Dear Friend of UPOP,

The UPOP team had a busy summer, with site visits to more than 70 students in the New England, New York and Bay areas, and, at last, the launching of our new website.

Our director, Joel Schindall, commented: “The new website represents a significant enhancement and includes a lot of new content, and I strongly recommend that you take a look. Your feedback is welcome.”

We also held our second UPOP Advisory Board meeting, with sub-committee spin-offs already hard at work brainstorming innovations, targeting outreach, assessing best practices, and expanding our fundraising efforts.

The second year of our sponsorship program is proving fruitful, with six annual sponsors already signed up for the coming academic year.

Our focus now turns to two tasks: coaching our outgoing Class of 2017 to reflect on their UPOP year and summer internship experiences in preparation for their junior internship search, and recruiting and welcoming the Class of 2018 sophomores.

With best wishes,

The UPOP Team
Joel Schindall Director | Kate Moynihan Mentor Relations & Outreach Coordinator | Bethany Walsh & Sharon Leary Student Program Coordinators | Amy Bass Program Manager Employer Relations | Jessica Jones Communications & Operations Coordinator

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From 3-D printing to NASA, Tesla to Ford
UPOP internship opportunities are expanding

As summer 2015 draws to a close and students return to campus, UPOP looks back on an exemplary summer internship season, with 73 percent of UPOP sophomores choosing to participate in traditional industry internships.
both domestic and international. UPOP interns’ summer projects ranged from coatings design and 3-D printing software development at local MIT startups Liquiglide and Formlabs, to transmissions and driveline engineering at Ford Motor Company and air revitalization systems with NASA.

As always, UPOP staff visited students across the Boston and Cambridge areas, and traveled to new companies in New York City and Silicon Valley, including on-sites to Tesla Motors, LinkedIn, A9, Goldman Sachs, Bloomberg, Merck, and many more. Dozens of new companies have joined the UPOP network over the past year.

UPOP student Jahnavi Kalpathy ’17, found her UPOP skills useful during her Tesla internship. On our website, you can read more about Jahnavi’s Tesla experience and about the four students who interned at our new annual sponsor, Ab Initio, in Lexington, Mass.

Three new annual sponsors: Goldman Sachs, Ab Initio and Saint-Gobain

Goldman Sachs, Ab Initio and Saint-Gobain have become annual sponsors for the first time, joining Akamai, Northrop Grumman, and Pioneer Natural Resources as UPOP sponsors for the 2015-16 academic year.

This year’s sponsoring organizations represent a wide variety of industries, including high-tech, big data, mobile, global securities, oil and energy, materials and manufacturing.

Our annual sponsors are featured on our website: you can read more here!

Interns put their UPOP training into practice

"Thank you guys for everything. It's cool to see everything we learned back in IAP be applied at work."—from a Class of 2017 sophomore's recent summer progress report.

UPOP doesn’t stop at the end of the spring semester: students are challenged to make the most of their summer internships by employing all of their UPOP skills. As part of this, UPOP students are required to submit two reflective progress reports prompting them to think critically about their experiences as they relate to UPOP training throughout the year, the Team Training Camp workshops, and their professional goals and interests.

The first report also requires students to conduct and report on an informational interview with someone whose career they’d like to learn more about. As one Class of 2017 student wrote:

"This experience taught me how easy and valuable conducting an informational interview is, so I'll definitely use it again in the future."
UPOP teams with DME on survey

UPOP is partnering with Prof. Warren Seering from the Department of Mechanical Engineering on a research project harnessing the information gathered from the informational interviews the students conduct as part of their summer progress reports.

Prof. Seering will use this data and his research to inform the MIT community about the skills that industry professionals need and use, how they spend their time, and how they make their career decisions.

UPOP is the Undergraduate Practice Opportunities Program, a yearlong co-curricular program open to MIT sophomores from across the Institute. The program's mission is to prepare MIT sophomores to successfully integrate into and thrive in the professional world and to be strong contributors to their organizations, supported by a dynamic community of students, program staff, employers, MIT alums, and other friends of the program. UPOP offers numerous opportunities for MIT alums and companies to get involved—as speakers, coaches, employers, and sponsors.