

**ARF
WIDE**

IMPACT REPORT

2026

The background of the page is a photograph of graduation caps and gowns. The caps are black with blue tassels, and the gowns are blue. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking up at the caps as they are tossed into the air. The lighting is soft and blue-toned, creating a celebratory and academic atmosphere. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

CONTENTS

Message from the CEO	1
Executive Summary	3
ARF Charitable Foundation Board Members	4
Mission Statement	6
WIDE Goals	6
Program Components	7
Program Growth	8
Scholar Academic Backgrounds	9
Annual Program Timeline	9
Program Impact	10
WIDE at Onward Together Nonprofit Conference	11
Donor and volunteer Recognition - Corporate and Individual	14
Scholar and University Recognition	15



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

ARF's WIDE program launched in 2020 with a clear goal: to expand and strengthen the pipeline of talent entering the marketing research, analytics, media, and advertising industries. Today, that mission feels more urgent than ever. WIDE supports scholars through scholarships, mentorship, internships, and direct connections to prospective employers, while introducing them to the dynamic, problem-solving nature of our field. A workforce that reflects a range of backgrounds and perspectives is better equipped to understand and reach today's diverse consumer base.

Since its inception, WIDE has raised over \$2.2 million in support of promising students navigating financial and structural barriers to opportunity. Many are first-generation college students, transfer students or individuals balancing academic pursuits with family responsibilities. What they share is ambition, resilience, and the drive to build meaningful careers. WIDE exists to ensure that talent, not circumstance, determines access to opportunity.

As the industry undergoes rapid transformation, particularly with the rise of AI and data-driven decision-making, the need for adaptable, future-ready talent has never been greater. WIDE continues to evolve in step with these changes, refining its programming to equip scholars with both technical fluency and the critical thinking skills required to thrive in an increasingly complex landscape.

The program has reached an important milestone. WIDE is now a mature and stable initiative, with a proven model and growing network, positioned for its next phase of strategic growth and expanded impact. Through the strength of the ARF community, spanning more than 400 member companies, WIDE scholars gain access to unparalleled industry exposure and career pathways. Graduates of the program are already contributing across the ecosystem, bringing fresh perspectives and energy to our field.

I am deeply grateful to our corporate and individual donors, volunteer mentors and coaches, board members, and university partners for their continued commitment. Together, we are building a stronger, more dynamic future workforce. I look forward to seeing WIDE continue to grow and to watching our scholars shape the future of marketing and advertising.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott McDonald". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Scott McDonald, Ph.D.
CEO & President, ARF



“MY MENTORS HAVE BEEN INCREDIBLY SUPPORTIVE AND HELPFUL, SO A BIG THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY”.
- GABRIELLE FUZEAUX



PROGRAM MANAGER EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The WIDE program is building a strong pipeline of emerging talent for the marketing, media, and insights industry by connecting high-potential students with leading companies, mentorship, and hands-on professional experiences.

Over the past year, scholars participated in mentorship, Career Labs, industry events, and internships that bridge academic learning with real-world application. These experiences provide direct exposure to career pathways across marketing, analytics, research, and media, while helping scholars build meaningful professional networks.

As the entry-level job market becomes more competitive, and as some companies scale back traditional entry-level roles, WIDE is focused on preparing scholars to be day-one ready. The program emphasizes practical experience, industry exposure, and applied learning, with increasing attention to AI readiness to meet evolving industry demands.

WIDE scholars reflect the interdisciplinary nature of today's workforce, bringing strengths across marketing, analytics, market research and insights, computer science, privacy and security, and social sciences, mirroring the skill sets companies rely on.

As the program grows, WIDE remains focused on expanding opportunities for scholars and strengthening engagement with industry partners, helping shape the next generation of leaders in marketing and insights.

Thank you to all who support WIDE as donors, mentors, and hosts. Your involvement makes this impact possible.

