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## Recruiting Gen Z: An Emerging Talent Internship Thesis at PetSmart

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**Recruiting Gen Z: An Emerging Talent Internship Thesis at PetSmart**

**by**

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**An Honors Thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Bachelor of  
Science in Business Administration in Marketing and Supply Chain Management**

**Sam M. Walton College of Business  
University of Arkansas  
Fayetteville, Arkansas**

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## **Introduction**

During the summer of 2021, I served as the Emerging Talent intern in Human Resources for PetSmart. While this internship was virtual, PetSmart is the largest pet retailer and is headquartered in Phoenix Arizona. Originally, I was hired for the summer of 2020 but due to COVID, the summer program for that year was canceled. While the actual internship program was canceled, they used that group of interns to pilot a different type of program called, the summer experience. During this program, we were invited to a variety of online seminars that covered different areas. Half of them were led by PetSmart's executive team and provided insight into the role and responsibilities of their team as well as how the pandemic has impacted the work they are doing. The other half of the sessions were learning-based and helped with interview tips, financial literacy, and topics like presentation skills.

After the summer experience ended, I received a call asking if I would like to come back and join the intern class for the following year. At the point of receiving the offer, it was unclear whether the program would be in person or not. As time went on, it was decided that the 10-week paid internship for the summer of 2021 would operate virtually. Although the program was strictly virtual, I had the opportunity to go into the office several times to meet my manager and help with team projects since I lived in the same city.

## **Emerging Talent Internship**

During my time as an intern, I served as the Human Resources intern in Emerging Talent. The Emerging Talent team is responsible for recruiting and developing the future talent of PetSmart through identifying diverse top caliber talent and positioning the organization as an employer of choice. Before my internship began, this was being done through limited Campus Programming at some local universities, the PetSmart Unleashed Group Mentoring Program, the free Summer Experience Sessions Internship Program, and Full-Time entry level roles and rotational programs. As an intern, I worked on two main projects. A group project that had the end goal of pitching a product that was owned by a minority group to be brought into stores and an individual project that was developing a campus ambassador program for talent acquisition to increase diversity in the variety of roles and programs that Emerging Talent recruits for.

## **Research: Who is Gen Z?**

Generation Z refers to the population that follows millennials and were born between the 1997 and 2012 and totals to an estimated 84.7 million people in the United States alone. This group accumulated to 40% of the global population and influence roughly 90% of household purchases. They are the first generation to be raised on social media and the internet and soon will become the largest group of consumers. Across the board, Gen Z is the most ethnically diverse yet, nearly half are minorities and 1 in 4 identify as Hispanic. Beyond racial and ethnic diversity, Gen Z has grown up in a far more diverse setting with increased single-parent, mixed family, and LGBTQ+ households. The accumulation of all of this has resulted in the Gen Z population being more open-minded and accepting when compared to generations prior. This generation is also the most educated yet with 57% of 18–21-year-olds no longer in high school are enrolled in a 2- or 4-year college or college equivalent program. Additionally, 44% of Gen Zers grew up with college educated parents, compared to the 33% from the Millennial generation.

This new generation presents a new set of challenges regarding talent managers looking source and hire Gen Z into internship and entry-level roles. This is partly due to the fact that they have grown up on social media and the internet, but mainly deals with the fact that they often reject traditions and stereotypes that were created by previous generations. Overall, the same tactics that were successfully used to attract and hire previous generations will not prove to be very effective with this new generation that recently has started to enter the workforce.

First and for most, this generation wants authentic relationships that are formed in natural and casual ways. This generation also prefer to talk with company representatives within five years of their age. Gen Zers want to see what their career could look like in the near future as they enjoy creating a space of security and stability. They see tremendous value in social media, especially when it comes to authentic content. This populations loves and wants to see content, like short ‘day in the life videos’ to gain any insight as to what the workplace environment is like. Also, over half of Gen Z said they view people at the company to be just as important as what the company does itself. Overall, they want to be around people they are energized by and like-minded with. When looking for their employer they seek out the feeling of community.

With that being said, the way recruiting is currently being done for the early career roles and internships through career fairs alone are not meeting the needs and desires of this important generation. Tactics need to be modified in order to recruit the best talent from this influential group. Introducing programs like a Campus Ambassador program for Emerging Talent/Talent Acquisition teams is one of several solutions to meet Gen Z where they are while being intentional with recruiting.

Having a Corporate Campus Ambassador program would allow students to be the contact for their peers during the entire hiring process. This concept meets Gen Z where they are and allows them to feel comfortable. This Ambassador role could also host a variety of events outside of the career fair to educate the student body on job opportunities and company offerings intentionally while keeping the company top of mind throughout the entire year. Most importantly, Ambassador programs allow for companies to have boots on the ground in numerous colleges and universities that otherwise they would not recruit from. The Talent acquisition and Emerging Talent teams only have so much time to travel to all of these schools, so Ambassadors can allow for them to streamline their efforts while still getting to see talent from those places.

## **Journal Entries**

### **Journal Entry 1: June 7th - June 11th**

My first day as an intern at PetSmart was exciting yet intimidating. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I am working remotely along with all the other interns. However, I will be able to go into the office occasionally since I am living in Phoenix. While PetSmart has adapted well to provide a good online work environment, I struggled some during my first several days adjusting. From day one the leadership team has worked to ensure that we have the best and most enriching experience possible in the current virtual environment. The senior leadership team hosted a panel this week to introduce themselves, share what they do, and share more about the company values at PetSmart. It is clear that everyone loves what they do and buys into the values and mission which is really inspiring.

