Insider Inspiration

“You can only become truly accomplished at something you love. Don’t make money your goal. Instead pursue the things you love doing and then do them so well that people can’t take their eyes off of you.”

~Maya Angelou

Office of Internships and Experiential Learning

Each issue of the Intern Insider aims to provide an insider’s view of the internship world from the perspective of employers, current School of Management interns and staff. Enjoy our whole series of newsletters online at mgt.buffalo.edu/internships.

Intern-to-Intern

By Briana Janson, IEL Student Assistant

Imagine what you could learn as the intern for the world’s largest business competition. The past two semesters, Satish Chandra Goud Aily was able to experience this while interning for 43 North, an opportunity he found on BizLink. The competition, which began last February, included participants from around the world and awarded a total of five million dollars in cash prizes this October.

43 North initially accepted over 6,500 applications, and by the final round, had narrowed the competition to just eleven finalists. Satish saw the rehearsals of the final presentations and even gave corrections to one group. Working during the final presentations was stressful, but an incredible learning experience for Satish, who hopes to be an entrepreneur in the future. Satish said that through his internship, he was able to “improve soft skills and learn about different cultures.” 43 North week also provided many fun activities for Satish, including the chance to meet Kim Pegula, a judge for the competition.

Working for an organization in its first year provided exceptional learning opportunities for Satish. He was able to brainstorm with his supervisor and other leaders in the organization, allowing them to learn together. His team consisted of four others, including the executive director of the organization, Andrew Pulkrabek. Satish said that Mr. Pulkrabek “contributed to a friendly and open culture.” Satish felt he was able to speak honestly and that he was valued by his team. His supervisor Jon Spitz, validated this statement saying, “Whenever given an assignment, Satish delivered time and time again. He hit the ground running and never looked back.” Mr. Spitz also helped Satish by allowing him to explore new ideas and think of the best solution on his own.

After the competition’s strong first year, Satish finished his internship by working with his team to identify areas that could be improved for the next year. He continues to gain new experiences and continuously work on his communication skills while working in an inclusive environment. Satish’s suggestion to others for finding a great office culture is to “be yourself in the internship interview.”
Life Beyond the Internship Posting

When students come to the Office of Internships and Experiential Learning seeking assistance, one of their greatest concerns is that they don’t get an overwhelming response from the applications they submit to online internship postings. Applying to online internship postings is a key strategy in your search. However, if that is your only strategy, you are missing out. Almost half of the students that register internships through our office earn them through networking and proactive search strategies.

Begin by telling everyone you know that you are looking for an internship—as you just never know when conversation will lend itself to opportunity. Do not tell employers you will take “anything”. Identify your strengths and interests, and use them to imagine your perfect internship. What is the atmosphere like, who are your ideal co-workers, what type of projects would you like to work on? Be ready to communicate those concepts. Make a list of your ideal employers. Don’t limit yourself. Work off of your passions. UB School of Management students have completed internships at breweries, banks, golf courses, construction companies, nonprofit organizations and town halls. Place calls to your ideal employer list and inquire about internship opportunities. If they have a program, find out what the process is to be considered. If not, offer information about our internship office. We will work with most employers to develop an internship opportunity for you.

Earn visibility and seek the help of others through academic clubs, faculty members, and LinkedIn (join UB School of Management MentorLink Group). Find out where your classmates did their internships and see if they will recommend you to their supervisor. There is nothing wrong with asking your contacts to assist you. When you take the networking approach, you don’t get lost in a stack of resumes. You stand out.

Celebrating Internship Week

Each semester the Office of Internships and Experiential Learning creates a full week of internship activities tailored specifically to our undergraduate students.

On February 12, a panel of interns and their supervisors visited the MGG 300 class to answer questions and inform students about their internship experience. Representing New York State Department of Taxation and Finance were intern Alejandro Perez and his supervisor Todd Eastman. Lisa Piecki and her intern Danielle Lane represented NFTA, and Tracey Eastman from UB Communications participated as well.

The employers gave helpful advice about how to make a resume and cover letter stand out. One helpful tip was to “show you care about the position by sending a cover letter specific to the company and job posting rather than a generic cover letter.” There was a lot of discussion about how to excel during your interview. Employers recommended “showing initiative by researching the company, bringing examples of relevant projects to demonstrate experience, and not speaking negatively about former employers during an interview.” The panel suggested following up and staying in touch, not just after your interview, but after the selection process. This will help you to grow your professional network. While participating in your internship, make sure you are aware of the culture of your office. This may include altering how you dress or remaining professional when contacting your supervisor. In some offices, it may be acceptable to communicate with your supervisor via text, while others may prefer email. At the end of the event, each of the panelists agreed that students should make the most of their internship while they are participating.

Thursday evening featured Coffee Cup Conversations. Employers from various industries attended the event, including Matt Summers from The Travelers Companies, Stella Fey from Alliance Advisory Group, Christina Orlando from Fetch Logistics, Jennifer Swan from The Arts Services Initiative of WNY, Briana Wilson from Walsh Duffield Companies, and Maria Angelova from Chiampou, Travis, Besaw & Kershner. These employers met students in casual small groups to talk to them about their industries and what it’s like to work in the real world. Students were equipped with many questions which made the event rewarding for all. Take advantage of face-to-face opportunities to interact with employers. More events like this will be posted in BizLink.

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