Jasmin Kloh
Program Manager, ARF

ARF CHARITABLE FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS (2025-2026)



Andrea Bertels
*President & Executive Director,
Grantmaking, Nielsen Foundation
Nielsen*



Kristin Branch
*Distinguished Lecturer, Marketing
Wisconsin School of Business*



Marc Guldemann
*Founder & Chief Executive Officer
Adelaide*



Louis Jones
*Senior Fellow
Brand Safety Institute*



Scott McDonald, Ph.D.
*CEO & President
ARF*



Jed Meyer
*Chief Revenue Officer
Aquila*



Nancy Smith
*President & CEO
Analytic Partners*



Linda Vytlačil, Ph.D.
*Professor of Data Analytics
Soderquist College of Business |
John Brown University*



WIDE PLAYED A HUGE ROLE IN HELPING ME GROW PROFESSIONALLY AND GAIN CONFIDENCE IN CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTS. THROUGH THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND NETWORKING EVENTS, I LEARNED HOW TO BUILD MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS AND BETTER PLAN FOR MY FUTURE CAREER PATH.- NAIA GRIFFITH

MISSION STATEMENT

ARF WIDE's mission is to strengthen the future of the marketing research, data analytics, and advertising workforce by preparing high-potential students to be industry-ready from day one. By opening access to our member companies and the broader industry, we connect scholars with leaders through mentorship, career exploration and hands-on learning experiences that translate directly to long-term career success.

WIDE advances this mission by cultivating a next-generation talent pool defined by a diversity of experiences, perspectives and skills. A more representative workforce is better equipped to understand and reach today's diverse consumer base. As the industry adapts to changing technologies, shifting consumer behaviors, and increasing complexity, WIDE ensures scholars are equipped to contribute meaningfully, think critically and drive impact from the start of their careers.

The industry is better when we truly represent the consumers we are trying to reach.

WIDE GOALS

- In conjunction with leading public universities, identify highly talented college juniors and senior students who are passionate about going to work in our industry and studying a major that will prepare them for our industry.
- Support, inform, encourage and prepare WIDE Scholars to be the most industry-ready internship and entry-level candidates they can interview.
- Partner with industry HR and Talent Acquisition departments to expand and improve their candidate pool and help them achieve their hiring goals by giving them first access to WIDE scholars.
- Continue to serve as a leading program driving meaningful impact across the industry and beyond by fostering a more equitable and representative workforce.

“THE MOST VALUABLE PART OF THE PROGRAM FOR ME IS WORKING WITH JOSHUA AND SEEING HOW MOTIVATED HE IS AND SEEING HOW HE IS USING AI TO HIS ADVANTAGE.” - ANN MARIE GARZON (A+E NETWORKS)

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

WIDE is a holistic career preparation program. Unlike intensive summer fellowships, WIDE is a persistent two-year program that helps juniors and seniors transition into a career. Through these programs, WIDE scholars are among the most supported and best prepared candidates that companies in our industry can interview for internships and entry-level positions.

Mentorship

Scholars are paired with an industry mentor to guide them, answer questions, help prepare for interviews, make introductions and welcome them to the professional network..

Career Labs

WIDE Career Labs are immersive, company-led sessions that give scholars direct exposure to roles across marketing, media, research and analytics. Hosted by ARF member companies, these sessions go beyond traditional panels, offering a closer look at real projects, team structures, tools and decision-making processes.

Industry Access

Access to ARF events and conferences provides WIDE scholars with real-world venues to learn about and stay abreast of the best and latest research, methods and approaches used in our industry.

Internships

We foster the connection between Talent Acquisition departments and our well-prepared scholars to facilitate interviews and internship opportunities.

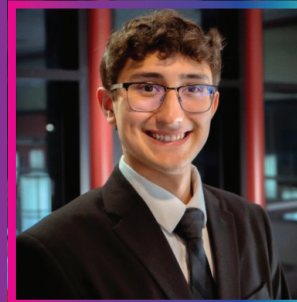
Entry-Level Jobs

Through the same partnerships that provide equal access to internships, we work to provide access to entry-level job opportunities for WIDE scholars.

Scholarships

We work with our partner universities to identify accepted WIDE scholars who are most in need of financial aid. We then provide up to \$10,000 to those scholars.

SCHOLAR SPOTLIGHT



MIGUEL DELTORO SMITH
(UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON, MARKETING)

Accepted a Marketing Intern role at Motorola

Solutions for summer 2026.