After all of the onboarding and orientation happened, I sat down with my manager, Lauren, and we started to discuss my project for the summer. I have been tasked with creating a campus ambassador program for talent acquisition with the goal of increasing diversity across the internship and post-grad roles. This project at first sounds daunting but, I cannot wait to get started because it is a very open-ended prompt. While discussing the project, we have started to break it down into more manageable segments starting with researching what other companies are doing and if it is working for them.

In addition to my individual project, we had a meeting this week to kick off the group project. This is something new that they are trying for this year, and I am excited to be in the pilot class. Our intern class is broken up into groups of five and consists of members that each come from a different business area. With this group, we are tasked to find a small minority-owned pet business and partner with them to pitch bringing those items into PetSmart stores. Included in this pitch are media strategies, store numbers, pricing, and corrugate layout/where the items would go in the store. Again, this is a project that has a lot of autonomy for my group and I which is something I am looking forward to diving into.

#### **Key Takeaway:**

This week I learned that not everything is going to work right away or be an easy transition, like working online and navigating a lot of new software. I also learned that it is important to love what you do and I have seen that from everyone here at PetSmart in just my one short week.

## **Journal Entry 2: June 14<sup>th</sup> – June 18<sup>th</sup>**

This week I had the opportunity to go into the office for several days and meet my manager and team in person. The time in the office this week was valuable as we could sit down and brainstorm good places to start or different paths to think about how to get to the end goal and develop a good program. I kick-started my project by digging into a variety of companies to see what kind of campus ambassador programs they operate. Primary I looked at the program requirements, program details, and pay structure. It did not take me long to realize that the majority, if not all, of these programs, were developed for the purpose of brand promotion and wanted people that are like social media influencers to fill the role. This is not what we want for PetSmart's program so I will have to think outside of the box. There was one company that had a program close to what I have been given the task to complete, and that is Kohl's. Lauren, my manager, has several contacts in the emerging talent team at Kohls and Lululemon so I took some time to put together an email to them. In the email, I explained what I am working on and asked if they could take 30 minutes next week to meet with me and answer some questions.

In addition to all the work that was beginning on my individual project, my group met this week with our team leaders to discuss the deliverables in more detail and to decide on the companies we wanted to reach out to. After the initial discussions, we walked away with two different companies that we wanted to meet with and potentially could be a good fit for PetSmart. First is Pardo Naturals, an African American female-owned business out of Georgia that makes natural shampoo bars, lotion, and perfume for dogs. The second option we found is Homescape Pets. They are an interracial husband and wife team that own and operate their business out of their house but are in the process of moving manufacturing to a third party as sales increase. They sell multiple variations of vitamin mixes and oils for dogs with and without CBD. After agreeing as a group to move forward and try to set up meetings with these two companies, we sat down as a group to draft an email explaining who we were and our goal. Currently, we are waiting to hear back from both companies but are excited to take these next steps and continue this process.

### **Key Takeaway:**

This week I learned a lot about what it takes for items to get onto the shelves in stores through meeting with our team leader who is a buyer at PetSmart. Also, I learned that planning these product launches and partnerships happens far out in advance.

### **Journal Entry 3: June 21<sup>st</sup> – June 25<sup>th</sup>**

I was able to go into the office one day this week to help support the emerging talent team and sit down with my manager in person to get some questions answered. The in-person time is also nice because it allows me to connect with my team and bounce ideas off of them in a more informal manner. Working online can sometimes be hard for that reason because you are lacking the passing-by conversations and between-meeting comments. This week was also about finalizing my research on other companies' programs while beginning to position the program I am building. I was also fortunate enough to hear back from the contacts at both Lululemon and Kohl's and had meetings with them this week. While the program at Lululemon was far from the goal I was looking to accomplish it was still nice to chat with him and gain another lens of perspective. The woman that I spoke with at Kohl's was very insightful and valuable to my research process. Of all the companies that I benchmarked; they had the program closest to what I am creating. They almost intertwine the two goals and have their program organized to promote the brand while also directing top-caliber talent to apply for internships and entry-level roles. I am starting to feel like I am more comfortable with the project and can accomplish my goals.

With most of the benchmarking done, and an understanding of the other programs I am now starting to shift my focus to identify which schools would be a good fit for the ambassadors. My group heard back from both small businesses, Pardo Natural and Homescape Pets, that we had reached out to and a couple of days later had meetings with both of them. They were so excited to share their passions for the why behind their business and were elated at the possibility for us to pair with them to pitch a launch into PetSmart Stores. We knew collectively as a group who we felt called to partner with at the beginning of the meeting, and that was Homescape Pets.

They shared that their business was created after they lost their beloved family pet several years prior to cancer. They felt that when looking for vitamins and supplements to add to dog food to better their health, the section was lacking and full of artificial ingredients. As a husband-and-wife team, they developed each of their supplement blends and have a true passion for what they do. We also liked that they have several CBD products in their line as that is a growing trend in this space. Before the end of day Friday, we put together an email to both companies to inform them of our decision and thank them for taking the time to share their story with us.

As an intern class, we had the opportunity to attend a virtual lunch and learn with the C.E.O, J.K. Symancyk. This hour and a half was very inspiring and insightful to hear his story as well as receive advice as we are in a very important time in our lives. Towards the end of the session, the floor was opened for Q&A and the interns on the call got to ask questions and leverage his experience.

#### **Key Takeaways:**

It is important to network and leverage contacts that could add value to what you are working on. Most of the time they will be willing to sit down and answer questions when approached in a professional and kind way.



