory housing in close proximity for C2C participants by creating a contract with the selected university. However, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, a majority of university housing will not be available in the summer of 2020. For example, The George Washington University announced on April 3, 2020 that housing was no longer available for intern or conference housing (“Individual Housing,” n.d.).

Time to Implement

Time to implement this housing alternative is low and extremely quick as it can be done until the selected university’s last day of summer housing registration, many of which are on May 1 of the upcoming summer. However, depending on when C2C proposes a housing partnership with the selected university, there may not be guaranteed dorm units near one another or even available units left. This is especially true with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Fostering Community

This criterion scores high in terms of the ability to foster a community among the C2C intern cohort. Interns will be housed in groups with shared spaces in each suite style or apartment style housing unit and will be able to socialize on a consistent basis. Those housed in different units will also be in close proximity, whether it be in an adjacent hall or neighboring unit, which allows for the whole cohort to foster a community of trust and support.

Option 2: Housing Partnerships with Private Housing Providers

Overview

Through expanding housing partnerships with Washington, D.C.-based private providers, C2C could potentially strengthen relationships with their current or potential providers through a long-term contract. A price-based contract would allow for C2C to be guaranteed an affordable price for intern housing while a quota-based contract guarantees housing for a certain number of incoming C2C interns. In particular, this alternative focuses on unconventional providers such as AirBnB. Private providers such as AirBnB are currently possible as C2C intern classes are between 7 to 12 students each summer. The houses would be split among 2 to 3 shared apartments with amenities such as wifi, kitchen, and grocery stores nearby. This option would take the cost of housing from the \$10,000 total and allow the interns to experience living in DC and managing their own funds. It keeps a sense of community within houses, and ideally would place intern apartments in close proximity to one another to foster a sense of unity among the cohort.

Housing Organizations
Airbnb
BlueGround
CheapDC Intern Housing
Intern Housing with Heritage Foundation
The Washington Center
WhyHotel

Effectiveness in Increasing Socioeconomic Diversity

This option should be moderately effective in increasing socioeconomic diversity among congressional summer interns. Partnering with private providers will guarantee affordable housing for C2C interns, whether it be price-based or based on the number of rooms reserved specifically for C2C. Though private housing prices may exceed current housing budgets, it scores highest among non-monetary benefits as outlined in the next section. Private providers allow for flexibility in accommodation size and location. As prices are per week or per month and not by number of rooms, this alternative could potentially allow for additional interns if the accommodations chosen have the capacity.

Financial and Economic Costs

The financial cost of pursuing housing partnerships with private providers ranges between \$4,040 to \$6,240 with WIHN and \$3,800 to \$6,960 with WISH (“Rates,” n.d.). Currently, C2C invests approximately \$5,000 per intern in WISH intern housing each summer. There are high costs estimated for the establishment of a private housing partnership at an average of \$5,380 per student.

	Average Cost Per Student	Number of Students	Total Cost	Total Savings
Option 2: Private Providers	\$5,380	10	\$53,800	- \$3,800

Though total costs exceed current spending by approximately \$3,800, this alternative introduces additional benefits (Appendix A) such as providing interns with an opportunity to truly experience living and working in Washington, D.C. The ability to house interns in safe, vibrant, communities near public transportation with need-based flexibility is a valuable opportunity gain for C2C interns.

Sustainability

This option scores medium (uncertain) on sustainability as private housing providers historically have increased rental prices annually. However, housing units will always be available from WIHN and WISH. If working with an AirBnB host with multiple units in close proximity, or within the same building, C2C could potentially develop an exclusive working relationship in the summer months. However, as this is heavily dependent on property management, a renewable guaranteed housing relationship is not guaranteed. Depending on the longevity and potential for a contract with

providers, C2C could guarantee long-term availability at discounted prices for future C2C participants.