PROGRAM GROWTH

Over the past six cohorts, WIDE has grown from 20 scholars in its inaugural year to a peak of 44 scholars in Cohort 5, serving 139 scholars to date. Cohort 6 enrollment stands at 31 scholars, driven primarily by staff transitions across three of six partner schools and reduced campus capacity during the recruitment cycle, not reduced student interest. This year has focused on stabilizing and re-establishing campus contact connections, aligning earlier recruitment timelines and strengthening school engagement to support renewed growth. The program is positioned for strategic re-acceleration in the upcoming cohort cycle.

Scaling Milestone

Cohort 5 marked the largest expansion to date (44 scholars), reflecting strong partner school engagement and alignment.

Cohort 6 Context

Cohort 6 enrollment (31 scholars) reflects institutional transition at 3 of 6 partner schools, including:

- Staff turnover
- Reduced campus bandwidth
- Introducing WIDE to new staff and explaining application process

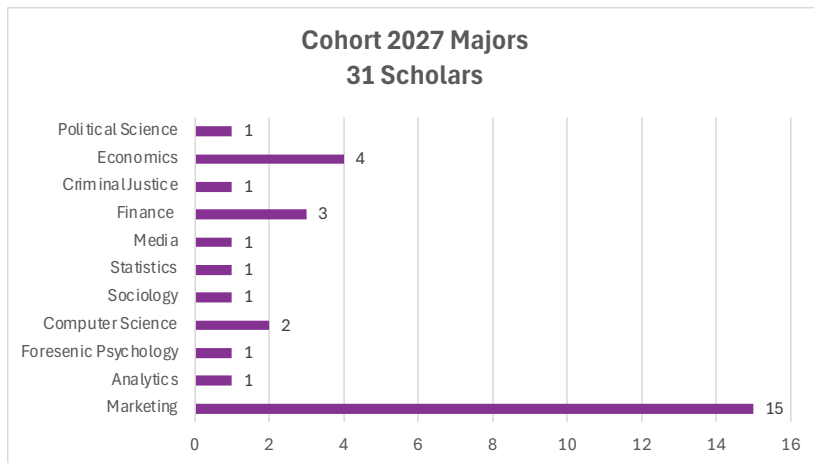
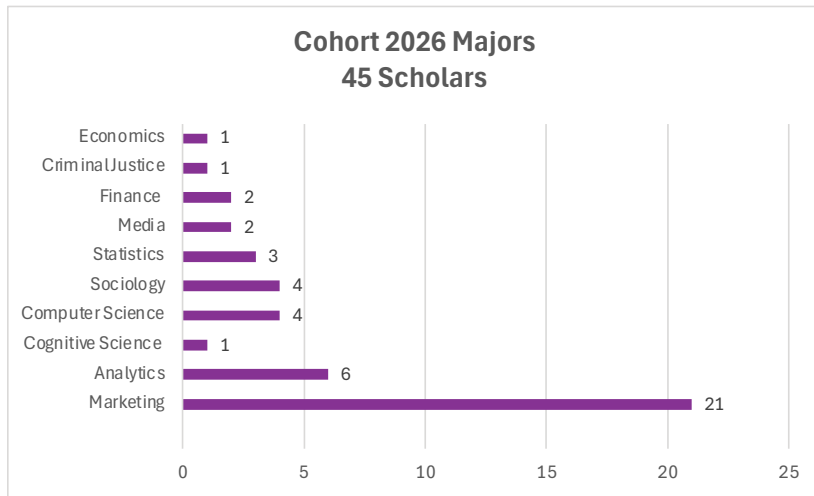
2026 Momentum

- Earlier recruitment timeline alignment
- Increased school partner communications
- Continued employer participation and internship placement strength
- Increased mentor interest from member companies and current mentor involvement overall (invited to Career Labs and stronger encouragement for mentors and scholars to attend ARF events together)

“I TRULY ENJOYED THIS PROGRAM AND HOPE I COULD HELP MY MENTEE TO NAVIGATE THROUGH A CHANGING WORLD WHERE I AM ALSO A LEARNER.”
– SEN DENG (PEOPLE INC.)

SCHOLAR ACADEMIC BACKGROUNDS

WIDE scholars represent a strong pipeline of talent across marketing, analytics, technology, and social science disciplines.



