

May 16, 2024

**TO: RAILS Board**

**FROM: Grant Halter, Data Analysis Manager**

**SUBJECT: RAILS Data Analysis Internship Experience**

The Data Analysis Intern position was created to provide a new opportunity for library students to gain important data skills and experience. These data literacy skills will be invaluable throughout their career and will produce unique outcomes for the library organizations they work for. Data positions in libraries are few and far between nationwide despite the high demand for data skills in the library world. This role offered the opportunity for an intern to integrate their data skills into their library work to amplify their impact on the library profession.

The Data Team at RAILS offers a unique position for a library student because we are engaged with all departments across the organization. Quinn McKissock, the first RAILS Data Intern, started their seven-month internship working with data from the eRead project. The goals of the project were to manage large datasets of orders, holds, and circulation transactions, and analyze the trends and patterns to inform and support the eRead project team. We worked with Quinn to set up data management best practices using real-world data and instructed them on how to navigate the complexity of the datasets. And through the opportunities provided at RAILS, Quinn has been able to gain a deeper understanding of how library systems operate through discussions with RAILS staff, vendor representatives, and member library staff.

The internship program has greatly benefited RAILS and Quinn as it encourages the development of data literacy skills that impact our work. Offering internships like this are important to supporting the library job pipeline with useful skills and experiences. We look forward to further developing and internship program at RAILS to the continue offering these unique opportunities.