



2017

# MATC Summer Internship Program



MID-AMERICA  
TRANSPORTATION CENTER

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Since my first day at The University of Nebraska-Lincoln, The College of Engineering Faculty has always stressed how beneficial it is to have some sort of out of classroom experience in the engineering field, Whether it's through Research, an Internship, or a Co-Op. Before starting my internship, I had no idea how much knowledge one could gain from just a few short months as an intern. An internship can offer so much that a lecture hall cannot. I had the opportunity to be an intern at Olsson Associate's Lincoln office located in the Haymarket for The Olsson Transportation Team. "Olsson Associates is a nationally-recognized, employee-owned engineering and design firm that has been creating public and private projects throughout the United States and offers comprehensive design and consulting services in site/civil, transportation, water, environmental, field operations, survey, and facilities". I can honestly say my internship has helped me learn and grow as a student and as an engineer.

When I first started my internship at Olsson Associates, I quickly felt like a fish out of water. I basically knew nothing about how things worked in the transportation industry and had very minimum experience reading a plan set; however, I was immediately introduced to a software I have never heard of and was handed my first set of plans. My supervisors and co-workers were eager to show me the ropes: After getting a quick lesson on the basics, I was given simple task to get the hang of things. I slowly but surely became more comfortable reading a plan set and navigating through the unfamiliar software. As I continued to learn, I was handed more challenging work. What started out as simple text revisions to a plan set (redlines) became setting up the sheets for a complete set of plans. After a few short weeks of working At Olsson I was quickly recognized as part of the Transportation team. I was invited to attend all team meetings and even invited to attend individual project meeting for projects I that have been working on. As my internship proceeded, I continued to be handed more advanced work and learn the ins and outs of being a transportation engineer.

Throughout my internship I had the opportunity to do various task on numerous project. Some weeks I would work steadily on one project, other weeks I would be juggling around many tasks for

many projects. Some of the work included doing simple text edits to the plan sets, calculating cut and fill volumes, creating displays for public meetings, and setting up various sheets. I got to work on projects for Nebraska Department of Transportation, The City of Lincoln, and Even Some Oklahoma Department of Transportation. Though most of my work was done on the computer there were times where I ventured outside the office. I got to go verify survey done for projects and attend public meetings: both of which I have never had the opportunity to do before. At the public meetings, I got to see firsthand how engineers interact with the public while designing a project. Olsson Associates allowed me to get a well-rounded experience as a transportation engineer.

Throughout the course of my internship I had the chance to learn many things about the transportation field that I never would have learned through class. The most important one of these was using the drafting and design software “MicroStation”. I have never heard of this software before starting at Olsson, but it turns out this software is used by most States’ Departments of Transportation. The drafting course that I have taken at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln didn’t touch on MicroStation. Having knowledge in this widely used software in the transportation industry is great advantage to have after graduation. Another very important thing I learned during my internship was learning how to properly read and interpret a set of plans. I have taking classes that involve reading transportation plan sets before, but I learned more about plan set reading within my first few weeks at Olson than I have throughout my college career. My Internship has given me knowledge in the transportation field that my college courses just couldn’t provide.

The employees at Olsson were very welcoming and helpful. They understood that an internship is a learning experience and they always made it clear to me it was okay to go to anybody on our team with any questions I might have. When I received a task, they would give me detailed instructions on what needed to be done; however, there were times when I would receive a task with instructions to “just take a stab at it”. It was great having the mix of task with detailed instructions and task that

allowed me to try to use the knowledge I gained during my internship to complete my work without instruction. The transportation staff at Olsson Associates were great mentors and teachers that made my internship a great learning experience.

Over the duration of my internship at Olsson Associates I have gained a tremendous amount of knowledge. Much of what I have learned here cannot be found in the classroom. The knowledge I gained through my internship with Olsson Associates will help be jump start my Career after college; In fact, Olsson has offered me a position over the fall and I will continue to work there throughout the school year. Thanks to the MATC Internship program I can say with confidence that I have chose the right career to pursue and I am excited to see what the future has in store for me as a transportation engineer.