

My Internship Experience

2016 Summer Internship

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This summer I have had the pleasure of interning with Olsson Associates as a Rail Design intern. From the experiences had, the lessons learned, and the people met, I could not ask for a more valuable opportunity. With this being my first internship, I had absolutely no expectation. I had no previous experience that would prepare me for the experiences that I would encounter.

My first task as a rail design intern began before I could even start working on projects. I had to familiarize myself with a new designing software program, Microstation. Microstation is a designing software program that is commonly used in the transportation field. Throughout the period of time spent becoming acquainted with Microstation, a majority of the rail team members took the time to initially give a brief overview of various rail design topics. At the time, this was slightly overwhelming, but once I started working on actual projects, I was able to refer back to the overview.

After a few short days, I was able to start working on different projects. These projects entailed numerous objectives such as adding in a siding track or proposing the addition of a mainline track. Regardless of what the proposal was, the process for each project was generally similar. Although I was not able to start a project and work through it finishing, I was able to work on a variety of projects. Another task I found myself spending much time working on was coding. Throughout my summer, I was able to complete multiple codes that would simplify the project process for the rail team.

Outside of the designing work, I was able to attend meetings and training sessions. This gave me the chance to interact and work with individuals on the other transportation teams and

other teams within the office. The rail team held a session called "Lessons Learned," where we spent time as a team sharing lessons we had learned from working on recent projects. This was extremely beneficial in growing as a team to ensure success in the future.

Throughout the internship experience, Olsson Associates provided many opportunities for its interns to become acquainted with one another and meet many that hold different leadership roles within the company. I attended luncheons and outings which allowed us to learn much more about the company's values and goals for the future. The individuals holding these leadership roles were always accessible and encouraged us to ask questions. Building these connections with the other interns and individuals within the company was one of the most enjoyable parts of this internship.

I have learned multiple lessons throughout my time spent with Olsson Associates. I have learned how each new day provides new experiences to learn and grow. The educating aspect of engineering will not end at a certain age or at a certain amount of experience. I believe that one of the most important lessons that I have learned this summer is this: excellence is in the details. Throughout the entire planning process of a project, it is crucial to give accurate measurements and provide well thought-out, realistic solutions.

This summer has been a wonderful opportunity for me to grow as a student, as an engineer, and as an individual. I am grateful to have met the people that I have and to have learned from my experiences. The lessons learned and the knowledge gained from this internship will be very helpful as I continue my journey with Olsson Associates on their traffic team this fall. I am so appreciative of the people who invested so much time into helping me succeed and emphasizing the importance of the learning aspect of this internship. I have thoroughly enjoyed

my time as a Rail Design intern with Olsson Associates and I am grateful for this experience in helping me justify that this is something I would love to do for the rest of my life.