Today’s college students have grown up in a world very different from the one their parents knew. Globalization, with its lowering of social, economic, and political barriers throughout the world, has triggered radical changes in our economy, culture, and society.

To the current college generation, the impact of globalization is what the world is all about: instant communication; access to unlimited information; ease of movement to just about anywhere in the world; and unfettered competition for jobs, educational opportunities, and resources, no matter where one was born, where one lives, or where one was educated.

The demands that are placed on our graduates to actively engage the world, in all of its complexity, require us to help them learn how to apply their knowledge to real-world problems. They need opportunities outside of the classroom to develop and practice their abilities for critical inquiry, synthesis of information, complex analysis, and clear communication. Such opportunities can be found through work, volunteer activities, research, or self-directed projects. These experiences enable students to develop the skills they need to succeed while also exploring potential career directions, making contacts that will assist them in finding that first job after graduation, and fulfilling their potential as engaged citizens.

The College is committed to ensuring that each undergraduate has at least one opportunity to acquire practical experience that furthers his or her aspirations and educational objectives. It is the mission of the Center for Education in Action to help students to pursue meaningful experiential opportunities in the United States and abroad through internships, volunteer activities, or independent projects—and then...
to help them translate those experiences and all they have learned in and out of the classroom into plans for life after graduation.

**INTERNSHIPS**

Internships enable students to explore career options, pursue academic interests or personal passions, and acquire practical work experience before they start looking for a job. Internships also make them more competitive applicants for employment. Research conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) showed that 61 percent of students who had an internship also had a job offer in hand when they graduated in 2011.

The College is working with alumni and parents to expand the network of businesses and organizations that welcome internship applications from Middlebury students. Many businesses provide a modest salary to help interns with living expenses, but nonprofit organizations generally do not. (More than 60 percent of the internships held by Middlebury students during the summer of 2010 were unpaid.) Many students cannot afford to forego a paying summer job in favor of an unpaid internship. The Center for Education in Action has some gift funds to support unpaid summer internship opportunities but currently can fund fewer than half of the students who apply for funds. This past summer, 90 students received funding for unpaid internships.

**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

In the words of the College’s mission statement: “Students who come to Middlebury learn to engage the world.” Many do that through service to the community. Each year, more than 1,500 students work as volunteers with organizations addressing community needs in the Middlebury area and around the world.

Community service enables students to deepen their learning and apply course-related theory and content to solve real problems, whether they are volunteering with the Middlebury ambulance corps or a local homeless shelter, serving as translators for Mexican farm workers in Vermont, or building a house with Habitat for Humanity. They learn to identify, understand, and respect others’ needs while acquiring valuable experience in real work situations.

The Civic Engagement team within the Center for Education in Action helps students identify volunteer opportunities that suit their skills and interests and to obtain funding for their own service-related initiatives, including unpaid internships and shorter-term, project-based work. Increased funding would not only support more students engaged in service projects but would also forge additional links to our local, national, and international communities.

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**Education in Action: Encouraging Initiative**

**Name:** Kenneth Williams ’12

**Hometown:** Bronx, New York

**Major:** Economics

**Self-directed project:** The Bronx Garden Project, a community garden developed by Williams and three other Middlebury students—Janet Rodrigues ’12, Jacob Udell ’12, and Ben Blackshear ’12—in partnership with a New York City school, the Bronx Academy of Letters.

**Learn more:** [http://ravensgarden.tumblr.com/](http://ravensgarden.tumblr.com/)

“I've pursued environmental studies at Middlebury, and I've always yearned for that hands-on experience to anchor the material I was learning at the College. Working with friends to plan, fund-raise, and create the garden was an amazing opportunity to do that.”
SELF-DIRECTED PROJECTS

To meet 21st-century challenges, today’s leaders must be able to take intellectual risks, to think creatively, to develop new knowledge and new ways of thinking, and to be entrepreneurial. One important way for students to develop these abilities is through self-directed projects. Students define an idea, articulate their goals, develop a plan, create a budget, put their plan into action, and then analyze its success or failure. Along the way, they develop creativity and learn organizational, communication, and leadership skills.