Time to Implement

Time to implement this housing alternative is high as it would require C2C to begin searching for potential accommodations far in advance of selecting an intern class. As short-term housing is difficult to find in the Washington metropolitan area, C2C would need to reserve intern accommodation prior to selecting the incoming class. The creation of a binding contract that satisfies both parties would also be a necessary precaution to ensure the provision of housing. As the internships begin in the beginning of June, and finalists are selected in February, C2C would need to begin searching for potential housing providers ideally a year prior to the next cohort to December, or 7 months prior to the start date. This large window of time allows C2C to see firsthand popular housing providers in the summer months while allowing for potential delays in future implementation.

Fostering Community

This option scores high for fostering community among the intern cohort as housing units will be in close proximity to one another. Interns will have shared apartments, or houses, in either the same building or close neighborhood as arranged by C2C. This criterion is especially important as people to people connections and a shared mission of increasing socioeconomic diversity in Congress is a key mission of C2C.

Option 3: Housing Stipend

Overview

This policy option would involve four payments from C2C to students as a living stipend. This would include money for housing, transportation, food, and other necessities. For the “living stipend” \$8,500 now instead of \$10,000 will be allocated due to the decrease in housing funding. C2C participants will be given a \$3,500 for housing. \$3,500 was determined based on the stipend amount averages given on similar internship programs. However, these other program stipends are not meant solely for use on housing, in the case of C2C, a suggested spending amount of \$3,500 over the nine-week program is recommended.

The \$8,500 will be given in four increments throughout the summer with the largest portion at the beginning, prior to arrival in D.C. This option will also consider the length of travel to and from DC and allow for flexibility in the amount of stipend provided. Depending on student proximity to Washington, D.C. (for example if no air fare travel is required), Pell Grant status, and/or additional financial aid concerns the stipend amount can be adjusted.

Effectiveness in Increasing Socioeconomic Diversity

This option scores high in effectiveness of increasing socioeconomic diversity among congressional summer interns as a stipend decreases costs per student, allowing for a greater number of accepted students. It will function similarly to intern programs intended to increase racial diversity such as APAICS and CAPAL, as the monetary savings from a lower cost stipend and unlimited choice of housing will allow for more potential students to participate in C2C. This alternative allows for high cost savings that allow for additional students to participate in a congressional internship through reducing the costs per student. Assuming an intern cohort of ten students, the adoption of this alternative would allow for the addition of approximately two more students, a 20 percent increase. The following section will detail the monetary breakdown of a housing stipend.

Financial and Economic Costs

The \$3,500 housing stipend for a nine-week program is based upon calculations by the University of Pennsylvania, The George Washington University, and similar diversity-based intern programs in D.C. (“Housing Options,” 2017). This policy scores a medium in terms of costs. The estimates are taken from weekly costs of renting university priced housing plus associated fees, as well as the average price of private housing options students tend to seek with roommates. As Craigslist, Facebook groups, and other less moderated housing search sites are resources students seek out, the economic cost of time spent on other activities is lost. Summer internship programs that focus on increasing racial diversity in public service award stipends between \$3,000 to \$5,000 for a summer internship. As C2C covers all living expenses, the equivalent amount will be given to interns solely for the purpose of housing.

	Average Cost Per Student	Number of Students	Total Cost	Total Savings
Option 3: Housing Stipend	\$3,500	10	\$35,000	\$15,000

While this alternative allocates \$3,500 of the total reduced living stipend of \$8,500 to the interns, it does not guarantee that the full amount will be used directly on housing. The first of four stipend payments will be given three months prior to arrival \$4,250 for use on securing transportation, housing, clothing, and other necessary items for working on the Hill. The second payment of \$2,750 will be distributed after the second week of the internship. The third and fourth payment of \$750 each will be given on the fourth week, and the sixth week. This distribution method will ensure interns are able to make the necessary arrangements to live and work in D.C., while the next three payment rollouts work as a safety net of funds for a comfortable living stipend.

Sustainability

This option scores high on sustainability as stipends can be given every C2C cycle. There is no restrictions on housing in Washington, D.C. as well if stipends are adjusted for inflation and price jumps each year.

Many other D.C.-based internships operate on a similar model of providing an internship stipend for interns to use as needed. As the interns will find their own housing through various means, it is key that C2C provide a: Housing Guide, Neighborhood Guide, Public Transportation Guide...etc to help interns in selecting summer housing. It would also be important for C2C to provide budget planning and money saving resources for interns to ensure that funds are properly used and that interns are able to live comfortably and responsibly.

