The Congressional Budget Office’s summer associates gain meaningful, real-world experience in their field of study while being exposed to the pivotal role that CBO plays in serving the Congress. Whether they were creating data sets about pharmaceutical development, analyzing the use of the GI Bill, or investigating the prices of brand-name drugs once generics arrived, CBO’s 2021 summer associates found their work educational and rewarding. Even though the internships were remote, video meetings and virtual happy hours helped the summer associates establish professional connections with experts in public policy, economics, and other fields.

During my internship with CBO’s National Security Division, I explored and analyzed the labor force outcomes of veterans with disability compensation. The economists in the division provided institutional knowledge that allowed me to approach the issue more deeply than my academic training had prepared me for. Under their guidance, I learned about the complicated nature of using survey data and the applied technical skills required to gain useful information from it.

Although I was working in the Health Analysis Division, with a focus on developing a data set related to the historical development of pharmaceuticals, I had the opportunity to interact with analysts in other divisions too. CBO’s staff were extremely helpful and welcoming. My assigned work was interesting, and I was able to contribute meaningfully to the work of the Congress.

Working in CBO’s National Security Division this summer provided me a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between my previous professional experience and my graduate studies in economics. As a summer associate in NSD, I conducted and presented research on the availability and use of the Navy’s aircraft before and after large-scale maintenance events. As part of that work, I developed algorithms to clean extensive data sets and report key metrics. Even though my internship was remote because of the pandemic, I felt incredibly connected to the other staff at CBO and encouraged to be involved.

Information about internships and employment is available at www.cbo.gov. CBO is an equal opportunity employer.