ANNUAL PROGRAM TIMELINE & KEY MILESTONES

WIDE scholars represent a strong pipeline of talent across marketing, analytics, technology, and social science disciplines.

Q1 (Sept–Nov): Foundation & Launch

- Onboard mentors and oriented scholars
- First Career Lab and coaching sessions
- Begin internship exploration support
- Introduce ARF resources to participants

Q2 (Dec–Feb): Skill-Building & Outreach

- Continue mentorship and one-on-one coaching
- Expand virtual events and Career Labs
- Conduct company outreach for summer internships

Q3 (Mar–May): Preparation & Placement

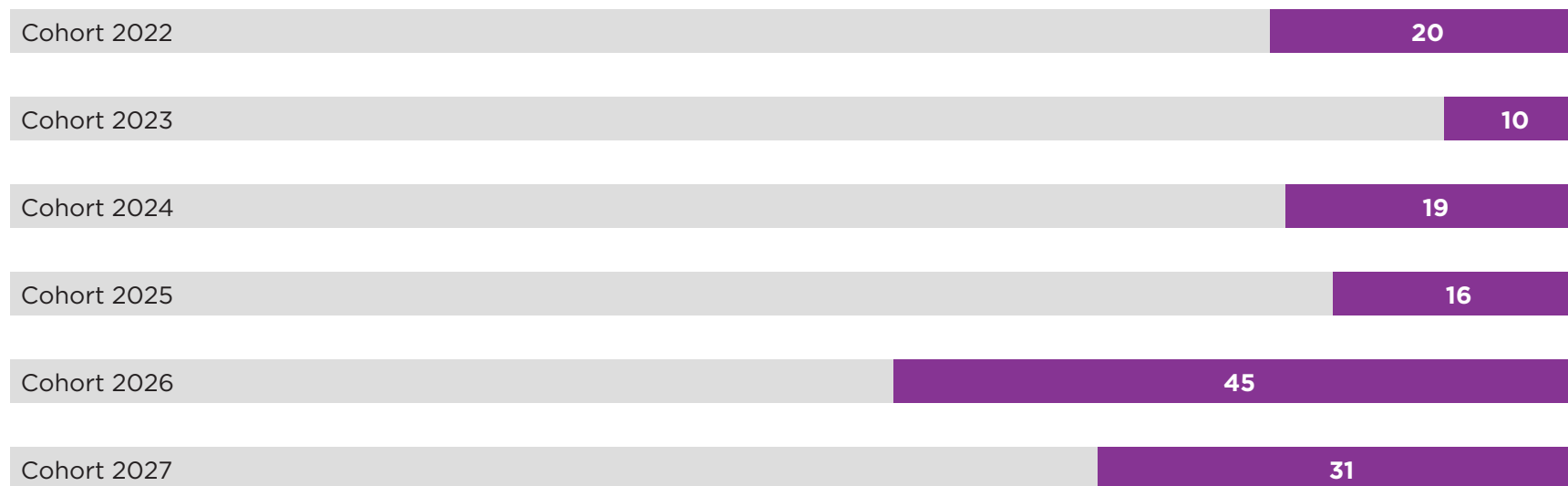
- Confirm internship placements
- Provide readiness guidance for internships
- Engage partner schools for WIDE Scholar applications
- Host WIDE Gathering to honor graduates

Q4 (Jun–Aug): Experience & Reflection

- Internships in full swing
- Collect program reflections and impact assessments
- Strengthen alumni connections and tracking
- Begin planning and selection for next scholar cohort

PROGRAM IMPACT

Number of Scholars



Program Reach

- 139 scholars supported since the program's first cohort
- 75 scholars currently active across Cohorts 2026 and 2027
- 74 mentor companies involved in staff volunteers across all cohorts since inception
- 35+ companies engaged through Career Labs since the first cohort
- 11 internship companies connected with WIDE to share opportunities

Career Development

- 10+ Career Labs hosted annually, providing industry exposure and professional skill-building
- 1:1 mentorship by a leading professional in the industry available to all scholars

Career Outcomes

- 40% of 2024-2025 scholars secured an internship through WIDE
- 70% secured full-time roles within the industry after completing WIDE
- Scholars typically secure internships or jobs within six months of program completion
- Most alumni remain in marketing, media, or analytics roles two or more years after graduation

WIDE AT THE ONWARD TOGETHER CONFERENCE

Thanks to a grant from the Nielsen Foundation, WIDE attended the Onward Together Conference hosted by Nonprofit New York, gaining valuable insights to strengthen our mission of elevating voices and driving impact in marketing, research, and analytics.