Time to Implement

Time to implement this housing alternative is low as it can be done immediately. Students will be pre-notified about having to find their own housing for the summer when applying to the program, and reminded again once accepted. A total of four payments of the \$8,500 sum will be distributed throughout the program to account for total completion of C2C’s programming and intended use of the stipend.

Fostering Community

This alternative allows greater freedom to truly experience living and working in D.C., but will sacrifice a sense of community among the C2C cohort given the individual responsibility to secure housing. As it is unrealistic that all interns will coordinate housing arrangements prior to meeting, this option scores low for fostering community. The additional commute time and difference in housing locations between interns may discourage after work gatherings as efforts to build community with one another are faced with additional obstacles.

Outcomes Matrix

The outcomes matrix below displays each alternative's performance against the evaluative criteria. Option 1, Housing Partnerships with Local Universities, which is highlighted below has the overall best outcome. Please see Appendix A for the non-monetary benefits matrix breakdown.

	Option 1: Housing Partnerships with Local Universities	Option 2: Housing Partnerships with Private Housing Companies	Option 3: Housing Stipend Program
Effectiveness in Increasing Socioeconomic Diversity	Medium Projected to increase socioeconomic diversity through cost-savings that could allow for additional C2C participants	Medium Anticipated long-term increases in socioeconomic diversity through the establishment of private housing contracts	High Projected to increase socioeconomic diversity through cost-savings from a general “living stipend” that extend beyond housing
Financial and Economic Cost	Low University housing is the most low-cost option with additional features such as campus security and dining halls	High Private provider housing costs on average exceed the current housing budget; however, this option brings additional benefits and opportunities to students	Medium General stipend usage as each individual sees fit from a grand total allows cost-savings for C2C while allowing interns financial freedom to seek accommodation
Sustainability	High University-owned Summer rental housing is available each summer ¹	Medium Private rental housing options are always available though there are risks of annual price increases	High Short-term housing options in the D.C. area is always available
Time to Implement	Low Housing can be secured up until approximately a month before C2C interns arrive	High Negotiations with potential providers and securing suitable housing may take up to a year	Low This option is easily implementable as interns are responsible for their own housing once stipend money is allocated
Fostering Community	High Dorm and/or suite living is highly interactive nature and will push the intern cohort to get to know one another	High Shared house or apartment living is highly interactive nature and will push the intern cohort to get to know one another	Low Interns are highly unlikely to coordinate living arrangements prior to meeting

¹ Many universities are no longer allowing use of university dorms by students or outside organizations for the summer of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, C2C has also suspended its congressional internship program for summer 2020.

Recommendation and Implementation

Among the three alternatives, Option 1: Partnering with Local Universities, has the best cost-effectiveness in regard to direct housing costs, and non-monetary valuation of other benefits to the congressional interns as seen calculated below. Dormitory or suite style housing maintains a lively C2C intern community while introducing cost savings that could allow for additional interns to participate in the program. The cost savings per internship period are more effective than sticking to the status quo and should be considered for the next class of interns, summer 2021 specifically.

	Status Quo (WISH Housing)	Option 1: Housing Partnerships with Local Universities	Option 2: Housing Partnerships with Private Housing Companies	Option 3: Housing Stipend Program
Average Cost Per Student	\$5,000	\$3,150	\$5,380	\$3,500
Number of Students	10	10	10	10
Non-Monetary Benefits Per Student	\$4,766.67	\$4,733.33	\$4,766.66	\$4,233.33
Total Costs	\$50,000	\$31,500	\$53,800	\$35,000
Total Savings	-	\$18,500	-\$3,800	\$15,000

