

Internships give ‘real-world’ experience

Dina Nagdimunova admits that much of what she learns in her finance textbooks at Loyola College in Maryland, Baltimore, is forgotten soon after exams. That’s why she thinks it’s important to apply what she studies in class in real-world situations.

Ms. Nagdimunova, a 21-year-old senior who was born in Russia, serves as a paid intern with Safenet Corporation in Belcamp, an information security company. She found her internship through a career Web site offered by Loyola College.

Working several days a week, in addition to completing her academic work, Ms. Nagdimunova has contributed to preparing growth management reports that the company uses to determine its value.

The internship has sharpened her accounting skills and taught her how to communicate with higher levels of management, Ms. Nagdimunova explained. Those skills will be needed if she later pursues a career in investment banking, she said.

“You can’t do investment banking without knowing the basics,” she explained.

Ms. Nagdimunova said it’s “incredibly important” in today’s market to have real-world experience on a resume. It provides an extra edge that shows employers that students are motivated and interested in their field.

“It’s very competitive,” she said, noting that she has had three finance-related internships while at Loyola.

For those considering an internship, Ms. Nagdimunova said it is important that students represent their skills accurately and not pretend they know more than they do.