#### **Journal Entry 4: June 28<sup>th</sup> – July 2<sup>nd</sup>**

As an intern class, we had the opportunity to attend a session on wellness and work that was around maintaining balance. This was very insightful and beneficial to us all as we are newer to the full-time working world and may not understand the value of balance, especially when your home and work become the same room. This week my group also set up another meeting with Homescape Pets to talk more details about the timeline, quantities, and which products we collectively think would be the best to bring into the pitch. After the conversation, we all felt that 500 stores would be the best fit for the volume that can be produced. Additionally, we all decided that carrying the oils and powder that do not include CBD is the best fit for all. The introduction of CBD into dog and cat products has some research behind it to show a lot of benefits but is not FDA-approved which makes it a little more complicated. Also, PetSmart policy and state laws provide a lot of additional hoops to jump through that we do not find necessary. We are now waiting for samples of the five items we are moving forward with to ensure their quality and see them in person. We can then in turn use the samples to build out displays and corrugates.

This week I met with Kristen Rodney, the Head of Belonging D&I to share my project goals and leverage her expertise to ensure that my messaging is on point and uses the appropriate terminology. During the meeting she opened my eyes to what diversity really is, she shared multiple illustrations that show diversity is far beyond race and ethnicity. True diversity is differences in every facet of life and that is what PetSmart celebrates and what needs to be communicated in the program messaging.

This week I also dug deep into different schools across the country and set parameters of what we should look for when deciding on a school to partner with. When looking at schools there are multiple areas to focus on to ensure that it is a good fit. First is the enrollment and type of university, it is important to pick schools that have a sizeable enrollment total and if private, ensure they agree with PetSmart's values. Next are the degree programs they offer, we are looking for predominately merchandising and IT roles, so it is important that the programs are offered at the schools we pick. Finally, I am looking at the enrollment breakdown in terms of ethnicity and instate vs out of state students.

#### **Key Takeaways**

I learned a lot this week about what diversity truly is and what it means. Although it's a word I hear a lot and I assumed to know what it was my definition was not all-inclusive. Diversity includes talents, passions, features, race, and ethnicity.

### **Journal Entry 5: July 5<sup>th</sup> – July 9<sup>th</sup>**

This week was a shorter week because of the fourth of July. As an office, we all had Monday the 4<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday the 5<sup>th</sup> in observance of the holiday. These two days were a good reset and gave me some time away from my projects and allowed me to have a better perspective on it this week. In support of the emerging talent team, I began preparing with the team for national intern day by brainstorming ways to celebrate the work done by the entire class. We decided to write a letter to the intern's support systems/parents to let them know they are doing great. In order to gather the names and addresses of these support systems I created a Microsoft form and sent it to all the interns asking them to complete it and include as many individuals and addresses as they would like. Then I sent a separate form to all of the intern managers asking them to list three adjectives to describe the work and accomplishments that have been displayed by the intern. Then I spent some time building out the letter template to be sent and individualized with the words sent in by their manager. This letter shared the accomplishments with the intern's support system while also informing them of the upcoming 'holiday' and asking the support system to help us celebrate them and sharing several ideas of what they could do.

Working on this taught me several new tools on Microsoft word to make individualized letters with a click of a button after writing the template. I also utilized Canva to use branded images and graphics for the letters and envelopes to make them feel more special. This short week did not leave me with much time to work on my campus ambassador project. With the little time I did have, I began thinking about what the specifics of the program would look like. For example, what are the requirements, what type of events should happen, and who is the ideal ambassador.

#### **Key Takeaways:**

This week I learned a lot about Microsoft skills and the best ways to utilize the systems. From creating and sending forms through teams that create excel outputs to using Microsoft word to create multiple versions of a singular letter.

## **Journal Entry 6: July 12<sup>th</sup> – July 16<sup>th</sup>**

This week I went into the office for several days to work on the next steps of my project and to send out the letters that I created the week prior. In terms of the group project, we met as a group to discuss the roles everyone would take for the next steps. I have been tasked with designing a mockup of the webpage listings for the products, the tags for the corrugate that will be in store, and the actual display imaging. The majority of this work involves reorganizing the information from the packaging in a different way in the correct size for that area. The other members in my group are handling the pricing, associate education of the products, and the supply chain aspects because they are on these different teams.

I spent most of this week on Canva beginning the layout for the playbook that will go along with my project. This document will serve as the one-stop shop for all answers for the program. The ultimate goal is to use the guide as the onboarding documents for the ambassadors and even eventually will include orientation details when the time comes for those. The big thing that I worked on this week was payment for the ambassadors. This is a tricky item to tackle as there are a lot of legal ramifications for what is allowed, especially when the program will span across multiple states. Originally, I wanted to develop a payment method for the ambassadors to provide scholarships to the students working for us. After talking with the legal team, I was informed that it goes against company policy and legal parameters and that the scholarship or stipend route would not be an option. Together, we partnered to work through a payment structure that was fair and legal across all states we plan to target. This value came out to \$15 dollars an hour plus a stipend amount for the purpose of event planning.

As a member of the emerging talent team, I assisted with the launch of the summer experience program. An online program developed for college underclassmen to gain business knowledge. This is a program that is open to all and sign-up is done online. There are two different branches of the program, the business series, and the learning series. During the business series, different members of PetSmart's leadership team host sessions on what their team does within the business and how they interact with others. On the learning side, the sessions are geared towards professional self-development; these are topics like presentation skills and a different variation of financial literacy.

This week we also attended a financial literacy seminar led as an intern class. During this hour we learned about 401K's, retirement funds, and how to utilize the company's offerings to maximize your paycheck. This was a very impactful hour for me as I learned about things that I do not regularly hear about or have seen much.

