



# Internship Application

**Dictators suck.** That's why at HDD Studios we believe that "design is a democracy, not a dictatorship." We listen to the needs of our residential clients and create spaces that are awesomely beautiful and functional. No over-trendified egos here!

**What is HDD?** HDD Studios is an interior design company focusing on design, media and publishing located 15 minutes from the MSU campus in Williamston, MI that provides residential and (sometimes) commercial interior design services. Leslie Hart-Davidson, founder/CEO of HDD Studios, brought her design business from New York to Michigan in 2004 with humble beginnings in her living room. Les created the HDD Studios intern program in 2006 with one intern, and is proud to celebrate the 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of interns in the Spring of 2017. Those talented and dedicated interns are directly responsible for the continued growth and success of HDD Studios, which now has clients across the state. According to the Greater Lansing Business Monthly (August 2010 issue), HDD Studios is one of the most successful female-owned small businesses in the state of Michigan thanks to the success of the intern program.

**Your mentor:** Your internship experience will be supervised directly by owner/author/tv personality Leslie Hart-Davidson. Besides her dedication to mentoring, she works tirelessly to market HDD Studios through media appearances and publications. Les has been working in the industry for over a decade and continues to receive national media attention as a designer, writer, mentor and entrepreneur. Les is a regular featured guest on the ABC television program "My West Michigan" on WZZM in Grand Rapids. As a nationally recognized interior design expert, her work has been featured on HGTV.com. As a business leader, her work has been featured in Forbes, CNBC, and The Wall Street Journal. Her speaking engagements include headlining regional and local Home and Garden shows as well as the National Kitchen and Bath Industry Show. Les published her design book *Remodeling Your House without Killing Your Spouse* in 2014, which is selling well in local bookstores and on Amazon.com. She launched the *designdemocracy* YouTube channel in January 2015 and has received national attention for the useful, usable, and irreverent content. Her second book *It's Not Your Room, It's You* was published in 2016 and her 3<sup>rd</sup> book, *Food is Love* is planned for a 2018 release.

**Your director:** Your internship will be enhanced by HDD's Director of Everything (and resident pit bull) Jennifer Henigan. JenHen protects HDD Studios' assets by managing the business, coordinating contractors and vendors, project managing remodels and ensuring the overall profitability and productivity of the staff. JenHen is quick with the pop culture references (we dare you not to laugh at her) and is an amazing advocate for the staff and clients. The biggest benefits of working with JenHen include the lessons of self-reliance, independence, humor and street smarts to make you a productive member of society.



**Our culture:** HDD Studios is always seeking the best and brightest interns who are able to embrace our work ethic and studio culture for inclusion in our successful program. Our studio is a place of humor, creativity, and support for our staff, our vendors and our clients. We take our role of ringleaders for clients very seriously; the relationships we develop with our clients over the course of lengthy projects often culminate in parties that they throw for us out of appreciation for our efforts. We're not kidding when we say we have the best jobs in the world. While we don't take ourselves too seriously, HDD Studios is quite successful with helping our clients live better in their homes and balancing the heavy and time-sensitive workload while having fun. You'll be challenged in ridiculous ways as an intern, but we promise it'll be worth it.

**Your position:** If you expect to only order lame fabric samples all day long, this is not the internship for you. HDD Studios interns are the most important part of the overall operation of the business. Les is dedicated to filling holes of the standard interior design college curriculum with practical design language and training sessions. Want to learn how to write a contract? Ask Les! Want to learn about kitchen design? Ask Les! Essentially, if you want to know everything about anything, ask Les. Along with training, you'll also have the opportunity to cultivate your superpower. Les will thoroughly dissect your brain until your superpower reveals itself. As a result, you will walk away from this internship with awesome personal development that will help you when you venture off into big people world.

**You in?** We have a current need for bright, enthusiastic interns for many different positions, including interior design, web & technology, professional writing, marketing, and advertising/public relations. We have been known to have a sophomore or two, but only if they are incredibly motivated and convincing. This internship rocks! Our interns work directly with clients, vendors, and contractors and contribute to real-life projects. There are also leadership positions that are available each semester that will further develop your resume depending upon the superpowers you possess. Each of these positions has significant responsibilities and varies in commitment from one to two semesters.

