Companies like Google, Intuit, Atlassian, and eBay are as much about entrepreneurship as they are about technology, and individuals with a liberal arts education help to drive innovative cultures in this global hotspot. The mission of the Silicon Valley Program (SVP) is to provide the students of the Claremont Colleges with an off-campus study alternative that marries the liberal arts to challenges facing technology firms in Silicon Valley. Students on the program will explore theoretical organizational structures and will apply classroom lessons to the daily tasks associated with an internship in technology. Students will meet corporate executives—and early-career professionals—who will provide insights into current challenges.

BACKGROUND
Open to students from all five Claremont Colleges, the SVP is rooted in the mission of Claremont McKenna College, and shares a foundation with the Silicon Valley Networking Trip, a one-week networking immersion trip held annually the week prior to the spring semester. This trip has introduced nearly 100 CMC students to careers in one of the most innovative regions of the world, and, more importantly, has inspired an understanding of how a liberal arts education will serve them well in future endeavors.

INTERNSHIPS
Alumni and parents who lead successful careers in Silicon Valley serve as mentors and internship sponsors at scores of Silicon Valley companies. Internships vary depending upon the needs of the sponsoring organizations and the skills of the students. Generally speaking, internships are secured in engineering, finance, human resources, product development, customer service, marketing, and other corporate functions. Many internships feature significant quantitative and analytical duties. All internships must provide students with the types of experiences that would be afforded to early-career professional staff.

Internship sponsors have included: Atlassian, Avinger, eBay / PayPal, Edmodo, Electric Imp, Electronic Arts, Equinix, Google, Intuit, Retail Next, Samsung, Tegile, Uber, and Zynga. Students are encouraged to identify qualified companies of their choosing for potential internship opportunities and work with the Program Director for introductions to hundreds of interested contacts.

LOCATION
Most SVP students live in apartments near the Mountain View train station. Some students with internships in San Francisco may choose to find an apartment in The City. Google generously provides classroom space for Saturday classes.
**CURRICULUM**

The curriculum includes four courses presented by the Robert Day School of Economics and Finance at Claremont McKenna College.

**ECON 123 CM:** “Quantitative Data Analysis” introduces students to advanced data analysis. The main objective of the course is to allow students to apply statistical concepts to large data sets using both spreadsheet software and statistical packages. Emphasis will be placed on acquiring programming skills, and on real-life applications addressing both public policy questions and topics related to student internships.

**ECON 165 CM:** “Industrial Organization” uses economics to study industries and firms. We will explain why imperfect competition is pervasive, discuss how to describe and compare imperfectly competitive industries and firms, consider alternative strategies firms employ, examine how industries evolve over time, evaluate the implications for profitability and welfare, and assess the impacts of public policies on firm strategy and industry performance. The insights are particularly useful for prospective consultants, entrepreneurs, investors, managers, and policy makers.

**ECON 198 CM:** “Independent Study & Research” allows each student to design a research project that covers topics of interest to a technology / innovation culture, and may stem from work done on the internship, with approval of the employer. Students are required to submit a substantial research project at the end of the semester, among interim deliverables. Some students will be required to seek academic supervision from a faculty member at his/her home campus.

**ECON 030 CM:** “Internship” will allow each student, in consultation with the program director, to secure an internship at a Silicon Valley firm. The internship should be with a technology company, or should be in a field closely related to technology innovation in Silicon Valley. Internships must have a corporate sponsor or supervisor who understands that this is first and foremost an academic undertaking, and will be supervised by the program director.

**ELIGIBLE STUDENTS**

All students of the Claremont Colleges are eligible to participate, so long as they have completed ECON 101 CM “Intermediate Microeconomics” or a related course, the prerequisite for ECON 165. Juniors and second-semester sophomores will be considered. Students must have attained at least a 9.0 cumulative GPA and must not already have taken ECON 165 CM. Exceptions to these criteria may be made by the Dean of the Robert Day School.

**CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Students on the SVP semester will be afforded opportunities to meet informally with corporate executives in a number of companies, as well as recent graduates who can provide insights into how Silicon Valley works. The CMC Alumni Association’s Silicon Valley Chapter has adopted the SVP students, and will organize networking and social functions. The program director will reach out to the alumni offices of the other four colleges as their students participate in the program.

**PARTNERSHIPS**

The Silicon Valley program is managed by the Robert Day School of Economics and Finance at Claremont McKenna College. The College’s Center for Global Education supports the organization of the off-campus study program, and the director of the Washington Program has served as a valuable resource. In addition, the program director has established key relationships with the CMC Office of Alumni & Parent Relations, as well as faculty and staff of Pomona, Scripps, Harvey Mudd, and Pitzer colleges.

**FACULTY**

Courses will be taught by faculty from the Robert Day School of Economics and Finance at Claremont McKenna College. Students’ independent study may be supervised by faculty from their home campus.

**DATES**

The program operates on the same schedule as the Claremont Colleges. It includes a three-day orientation session prior to the start of the internship / classes. The program operates in the fall and spring semesters.

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

More detailed information may be found on the program website (www.cmc.edu/svp). Please contact Stephen M. Siegel ’87, director, Silicon Valley Program, steve.siegel@cmc.edu, 408-899-6928, cell: 909-322-3461.