Some students have an idea for a business that they want to explore. Others see a way to solve a problem and want to take their ideas to the next level. Still others have an artistic vision they want to realize. Examples of recent projects include the creation of an urban garden with a school in the Bronx, construction of a hydropower project in Nepal, and development of a partnership with a university in Chile to advance sustainability initiatives.

Funding for independent projects that do not receive academic credit is administered by the Center for Education in Action through unrestricted internship funds and grants for service and community action in the U.S. and abroad. Funding is awarded through a competitive process. Students have shown extraordinary interest in developing such original and self-designed work, and there are routinely far more worthy projects than there is funding.

Fulfilling the Promise: The MiddAction Challenge

There are many resources on campus to help students find experiential opportunities that fit their goals, interests, and passions. However, some students are unable to take advantage of such opportunities, either because they cannot afford to work as an unpaid intern or volunteer or they do not have the money needed to cover the cost of their self-designed project.

To ensure that each undergraduate is able to take advantage of at least one meaningful experiential opportunity, Middlebury is creating a permanent fund called the MiddAction Fund. Administered by the Center for Education in Action, it will support student experiential opportunities in the summer and during winter term. We have a challenge commitment from an anonymous donor to help us launch this fund. Gifts of $5,000 or more will be matched dollar for dollar and will be split between current use (20 percent) and endowment (80 percent) to provide a permanent source of income for stipends. Individuals who would like to create a named internship fund with a particular focus can do so with an endowment gift of at least $100,000.

Name: Dristy Shrestha ’11.5
Hometown: Kathmandu, Nepal
Major: Psychology
Learn more: www.middlebury.edu/giving/difference/impact2/finca-intern

“I wanted to do an internship this summer because it’s the last summer before I graduate, and I particularly wanted to do something in international development. I grew up in Nepal, so I’ve seen development projects working around me, and I’ve seen how it makes a difference in the society.”
**Our Mission**
Empowering students to apply their liberal arts education and engage the world through their professional pursuits, active citizenship, and life’s work.

**Applying the Liberal Arts**
The Center for Education in Action connects students to opportunities for experiential learning and “real world” engagement by promoting internships, community-based research, and service; providing career counseling, education, and resources; and advising for fellowships and other post-graduate study. We work with faculty, too, in supporting community engagement in teaching and research.

The Center enriches a Middlebury education by helping students to build on experiences in and out of the classroom, to deepen their understanding of themselves and the world, and to make informed decisions about preparing for life after Middlebury. Here, students find opportunities to volunteer locally and around the world; explore career options; identify internships; craft an international immersion experience; locate funding for projects; and pursue job opportunities, graduate study, and fellowships. We help students put their educations into action!

**Who We Are**

**Civic Engagement:** volunteering, internships, community projects, service learning

**Career Services:** internships, career advising, job opportunities

**Fellowships:** applying for competitive scholarships and fellowships, pre- and post-grad

**Health Professions:** applying for professional school (medical, veterinary, dental, and allied health fields)

**Internships & Funding:** summer and winter-term internships, funding for unpaid internships and self-directed projects

**What We Do**
We advise; we inform about opportunities; we educate about careers; we offer hands-on practice with internships and community involvement; we help find funding for projects and internships.

**When We’re Open**
Monday–Friday: 8:15 A.M.–NOON, 1:00–5:00 P.M.
Career Services drop-in hours: Monday–Friday 2:00–5:00 P.M.

**Online**
Find us online at [go.middlebury.edu/eia](http://go.middlebury.edu/eia)

**Where We Are**
Adirondack House, 534 College Street
Stop at the main desk for more information.

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**Education in Action: The Power of Internships**

**Name:** Quan Pham ’12

**Hometown:** Honolulu, Hawaii

**Major:** Molecular Biology and Biochemistry

**Internship experience:** Worked as a Global Health Impact Fellow with Unite for Sight in Ghana. Quan took courses in ethics and health care delivery, shadowed ophthalmologists, collected 500 pairs of glasses, and raised more than $2,000. He was part of a team that, on an average day, screened 90 patients.

“This summer, I was able to go beyond the textbook and really witness for myself a global health initiative in Ghana, scrutinizing both its impact and shortcomings.”