Key Learnings:

- **Storytelling with Purpose:** Emphasizing the “why” behind our work and ensuring clear, authentic messaging across scholars, mentors, and partners.
- **Data That Drives Impact:** Combining qualitative and quantitative insights, tracking outcomes, and measuring impact in a meaningful, human-centered way.
- **Strategic Communication:** Balancing proactive and reactive messaging, adapting to change, and optimizing communication across limited resources.
- **Leadership and Voice:** The importance of speaking up, defining our mission, and empowering scholars and professionals to make their voices heard.

This experience reinforced the WIDE program’s commitment to visibility, access, clarity and strategic impact across all our activities.

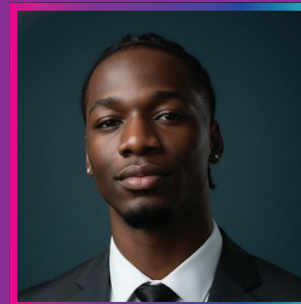
SCHOLAR SPOTLIGHTS



DANIELLE COLON (BARUCH COLLEGE, MARKETING)

Completed internships in Consumer Insights at Paramount Global and Television Programming Strategy at Walt Disney,

which led to a full-time offer beginning summer 2026



STEVEN PREVAL (RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, MARKETING)

Invited to participate in a Google internship and offered a full-time role as an Associate Product

Marketing Manager beginning summer 2026.

WIDE INDUSTRY FOOTPRINT

Thank you to all who generously volunteer their time to improve the lives of so many and elevate the quality of our industry's work and work environments.

A + E Networks
 Accenture
 Adelaide
 Amazon
 Amazon Flex
 Analytic Partners
 Appcart
 AT&T
 Bain & Co
 Carat
 Circana
 Colgate-Palmolive Company
 Comscore
 Dell Technologies
 Deutsch
 Discovery
 Disney
 Dotdash Meredith
 Dynata
 ESPN
 Estee Lauder
 Galileo Research Strategy
 Consultancy
 General Mills
 General Motors
 GfK
 Google
 GroupM
 Horizon Media

Horowitz Research
 Initiative
 Interactive Advertising
 Bureau (IAB)
 IBM
 Ipsos
 Janus Strategy
 Kantar
 Kenvue
 Leo Burnett
 Levi Strauss & Co.
 LG Ads
 ListenFirst
 MediaScience
 Merck & Co.
 Meta
 Microsoft
 MTV
 NBCUniversal Universal
 Nielsen
 NIQ
 Ogilvy
 OMD
 OMG
 Omnicom Group
 Optimine Software
 Paramount
 Paypal
 Penguin Ransom House

People Inc.
 Pernod Ricard
 Proctor & Gamble
 Publicis Media
 Reset Digital
 RMT - Research Measurement
 Technology
 Samsung Electronics
 America, Inc.
 Snapchat
 Social Standards
 Spotify
 St. Judes
 Studio 2152
 Televia Univision

The Cambridge Group
 The Nielsen Foundation
 The Newsette
 TikTok
 Tvision
 Verizon
 Viacom CBS
 VMLY&R
 Warner Bros. Discovery
 Weber Shandwick
 Whirlpool
 WPP Media

SCHOLAR SPOTLIGHT



KIRA SCHAUER
 (UNIVERSITY
 OF WISCONSIN-
 MADISON,
 MARKETING)

Internship at Ovative
 Group as a Marketing

Intern beginning summer 2026



“WIDE HAS BEEN SO INSTRUMENTAL IN HELPING ME GET TO WHERE I AM.” - OZICHI CHINEDU

DONORS

Thank you to the many corporations and individuals who have donated generously. **In 2025 we provided scholars with \$100,000 in scholarship** funding. Together, we have raised **\$2.2 million dollars since the launch of the program.**