### **Key Takeaways:**

This week I learned a lot about teamwork and working cross-functionally to achieve a goal. Partnering with legal to leverage their expertise when it came to developing the payment format provided an accurate and optimal result.

### **Journal Entry 7: July 19<sup>th</sup> – July 23<sup>rd</sup>**

This week I went into the office twice to work on my program in person with my manager and pack boxes for national intern day. Working for emerging talent has been exciting because I am getting to help support and celebrate my fellow interns. With national intern day next week, we are sending packages to everyone with goodies and supplies for the event next week. Included in the box are a letter, t-shirt, mug, coffee, and several iced sugar cookies. We are planning on having a coffee chat set up with virtual games and breakout rooms and are hoping that all the interns wear the shirt for a group picture via Microsoft Teams.

This week I also had the opportunity to travel to see the space planning team at the mock store in Phoenix with another one of my group members. We brought our samples to layout in different corrugate formats and understand the different options of where our product could live in the store. This was a fascinating and enriching experience. It was so incredible to see a warehouse that was laid out as an actual PetSmart store with rows of products in each self. We also had the opportunity to tour the back and see all the samples that had come in for the holiday lines and were told that they were about to reset the mock store for an executive walk-through of the holiday layout next week. Collectively, with our team and the space planning contact, we decided that a single facing corrugate in the FES3 location. This is towards the front of the store and gives the product visibility to most customers which will drive sales. Additionally, this is where the current calming solutions are found. This display will have branded imaging on the top which consists of the Homescape Pet's logo and mission statement. There will also be a single panel on the right-hand side that will highlight the owners and the overarching benefits of the products.

After making these decisions as a group, we met with the husband and wife behind Homescape Pet's to share our progress and ask for feedback and follow-up questions. During this meeting, we decided that PetSmart and Homescape will split the cost of the displays 50/50 if selected to bring into stores which we hope is a win for our strategic pitch. This is because sometimes it can be hard to get smaller companies to cover some of those costs because they are not that liquid.

This week I also continued working on my campus ambassador guide by first starting with developing a list of responsibilities and expectations for the role. These items were determined by looking at what other companies were doing that I felt would be of benefit to this program, the Gen Z research gathered, and the overarching goal for the program. After analyzing all of these components I determined that responsibilities should include:

- Conducting presentations on career readiness topics and opportunities at PetSmart to classes and diverse organizations on campus
- Organize and host on-campus events to inform and promote the mentorship, summer experience, and internship programs.
- Attend career fairs to engage with interested students.
- Conduct candidate calls prior to the 1st and 2nd round interviews to answer any questions.
- Collaborate with fellow campus ambassadors to plan targeted events.
- Spot campus trends and needs and share with PetSmart leaders to create more streamlined and impactful events across campus.
- Post weekly content to social media to promote PetSmart careers and events.

### **Journal Entry 8: July 21<sup>th</sup> – July 30<sup>th</sup>**

This week, we celebrated national intern day with the entire class and all of the intern managers. It was great to be able to virtually meet those that I had not yet and hear a little bit about what each of them are doing in their roles. This week was a busy one full of campus ambassador project work. I have continued working on my program guide and formatting it along the way to match branded imaging for a cohesive look. After working on the responsibilities page, it is important to solidify the other requirements. This includes information on meetings and training. From the wins of other programs, I felt it best that ambassadors should meet with their managers biweekly to check-in in and keep them in the loop of on-campus programming. Beyond meeting bi-weekly, I found it important to bring all the ambassadors to Phoenix for a three-day orientation. The goal of these several days is to allow them to live in the culture, learn from leadership, and get to know their fellow ambassadors. PetSmart has such a special culture and set of values that I found it pertinent that the ambassadors get to see that for themselves to really be able to buy into the mission at hand. The orientation will include items such as a presentation skills workshop, and team collaboration to brainstorm potential event ideas that will best target the diverse gen z population.

The next section of the guide provides information on the values, vision, and mission that are the backbone of PetSmart. It is important for ambassadors to always have these on hand and know them like the back of their hands because this is what makes PetSmart special. Following this is a page dedicated to belonging. PetSmart places an emphasis on belonging because it celebrates diversity and inclusion which then creates an inclusive environment where associates feel they belong. This belonging results in the creation of an environment where associates can do their best work, partners enjoy engaging with us and pet parents receive an unmatched customer experience.

This week I also had the opportunity to meet with someone from PetSmart Charities and discussed a potential partnership for an annual event on the campuses that the ambassadors are working on. PetSmart Charities has been operating for over 26 years and has granted over \$451 million to change-making organizations that help the lives of pets. With the help of all of the donors over the years, two pets are adopted every minute that PetSmart stores are open. This is a perfect partnership for the ambassadors to help the community while still sharing something that PetSmart cares and is passionate about.

I also worked with my group this week for several days to complete the final touches on our group pitch and practice what we were going to say and who is going to take which parts. We also practiced our presentation to Homescape Pets and our team lead Jessica to get feedback and improve before our final presentation.

#### **Key Takeaways:**

Working in a group comes with some hardships and disagreements, asking for advice on how to deal with it is okay

## **Journal Entry 9: August 2<sup>nd</sup> – August 6<sup>th</sup>**

This week was final presentations week for the group projects. While stressful, it was exciting to see it all come together and share the products we grew passionate about over the past 9 weeks. It was also impressive to see what the other groups had come up with and the various ways to approach the presentation of items.

