



# Class of 1981 Internship Fund INTERN PROFILE



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## **Daniel Lin '23** **The COVID Tracking Project**

Daniel Lin '23 grew up in San Jose, California and graduated from Valley Christian High School as an AP Scholar with Distinction. At Valley Christian, Daniel played varsity football, acted in musical theater, and served as the student body president. Additionally, he contributed to scientific research projects (two were sent to the International Space Station) and played cello in the school chamber string quintet. Outside school, Daniel achieved his Eagle Scout, played cello in the California Youth Symphony, and led his youth group as a worship leader. At Dartmouth, although he is interested in most subjects, from religion to music to data analysis, Daniel plans to major in sociology with a minor in human centered design. He is a member of The Dartmouth Cords a capella group, the Biathlon Club, and is active in Christian fellowships on campus. After graduation, Daniel plans to pursue a career in the non-profit sector.

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### **Executive Summary from Daniel's final report:**

The COVID Tracking Project is a national volunteer organization that collects, researches, and publishes the most complete data about COVID-19 for US states and territories. This data is widely cited by science journals and news outlets and is used by numerous states in deciding re-opening measures. During my internship, I led multiple data entry shifts per week, helped maintain a high-quality dataset, and developed and implemented internal processes to maximize efficiency within the organization to ultimately provide clear and accurate data for the public.

When leading data entry shifts, I organized a group of 10-16 volunteers that changed each day to manually scrape state and territorial COVID-19 websites for data. During these shifts, in addition to double-checking volunteers' work, I answered volunteers' questions, made final decisions when faced with anomalous state reporting, and drafted/revised public notes that were posted to the website. I also facilitated communication with the editorial team who releases tweets along with our daily data update. Outside data entry shifts, I contributed heavily to the Data Quality team by drafting outreach questions to state health officials, backfilling missing values in our dataset, and responding to email inquiries. To supplement our data, I worked extensively to maintain accurate metadata for each datapoint, researching state annotations for different types of testing, units, and outcomes, while maintaining a Data Quality Log that tracked state anomalies, backfills, and other changes within the data. This work involved collaboration with a separate team of volunteers and team-leads to make nuanced decisions and to ensure accuracy and precision along the way.

In doing this work, I developed numerous project management, software development, and editorial skills that are applicable to any occupation. I drafted, pitched, and revised process and data proposals, integrated software tools, and engaged deeply with complex data. After immersing myself in numbers for these past months, I learned that while I do enjoy working with numerical data, I am not as interested in the numbers and visualizations themselves as I am interested in working with others to discover what the numbers represent.