**An HDD Studios internship is what you make it.** As an intern, you will have every opportunity to gain experience and make a direct impact on the success of HDD studios. We're proud to have employed graduates that have interned with HDD Studios and of the quality letters of recommendation that help earn our interns fantastic jobs. In fact, those with HDD Studios experience are many times more likely to be gainfully employed post-graduation. Interns are not just appreciated at HDD Studios--they're revered. Les answers multiple calls from potential employers asking about former interns and is thrilled to help graduates succeed. HDD Studios alum are also happy to help connect you with amazing careers post graduation and are located in every corner of the country as well as the UK.



So want an internship that doesn't suck? Apply to be an intern at HDD Studios! To process your application and land an interview at the studio, **send the following 3 documents to business manager Jennifer Henigan (a.k.a. JenHen) at [jj@designisademocracy.com](mailto:jj@designisademocracy.com)**:

- A personalized **cover letter** explaining all the ways you're awesome (seriously, don't be shy).
- Your **resume** (quirky, please) with specific HDD Studios internship objective clearly listed.
- The **answers** to the following 7 questions:
  1. Do you prefer cake or pie? Why?
  2. What is your favorite movie quote? Les and JenHen LOVE to quote movies and TV shows. **Humor is highly prized at HDD Studios.** No worries; *you can't possibly offend us.*
  3. Why did you select your major for your career path?
  4. What does the idea of "democratic design" mean to you?
  5. Describe your work ethic. How specifically will you contribute to the HDD team?
  6. So tell us what you want, what you really, really want to take away from an HDD internship? (Please be specific. "I want to be exposed to everything" is lame).
  7. The HDD studio is located near a cemetery in which the original owners of the 140 year old farmhouse are buried. What skill(z) would you contribute to the survival of our posse in the event of a zombie apocalypse? Again, specificity is greatly appreciated (as is creativity).

**Friendly reminders for the biggest success:**

1. DO NOT refer to Les as "Mrs. Davidson." Les will snarl, then take your tasty lunch away (she provides gourmet-level noms on the regular).
2. DO NOT refer to JenHen as "Jenny." She will pinch you.
3. DO NOT misspell HDD Studios. Everyone at HDD will laugh at you.
4. Do invest some time in researching HDD's philosophy at [designisademocracy.com](http://designisademocracy.com).
5. Do thoroughly proofread your application – we want to see you sweat the details.
6. Do feel free to bring a portfolio to strut your stuff!
7. Do be aware that we will creep on your Facebook, LinkedIn & overall internet profile. We (along with every future employer) will wonder how you will fit in to the organization and if you're doing naughty things.
8. Do "like" HDD Studios on Facebook , check out our boards on Pinterest ([designdemocracy](http://designdemocracy)), follow us on Twitter ([@designdemocracy](https://twitter.com/designdemocracy)), and check out Leslie's many appearances on WZZM's My West Michigan (all posted on [hddstudios.com](http://hddstudios.com)) and subscribe to [designdemocracy](http://designdemocracy) on YouTube.



**What happens next?** If the team at HDD Studios thinks your resume is cool, you will be asked to visit the studio for an interview. During the interview, your brain will be poked and prodded. Be prepared to answer basic design questions and think on your toes. Les has a track record of making candidates break out in hives, cry or vomit, so be sure to bring you A-game (just kidding....*mostly*). On average, only 30% of applicants are accepted into the HDD Studios intern program (not kidding).

If you are *not* invited to come play with us, it is advised that you follow-up with an e-mail so we can help you improve and be awesome for future job interviews you may have. In the past, follow-ups have lead to some very positive results. Tenacity is appreciated. Good Luck!

**“Pressure is a privilege.”**

**-Billie Jean King**

**“You’re not really hired ‘til JenHen says you’re fired.”**

**-JJ**

**“There are three ways to ultimate success: the first way is to be *kind*.  
The second way is to be *kind*. The third was is to be *kind*.”**

**-Mr. Rogers**