With final presentations next week, I spent most of my time this week finishing out my ambassador guide and slide deck to be prepared for the presentation. The first thing I worked on this week was developing the characteristics of an ideal ambassador and writing a job description. The job description is a one-page document that provides information about the team, the role, and shares what kind of person we are looking for. This is a current underclassman in good academic standing and participates in a variety of organizations on campus. Other skills we are looking for are being a people person, comfortable with public speaking, multi-tasker, a natural leader, flexible with change, organized, and able to work around 10 hours per week.

After all the research I have done on gen z and recruiting trends, I concluded, along with the help of a manager, that there is no one size fits all approach to events. Each campus is different, they have different layouts and student body makeups. We want the ambassadors to choose what events are best for their campus rather than be pigeonholed into certain things. To ensure that we gain the most impact we simply provide the ambassadors with a list of suggestions rather than concrete things. The suggested events I developed include those such as interview tips and tricks, previous intern panels, resume reviews, company culture seminar, PetSmart company culture, and how to best utilize LinkedIn. All of these events would highlight PetSmart and the opportunities while also adding value to the students that attend.

The final item that is included, besides a couple of blank note pages, in the program guide is the post-event procedures. While the event itself is important, I believe what happens after is even more important and impactful to recruiting efforts as the media and information shared out is what gets people talking. After each event, we ask the ambassadors to write a paragraph or two about the event along with several photos. To keep the messaging consistent with what gen z desires, it is important that they keep it fun and fresh. Along with the write-up, I think that it is important to have them submit photos with captions to represent the image to be used on various social media channels. Collectively we want the post-event media to make others wish they were at the event and attend the next one.

After finishing both the guide and my slide deck, it is time to start practicing presenting my project. While I am not usually that nervous when it comes to presenting, the sheer amount of people and time of this presentation is going to require more preparation to get my ideas across in a professional manner.

### **Key Takeaways:**

Presenting in a group can sometimes take more time to practice

Slide decks are just as important as verbal communication during presentations sometimes

The importance of editing to just the meat of it

### **Journal Entry 10: August 9<sup>th</sup> – August 13<sup>th</sup>**

I cannot believe that this is week 10 already. This summer has gone by so fast and has been filled with more learning and professional development than I could have ever imagined. This week, as we come to a close, all 45 of the interns presented their final projects to large groups of people including fellow interns, intern managers, and senior-level management from the respective areas. With presentations starting on Tuesday, Monday was full of practice and finishing touches to my presentation. I was fortunate enough to be able to present to the majority of the Human Resources department to receive feedback and answer their questions before the real deal came on Thursday. This group provided some useful feedback that led to several adjustments to the language used during the presentation for better results. These adjustments ensured that everyone attending my presentation would thoroughly understand what I was talking about and removed the specific Emerging Talent jargon that I had grown accustomed to.

Throughout this day, I was also working on stripping the notecards away to present my project as naturally and conversationally as I can. The interns are required to watch all the other intern presentations which was so exciting. I loved getting to see and hear what they had accomplished over the past 10 weeks. It was so impressive yet nerve-wracking as I did not present until the final day. I presented my final presentation to over 200 people on that Thursday and have never felt prouder about something that I have accomplished. The 20-minute presentation led to some interesting and insightful conversations during the 10-minute question time. I am so excited to see what the future holds for this project.

Today is Friday, the last day of the intern program which is bittersweet. We got to celebrate the end of a great program with the entire class this afternoon and I had my final checkout with my manager. During this meeting, we did my final performance review and I sent over all that I had been working on so that my project could hopefully be put into motion to be rolled out in the fall of 2022.

#### **Key Takeaways:**

I am capable of much more than I could have imagined prior to the experience

Its okay to stumble over your words sometimes

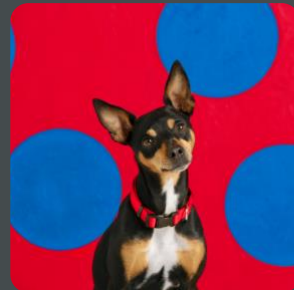
Learning is done primarily on the job, don't think you have to know everything the minute you walk through the door





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## Hello 2022 PetSmart Campus Ambassador and Welcome to #LifeatPetSmart!

We are so excited to have you join the pack this year as a Campus Ambassador for the 2022-2023 school year! Here at PetSmart we are truly United Together in all that we do.

As we strive to recruit diverse talent, we want to form connections in the communities where our associates and pet parents live and work. That is where you come in! As a PetSmart Campus Ambassador, you will be able to connect with your fellow students to share our values, culture, and career and developmental opportunities.

Belonging, diversity, and inclusion make us a stronger company. It's why we place such a high value on the unique backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of our associates and customers. We believe that you embody these same values and will make a great culture fit! Your role is critical for recruitment across our Home Offices, Distribution Centers, and our Stores. Through events and relationships building, you will help potential new-hires and pet parents believe that together, we can make anything happen.

We are so excited to welcome you to #lifeatpetsmart as a Campus Ambassador and look forward to seeing who will make their way to PetSmart because of your good work. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any comments, questions, or concerns along the way. We are all here to help you succeed and make an impact!

We can't wait to see all the AWESome work you will do this year!

