

GM Giving Paid Internships To 110 HS Students

The Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — General Motors is kicking the tires on a unique new internship program for Detroit-area high school students.

GM has hired 110 students for paid summer internships, the automaker said Monday in announcing the formation of the GM Student Corps, a program that combines service, education and mentoring.

The students will work in teams of 10 to develop and implement service projects in Detroit-area neighborhoods. They'll be trained and mentored by 60 GM retirees and a dozen GM student interns from the University of Detroit Mercy. GM will pay for the student projects and provide Chevrolet Express vans and Chevrolet Silverado full-size pickups so adult mentors can transport materials and students to project sites and life-skills classes.

GM North America President Mark Reuss said the company wants to help rebuild Detroit because it'll need a highly skilled workforce that wants to live in the area, Reuss said. The program, he said, is designed to break "a bad sort of swirling idea of despair," in the city and nearby communities.

GM said it selected the Student Corps members based on leadership potential, enthusiasm, school activities, citizenship and academic performance. The teams are currently planning their projects; work is scheduled to begin in mid-June and finish up in August.

At the end of the summer, leaders from each student team will present their programs and results to Reuss and his staff.

The GM Summer Corps experience also will be chronicled in a documentary filmed by Detroit Mercy professor Jason Roche, and interns are being encouraged to document their projects on social media.

The company wouldn't say how much it's spending on the program. But Reuss, who came up with the idea, said the company wanted to give promising students a chance to find summer jobs because there are few in the city. He hopes that other businesses will join with GM to expand the test program.

"Imagine if we had five companies full-force," he said. "That's what happens with some of the seed ideas when you plant them."

All the students will be paid and will get to put General Motors on their resumes, Reuss said. Those in the program would be good candidates for GM jobs in the future, he added. For many, this will be the first job they've ever had, he said.

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