In order to implement this alternative C2C will need to first reach out to various local universities to inquire about reserving a large number of room units located ideally in the same hall or residence building. The selected local universities based on distance to Capitol Hill and accessibility are: Gallaudet University, George Washington University, Georgetown University, and Howard University and International Dorms. Once initial meetings and terms are in progress, a benefit-cost analysis, statement on why the housing change will be implemented, and overview of University-specific findings should be circulated to incoming interns, sponsors, donors, and related stakeholders in the C2C network. As C2C relies heavily on sponsors, partners, and donors to support the financials of the internship program, clear communication to these stakeholders during a time of change is vital to its success. Timeliness of communication and a point of contact from the selected university will also be a necessary element to successful implementation and communication. It is also recommended that when pursuing this alternative, any political or religious university affiliation be identified early in the process as not to disrupt future feasibility of housing. As C2C is not religiously affiliated and works with all political parties on the Hill, it is important that the selected university housing system align with C2C values.

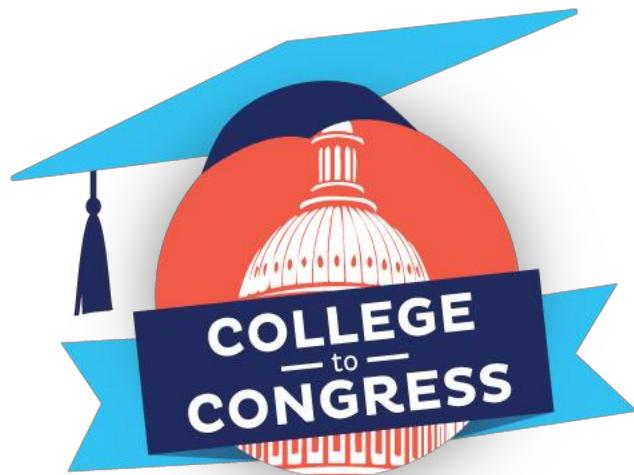
In order to move the recommendation forward, C2C could also look into purchasing university dining hall meal plans for the summer interns. This provision not only allows the university to

profit, but also serves as a convenient, reliable, and accessible location for C2C interns. As C2C covers all associated expenses with pursuing a congressional internship on the Hill, the introduction of a university meal plan can be used in addition to an adjusted food stipend, holding the potential for additional cost-savings.

It is also recommended that C2C provide interns with an updated “Housing Guide” of dorm rules, regulations, and expectations for the new housing system. A general guide to the university, neighborhood, and additional provisions in the area will prepare the intern class for the upcoming summer. Information such as: emergency and support contact information, nearby metro stops, how to purchase metro cards, grocery stores in the area, restaurants, dry cleaners, and so on should be included to allow for a smooth transition.

Furthermore, community building among the intern cohort is important to C2C’s mission of increasing socioeconomic diversity as it builds a support network. As the high cost of pursuing an unpaid or low paid internship on the Hill has created a system in which only affluent students are able to participate, hiring practices have created a culture that is unfavorable to those from lower socioeconomic status. Feelings of not belonging, inferiority, or an inability to participate in certain after work activities, such as pricey D.C. happy hours and networking events, may occur and cause congressional interns from less affluent backgrounds to feel ostracized. This is why having a support group of peers that may be experiencing similar emotions is so vital to maintaining and increasing socioeconomic diversity on the Hill. Fostering a community among the cohort strengthens the fact that students from all backgrounds belong in congressional offices and deserve to make their mark in the policymaking process.

Changing Congress, one intern at a time.