Best,  
Diversity Action Council (DAC)

First and Last Name	First and Last Name	First and Last Name	First and Last Name	First and Last Name	First and Last Name	First and Last Name
Title	Title	Title	Title	Title	Title	Title

# OVERVIEW

## WHAT IT IS

- Being the spokesperson for PetSmart's opportunities and culture
- Getting students energized about PetSmart and want to be a part of the programs

## WHAT IT'S NOT

- An Internship
- Social Media Influencer Role
- A recruiter to hire students into the programs that PetSmart offers

## GOALS

- Get students involved
- Spread awareness of the PetSmart Unleashed Mentoring Program, Summer Experience, Summer Internship Program, and Full-time Entry Level Roles

## STAKEHOLDERS

- Active Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Members
- Diversity Action Council (DAC)
- Talent Acquisition Leadership
- Corp Comm and PR
- Distribution Leadership

## BENEFITS

- The Campus Ambassador Program is a paid position
- Associate discount at PetSmart stores
- As a Campus Ambassador, you will develop a wide range of transferable skills:
  - Enhanced communication, presentation, and leadership skills
  - Networking both with PetSmart Associates and leadership on your campus with students and faculty
  - Polishing professional skills

# RESPONSIBILITY

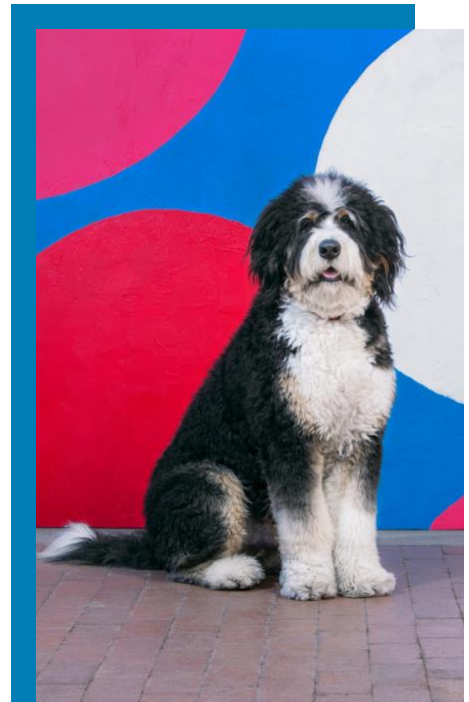


As a Campus Ambassador, you will educate fellow students on your campus about the opportunities that PetSmart has to offer. Throughout the semester, you will guide them through the career opportunities for students in their first through fourth years of school.

## RESPONSIBLE FOR:

The Campus Ambassador is responsible for engaging and educating fellow students about opportunities with PetSmart.

- Conduct presentations on career readiness topics and opportunities at PetSmart to classes and diverse clubs/organizations on campus
- Organize and host on-campus events to inform and promote the PetSmart Unleashed Mentoring Program, Summer Experience, Summer Internship Program, and full-time entry level roles
- Attend career fairs on campus to engage with interested students
- Conduct candidate calls prior to 1st and 2nd round interviews to answer any pre-interview questions
- Collaborate with fellow Campus Ambassadors to plan targeted events
- Spot campus trends and needs and share with PetSmart leaders to create more streamlined and impactful events across campuses
- Post weekly content to social media to promote PetSmart careers and events



# ABOUT THE PROGRAM

## MEETINGS

Ambassadors will complete regular bi-weekly check-ins with their manager to keep them updated on campus programming and attend monthly meetings with all the campus ambassadors.

## TRAINING

- Orientation at the Phoenix Home Office
  - Get to know your Manager and other Campus Ambassadors
  - Live the PetSmart culture for 3 days during orientation
  - Review roles and responsibilities
  - Practice presenting the material to become comfortable
  - Hear from PetSmart Leadership

## CONTACT

- Emerging Talent
- Field Support
- Associate Diversity ET Recruiter



# ORIENTATION AGENDA

## DAY ONE

---

### Morning

- Arrive and meet the PetSmart Team and other Campus Ambassadors
- New Hire Orientation

### Afternoon

- Listen to PetSmart leadership and learn about their teams and responsibilities
- Hear from the Belonging Team
- Hear from PetSmart Charities

## DAY TWO

---

### Morning

- Attend a workshop to brush up on your presentation skills
- Brainstorm ways to engage with the students on your campus
- Learn the questions you can and can't ask during events

### Afternoon

- Apply what you learned during the morning session by developing a mock scenario for your campus
- Recieve feedback

## DAY THREE

---

### Morning

- Present your mock scenario to the group
- Recieve comments, feedback, and suggestions from associates

### Afternoon

- Learn about civic engagement and the ways to give back to your local community and participate in a Campus Ambassador giveback project
- End of orientation celebration and send off

# EXPECTATION

## **Host Campus Wide Events**

- 2 events per year
  - 1 during the holidays - a toy drive competition
  - 1 during the spring during midterms or finals - partnered with PetSmart Charities

## **Meetings**

- Attend monthly Campus Ambassador meetings with your manager and fellow ambassadors

## **Post to LinkedIn**

- Must be PetSmart approved content
  - Content is provided via Everyone Social
- Must post at least twice a month

## **Present to Groups**

- Present an approved slide deck to diverse clubs and organizations on your campus
- Minimum of two presentations per month
- Must be a different group each time

## **Pre-Interview Calls**

- Complete pre-interview calls specified by your manager
- Contact information for candidates will be provided
- Talking points and what you can't discuss will be provided

## **Training Days**

- Attend quarterly training sessions to learn about different teams within the business

# VISION & MISSION



## **Our Vision**

We love pets, and we believe pets make us better people.

PetSmart is the trusted partner to pet parents and pets in every moment of their lives.

## **Our Mission**

Every day with every connection, PetSmart's passionate associates help bring pet parents closer to their pets so they can live more fulfilled lives.



# PETSMART'S VALUES



## **Passion For Pets and People**

We unconditionally love pets and have a passion for serving the needs of pet parents. We are devoted to helping pets live their healthiest, happiest lives.



## **Play to Win**

We see each day as a competition to be won. We embrace challenges, take prudent risks and celebrate successes.



