Tips for Applying to the PST Program at Berkeley Lab To Ensure Best Chances of Placement

Key Dates

- **15 January 2011** - Deadline to complete and submit online application, indicating Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) as your first or only choice
- **31 January 2011** - Deadline to have letters of recommendation submitted online
- **1 April 2011** - Last day offers made to applicants
- **1 April 2011** - Deadline for post-marked official transcripts mailed to:

Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
Center for Science and Engineering Education
One Cyclotron Road, MS 7-222
Berkeley, CA 94720
ATTN: PST – transcripts

Note: There is no minimum GPA requirement to gain acceptance into the program.

We encourage students to complete their applications prior to 1 February, because we begin making placements at that time. The application process is technically open until the end of March, but the chances of placements go down each day after 1 February. This is why we set our deadline as 15 January – if you submit your online application by then, it gives your references time to submit their recommendations online by 31 January, so that you are eligible to be placed beginning on 1 February. For the month of February we are the only ones who can place students who have selected LBNL as their first choice lab. After 1 March, the second and third-place preference labs can also access these students and make offers to them. So we try our best to place as many as possible in February before the placement process becomes really competitive.

Lab Selection

The PST program is offered at all 17 national laboratories and participating at any one of them will be a great educational experience. If you are certain that LBNL is where you would like your internship, please be sure to select Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) as your 1ST or only Lab Choice.

PST UC Cal Teach applicants MUST choose Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory for Lab Choice AND LEAVE THE "Second Choice" BLANK.

Educational Background

When providing a list of all college courses (title and number) you have completed and their respective grades, include a **descriptive title** for each course, e.g., CHEM 140A Advanced Inorganic Chemistry (not just CHEM 140A).

Research Interests and Special Skills

We encourage you to look at the Berkeley Lab website, www.lbl.gov, to learn more about the Lab and the type of work we do here. Explore the site and see if there are any research projects that you would find interesting.
Please go to the below link to see the various divisions at the Lab and research projects:
http://www.lbl.gov/LBL-Programs/divisions.html

When completing the application, please speak to your passion for science and how it relates to some of the research we do at the Lab; this is really insightful when mentors are considering applicants.

Note: Lab experience is not required for acceptance into the program.

As you answer the essay portion of the application, please keep in mind that scientist mentors will be looking specifically for your science background and interests in research. Be sure that your answers to these questions also reference the areas of research that you have identified from searching on the LBNL website. You should not list a specific person's name, but do use as much detail about your interests as possible.

> Ex., "I am interested in energy research" or "Science is a constantly changing, living entity and through the lab I want to explore what it truly is to become part of science" are not as strong or helpful as "I am interested in researching advanced vehicles and

fuels, building more energy efficient infrastructures, semi-conductors and metals, or nanostructures" or "I want to gain experience in researching inertial confinement fusion (ICF). Within ICF, my interests are variable. I would prefer to either work on an experimental project, specifically, with diagnostic devices."

We strongly recommend drafting answers to essay questions in a word processing software first and copying and pasting the final version into the online application before submitting it online. Be very careful that your final version is free of typographical or grammatical errors as well as including all pertinent information before you click on the "submit" button. **Proofread your essay** – It's a good idea to have parents, teachers and/or classmates review your essay answers for errors and to give you feedback on how to represent your research interests and skills effectively.

Letters of Recommendation

We suggest that you solicit three letters of recommendation from:

- A faculty member who can discuss the academic skills you have developed in your major that may be applicable to laboratory research
- Someone who can comment on your general professionalism and work ethic (e.g., a past employer)
- S Someone who can speak about your commitment to teaching (e.g. a K-12 classroom teacher or a Cal Teach supervisor).

These recommendations will be used by CSEE and your potential scientist mentor to consider you for placement. Remember that potential mentors will be looking for your background and experience in science, technology, engineering, math or research.

Requesting a letter of recommendation:

- Communicate with recommenders no later than early December, to let them know that you will need a letter by the late January application deadline, because they will most likely be difficult to contact over the semester/quarter break
- Provide recommenders with a personal statement about your research interests and why you want to participate in the program
- Include a CSEE Undergraduate flier, or a link to the PST page on the CSEE website: http://csee.lbl.gov/Programs/PST/index.html
- Confirm recommenders' email addresses prior to submitting application
- Follow up with recommenders frequently to ensure all recommendations are submitted by 31 January 2011

Submitting Your Application

Please use the Microsoft Word template version of the application to compose your application text before going online. Once it is completed, copy and paste your final version into the actual application on Edulink.

Note: ALL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED ON EDULINK ARE FINAL!
YOU CANNOT MAKE CHANGES AFTER HITTING THE "SUBMIT" BUTTON!

Proofread your final version to be sure that it is free of typographical or grammar errors as well as including all pertinent information before you click on the "submit" button.

Reaching Out to a Researcher

Explore the following site and see if there are any research projects that you would find interesting:
http://www.lbl.gov/Workplace/Lab-Support/orgchart-index.html

If you find a researcher whose project sounds like a good match, please contact that person directly to see if they are interested in hosting an intern and would have an appropriate project in mind. We have found that this personal reaching out is a very effective way to make a match between intern and mentor. If/when you find a researcher that you feel is a good match, have them contact Colette Flood, Internship Program Manager, at clflood@lbl.gov directly. Feel free to email clflood@lbl.gov with information about projects or researchers of interest and CSEE will be happy to contact them on your behalf as well.

Please be persistent; researchers are very busy and it may take some tenacity to really connect with them. We encourage you to reach out to others in the department i.e., an administrator, who may be very helpful in redirecting you to other scientists in the division that may have projects that would be a good fit for you as well.

Initiative is a very desirable quality when considering candidates for our programs; demonstrating initiative and your passion for science is likely to make a positive impact on one of our scientific staff. Connecting with a scientist and discussing your passion, acumen and any collaborative opportunities via a CSEE internship is the best avenue to a successful placement.