2025 Corporate Donors



Previous Corporate Donors



Individual Donors

Abby Mehta	Hamid Abbassi	Kristin Branch	Michael Heitner	Rachael Feigenbaum
Bill Livek	Jed Meyer	Louis Jones	Nishat Mehta	Scott McDonald
Carol Malinky	Kirti Singh	Mark Truss	Paul Donato	

UNIVERSITY AND SCHOLAR RECOGNITION

Partner Universities



Cohort 2026

John Jay College

Krismely Abreu
Dipesh Basnet
Maruf Rahman
Akayla Maximin

Baruch College

Danny Chen
Justina Dodani
Nicole Liu
Danielle Colon
Naia Griffith
Rachel Smith

University of California - Berkeley

Nathen Hadgu
Azariah Smith
Sofia Vargas
Giselle Arteaga
Danica Cortina
Xiaoyu Fan (Esther)
Citlali Gonzalez
Anita Almanza

The Ohio State University

Alauren Lane
Angie Leckrone
Noah Snipes Rea

Donovan Williams
Kayla Davis

University of Wisconsin Madison

Alanna Elie
Sarah Weber
Daniel Lockett
Mya Fields
Halimo (Hali) Jama
Naomi Bell
Natalie Orozco

Rutgers University

Ozichi Chinedu

Estrella Hernandez
Alyssa Bistany
Anjali Sammeta
Dudley Cadet
Khamani Wade
Jennifer Indrupati
Gabrielle Fuzeaux
Carla Prichinello
Steven Preval
Marc Palacios
Kalvin Mensah
Nikan Pahlavan
Rupsha Chakraborty

Cohort 2027

John Jay College

Brithany Galdamez
Ciara Chun
Elijah Williams
Kristina Vargas

Baruch College

Muhammad Saad Khalid
Joshua Ng
Fiona Mei
Nahin Rahaman

University of California - Berkeley

Ali Siddiqui
Alicia Trevina Oarto
Brandon Cho
David Cho
Faith Pham
Kat Luong
Michelle Ifediba

The Ohio State University

Cerena S. Dawson
Mariah Francis
Kachi C. Onyia

University of Wisconsin Madison

Kira Schaur
Claire Weber
Jack Estrin
Maya Cornejo

Miguel Deltoro Smith
Peyton Ross
Julianna Pohl
Mai See Xiong
Sean T. Her
Steven Lee

Rutgers University

Aaryan Shekh
Andrea Garcia
Vanessa Tuffour



DANNY CHEN
(BARUCH COLLEGE,
MARKETING
MANAGEMENT)

Programmatic Investment
Intern at Horizon Media
Summer 2025



JACK ESTRIN
(UNIVERSITY
OF WISCONSIN
- MADISON,
MARKETING)

Product Marketing Internship
at Sub Zero Group, Inc.

“I HAVE MENTORED SO MANY PEOPLE AT DIFFERENT COMPANIES BUT MENTORING SOMEONE IN SCHOOL HAS BEEN GREAT. IT’S HELPFUL TO HEAR FROM STUDENTS WHAT THEY ARE FOCUSING ON AS THEY TRY AND ENTER THE WORKFORCE. IT HAS BEEN GREAT GETTING TO KNOW PEYTON.” - NICOLE JONES (KANTAR)



A photograph of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a black jacket and light-colored pants, standing in front of the Paramount building entrance. She has her arms outstretched in a welcoming gesture. The building's name 'Paramount' is visible in large, white, cursive letters above the entrance. The scene is set during the day with a clear sky and some greenery visible in the background.

Paramount

HAVING A WIDE MENTOR ALLOWED ME TO LEARN DIRECTLY FROM A PROFESSIONAL IN THE INDUSTRY. I WAS ABLE TO GAIN ADVICE FOR INTERVIEW PREPARATION, LEARN ABOUT DIFFERENT CAREER PATHS IN THE INDUSTRY, AND UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF NETWORKING AND CONNECTIONS. - DANIELLE COLON



SCAN HERE TO
WATCH THE WIDE
EOY CAMPAIGN
SCHOLAR VIDEO

thearf.org/wide