## **Accountable to the Pack**

We do what's right, deliver on commitments and own the outcomes of our actions. Each of us plays an active role in growing the business and finding solutions.



## **United Together**

We promote belonging and inclusiveness where individuals with diverse backgrounds and talents can excel. We know that by working together, we can accomplish great things.



## **Learn New Tricks**

We are always curious, try new things and learn from our mistakes. Every day is an opportunity to be better.

# BELONGING

## Belonging at PetSmart

**Belonging, diversity, and inclusion make us a stronger company. It's why we place such a high value on the unique backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of our associates, customers and the communities where we live and work.**

**By celebrating diversity and creating an inclusive environment where associates feel they belong, we strive to:**

- **Provide the best environment where associates can achieve their full potential**
- **Deliver the best solutions to our customers**
- **Build the best partnerships**

**When we embrace and appreciate a wide range of people and perspectives, we create an environment where associates can do their best work, partners enjoy engaging with us and pet parents have an unmatched customer experience.**



### TALENT

We select, develop, and retain the best talent from all backgrounds to drive innovation and deliver superior results.



### CULTURE

We value an inclusive and caring workplace where associates are engaged, feel psychologically safe, and can be their best selves.



### COMMUNITY

We foster relationships to connect in the communities where our associates and customers live and work.



## ABOUT PETSMART CHARITIES

- With over 26 years of changing lives, we're proud to be the leading funder of animal welfare in North America.
- Since 1994, we've granted over \$451 million to change-making organizations that help transform the lives of pets and those who love them.
- We ensure 90 cents of every \$1 makes a direct impact in communities just like yours
- We partner with shelters across North America to help more than 600,000 pets find homes each year.
- PetSmart generously donates space in their stores to help adoptable pets find homes.
- With their help, two pets are adopted every minute a PetSmart store is open.



### OVER \$40 MILLION GRANTED

To animal welfare organizations to date



### 9+ MILLION PETS SAVED

Connecting homeless pets with loving families through adoption



### \$100+ MILLION FOR SPAY/NEUTER

Preventing pet homelessness before it starts



### OVER 4,000 ANIMAL WELFARE PARTNERS

To animal welfare organizations to date

# PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS

## PROFESSIONALISM

- You are the representative of PetSmart on your campus so show up as your best self!
- Dress for your day but keep it appropriate
- Put your cell phone away, be present!
- Greet everyone with a smile:)

## RESPONSIBILITY

- Be accountable
- Show up on time for events and presentations (at least 10 minutes early)
- Have all materials ready to go
- Communicate regularly with management to keep them updated
- Stay organized during event planning and execution

## ENTHUSIASM

- Be excited about what you are sharing - enthusiasm is contagious
- Show interest in the questions you are being asked
- Keep it fun and exciting

## BE INFORMATIVE

- Know your presentation materials
- Share your experiences to show why you LOVE PetSmart!
- Leave time for questions, especially at the end of presentations

## BE HONEST

- If you don't know the answer to a question, don't make it up! Contact your manager and say you'll get back to them when you have the answer.
- If you are unsure on a fact or answer, don't guess! Ask your manager, they are here to help
- Make sure to follow up with the person when you have the accurate and appropriate answer

# SUGGESTIONS & IDEAS

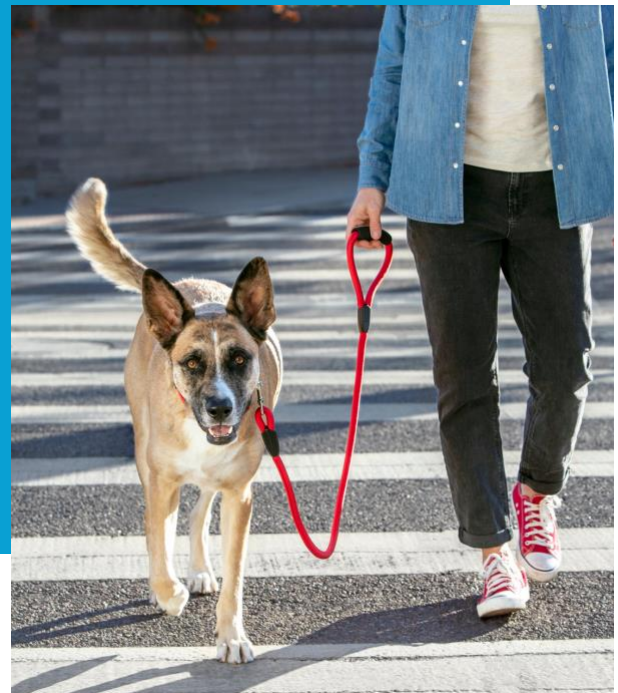


## CAMPUS GROUPS:

- Classrooms
- Diverse Clubs and Organizations
- Honors Societies
- Student Government
- Sports Teams
- Sororities
- Fraternities

## EVENTS:

- PetSmart Company Overview
- Student programs and opportunities  
PetSmart offers
- Interview Tips and Tricks
- Resume Review
- Effective Presentation Skills
- What is Company Culture?
- What is PetSmart's Company Culture?
- How to use LinkedIn and what is it used for?
- Video Interview Advice
- Community Giveback Events
- Previous Intern Panels
- Financial Literacy Presentation



# PAYROLL & HOURS

## PAYROLL

- You must clock hours into PS2 (Kronos) as specific as possible each day in order to get paid.
- If you miss a clock or have issues, please reach out to the Emerging Talent team.
- Hourly associates are paid on a weekly basis.

