Ve’ahavta is a Jewish humanitarian organization dedicated to promoting positive change in the lives of people of all faiths and backgrounds who have been marginalized by poverty and hardship. Ve’ahavta mobilizes volunteers in meaningful, hands-on experiences to fulfill our collective responsibility to care for our neighbour. Please visit www.veahavta.org for more information.

Ve’ahavta offers a variety of programs in the GTA, including relief and referral services, pre-employment and life skills training programs, and paid training opportunities for individuals who have experienced poverty and homelessness.

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Government Relations Intern would focus on researching and building portfolios on politicians' stances and government systems as they relate to client needs (e.g. financial assistance, housing reforms). The Government Relations Intern will use the research to create reports and recommendations to Ve’ahavta staff with regards to further actions that the organization and its clients should take to seek support on various issues and to better meet client needs.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

Research on Politicians (40%)
While we have built some connections with local politicians, we know that there are additional individuals to whom we could be reaching out regarding various issues and needs of our clients. The Government Relations Intern will create a database of municipal, provincial, and federal politicians. The student will then research the politicians' perspectives on a variety of topics related to our clients' needs (e.g. affordable housing, harm reduction work, financial assistance). This research will be accomplished using a combination of tools such as calls to political offices, politician websites, news articles, and so forth. The student will put together portfolios on the various politicians and, based on their findings, make recommendations of politicians with whom to connect regarding the various issues and needs of Ve’ahavta and our clients.

Research on Systems (40%)
Changes occur daily to financial assistance programs, health programs, affordable housing, and other system issues relevant to our clients. It can prove difficult for staff to keep up with the many program reforms; as such, the Government Relations Intern will research these reforms and share them widely with staff across the agency. This would include information on how the changes affect our clients, for example how much money those on financial assistance can make without jeopardizing their benefits.

Information Dissemination (15%)
Based on their research, the Government Relations Intern will provide reports on their research that can be disseminated to staff as a guide for next steps. The Government Relations Intern may also provide content for social media posts addressing advocacy issues relevant to the organization.
Reflective Essay (5%)
Write a short essay (500-1000 words) in which you describe the internship experience and reflect on its applicability to the PCJ academic program (to be graded by the PCJ Program).

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE
The successful candidate will have strong knowledge of issues affecting those experiencing homelessness, addiction, and mental health challenges, and an excellent understanding of the related complexities and sensitivities. They will display excellent oral and written communication skills. The ideal candidate excels in research and report writing. They will be a self-starter with a high level of initiative who is results oriented.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS
Currently enrolled in a post-secondary program in a related field
Familiarity with the nonprofit sector
Experience conducting independent research
Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, Internet, e-mail and database management

Interested applicants are invited to submit their resume and cover letter to Marni Herskovits, Director of Programs, marni.herskovits@veahavta.org by August 23rd, 2019

Please put “Government Relations Intern” in subject line

We thank all interested applicants but can only respond to those invited for an interview. Ve’ahavta is an equal opportunity employer and encourages applications from equity seeking groups including qualified individuals with personal experience of the mental health system. Accommodations are available on request for candidates taking part in all aspects of the selection process.