**Creating a more inclusive and effective
Congress by empowering the next generation
of public servants.²**

² College to Congress Mission Statement

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Appendices

APPENDIX A: Non-Monetary Benefits Ranking Matrix

	Option 1: University Dorms	*Option 2: Private Providers	Option 3: Housing Stipend
Financial Freedom	Low C2C arranges most living expenses, potentially including dining hall plans	Medium Interns are able to experience living and working as a young professional in D.C.	High Interns have full control of their housing and living expenses and choices
Safety	High University security and dormitory security (Such as: swipe access and multiple locks)	Medium Housing is assigned by C2C with the best interest of interns in mind	Low (Uncertain) The widespread range of intern locations and various housing conditions may place some interns at higher risk than others. C2C program coordinators will also face additional obstacles in tracking all intern whereabouts
Community	High Close proximity to other C2C interns and the greater D.C.-intern community	High Close proximity to other C2C interns due to shared living arrangements	Low (Uncertain) It is highly unlikely that interns will choose to live in close proximity prior to meeting. The amount of interaction between the cohort is severely decreased as interns do not necessarily work in the same congressional offices
Neighborhood/Grocery Store	Medium University neighborhoods that cater towards college students may have less options for grocery stores	High As housing is selected by C2C, proximity to grocery stores, dry cleaners...etc will be guaranteed	Medium (Uncertain) As each intern will be able to seek anywhere in the Washington Metropolitan area, some may choose low housing prices in less safe regions
Other Benefits (Gym, meal plan...etc)	High Low-priced options for university amenities if living in summer dorms	Medium Freedom to experience living and working in D.C. in a safe environment with strong support frameworks from C2C	Medium Stipend money can be used as each individual deems fit

Option 2: Private Housing Providers scores highest on the valuation of non-monetary benefits. However, when considering financial costs, Option 1 scores as most cost-effective overall for intern housing.

APPENDIX B:

The projected housing costs for each alternative in Figure 4 below display direct monetary costs of housing.

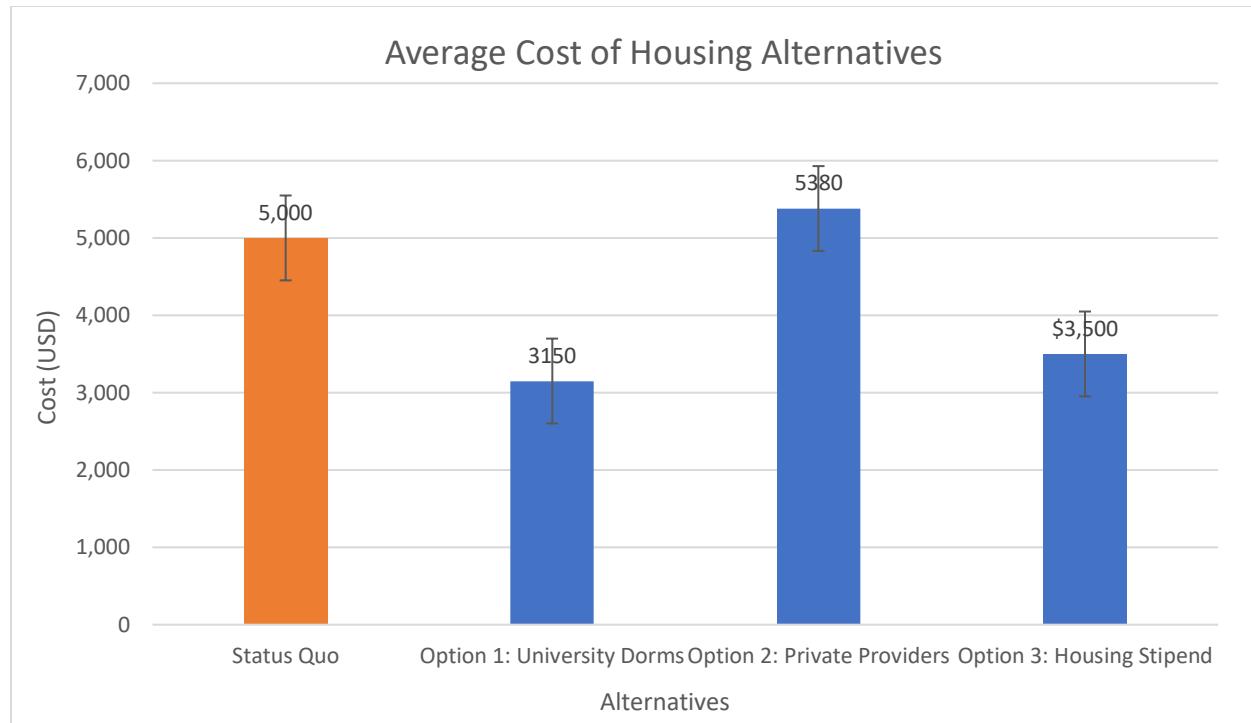


Figure 4: Average Cost of Housing Alternatives