## THE WORK WEEK

- The regular work week is Monday-Friday.
- May require some weekend programming
- Ambassadors are to work no more than 8 hours a week
- Any overtime must be approved by the Manager of Emerging Talent
- Any hours missed in one week are not able to be made up

## HEALTH BENEFITS

- As an ambassador, you do not receive health benefits. However, you can take advantage of Smart Solutions for discount health and wellness services. Click [here](#) to learn more.



# POST EVENT PROCEDURES

## EVENT WRITE UP

- Take pictures and even a video or 2 along the way to share what you did:
  - Prior to the event
  - Set up of the event
  - During the event
- After the event is over, complete a write-up and send it to the Emerging Talent team to share the work that is being done on campus. Almost like a short blog post!

Below is an example format to follow:

Name  
University

Fun Creative Title

Write a paragraph or two with the following information

- Type of event hosted
- Date the event took place
- Location the event was held
- Overview of what was done to prepare for the event
- What you did during the event
- Attendees response to the event
- Biggest success
- What you would have changed or done differently

Have fun with it! Be creative! Use pictures to help tell the story!

## CAPTIONED PHOTOS

- Along with the short write up, send in 2 pictures from the event with 1-2 sentence captions to be used on the @PetSmartoncampus Instagram page and for LinkedIn
- Keep the captions:
  - Simple
  - Informative
  - Fun
- We want to make people wish they could have attended these events!

## NOTES

[illegible]



# APPENDIX

## 1

## SOFTCLOCK SIGN ON

### PS<sup>2</sup> Soft Clock



1. Login to the Time Clock application with the following link, your associate ID# will be the login. Remember to bookmark this link in your browser.

<https://ps2lbwfc.ssg.petsmart.com/wfc/applications/wtk/html/ess/quick-ts.jsp>

Your default temporary password will be Unleashed1!

If you need assistance with your password, please contact Service Desk (formerly Solution Center) at 1-800-406-2155.

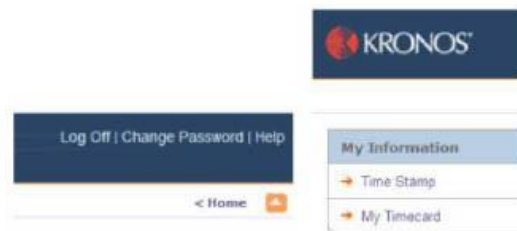
2. It is best to use Google Chrome as your browser. The first time you login, you will be asked to answer 3 security questions that can be used to reset your password if you forget it.

3. Click the Record Time Stamp button to punch. If you receive an error and are unable to record the punch, email your manager with the punch that needs recorded.

# APPENDIX

## 2 SOFTCLOCK SIGN ON

- Click the Home Icon on the upper right part of the screen and My Timecard to view your timecard.



- View your timecard for the current pay period. Change the pay period to previous or next by clicking on the arrow in the Time Period box at the top of the screen.

The screenshot displays the Kronos timecard interface. At the top, there's a header with the Kronos logo and a 'Log Off | Change Password' link. Below the header, there's a 'MECARD' section with a 'Person & Id' field and a 'Time Period' dropdown menu set to 'Current Pay Period'. The main part of the interface is a table with columns for Date, Pay Code, Amount, In, Transfer, Out, and Totals (SAB, Duty). The table shows time entries for a week starting from Mon 2/10 to Sun 2/16. Red boxes highlight the 'Mon 2/10' date, the '1:54PM' time entry, and the '2:02PM' time entry.

Date	Pay Code	Amount	In	Transfer	Out	Totals
Mon 2/10						
Tue 2/11			12:30PM		1:54PM	
Tue 2/11			1:54PM		2:02PM	0:62
Wed 2/12						
Thu 2/13			1:29PM			
Fri 2/14						
Sat 2/15						
Sun 2/16						

## **Job Description**

### **About the Team**

Are you looking for a rewarding and exciting job for the upcoming academic year? At PetSmart, we strive to recruit top talent and develop future business leaders. Join the pack as a Campus Ambassador and educate fellow students on your campus of all of the opportunities that PetSmart has to offer. As a Campus Ambassador you will guide them through the career opportunities for students in their first through fourth year of school.

### **About the Job**

The Campus Ambassador is responsible to lead and engage fellow students while educating them about PetSmart and the opportunities offered within the company.

- Attend a training session prior to the start of the 2022 semester
- Conduct presentations on career readiness topics and opportunities at PetSmart to classes and diverse clubs/organizations on campus
- Organize and host on campus events to inform/promote the PetSmart Unleashed Mentorship Program, Summer Experience, Summer Internship Program, and Full-Time Entry Level Roles
- Attend career fairs on campus
- Conduct candidate calls prior to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> round interviews to answer and pre-interview questions
- Collaborate with fellow campus ambassadors to plan targeted events
- Spot campus trends and needs and share with PetSmart leaders to create more streamlined and impactful events across campuses
- Post weekly content to LinkedIn to promote PetSmart careers and events

### **Education / Experience**

- Current sophomore junior or senior enrolled in postsecondary education for the next two academic semesters
- In good academic standing (minimum 3.5 GPA)
- Displays active participation in diverse campus clubs and organizations.
- Has the willingness to be an ambassador for the upcoming fall and spring semesters

### **Other Skills and Abilities**

- You're a people person - building relationships comes with ease
- Comfortable speaking in front of people
- Tackling multiple projects at once doesn't phase you
- Adapts well to change - you thrive when every day is different
- You are born to lead - you love to inspire and motivate your peers
- Detail oriented - it's no trapper keeper but you love a good list planner or spreadsheet

## Citations

“Generation Z.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 23 Mar. 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Generation-Z>.

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