

Guide to Education and Workforce Development



INTERN DELAWARE

Building the Workforce of the Future

BY KANA TURLEY

DELAWARE IS COMPETING with neighboring states to retain young talent and develop a workforce built for the future. According to a Wall Street Journal study, 42 percent of graduates from Delaware colleges and universities move to Philadelphia, while another 26 percent move to New York, Baltimore, and Washington, DC. Another study by Zippia states that over 70 percent of Delaware graduates leave the state for their first job.

Although Delaware offers a business ecosystem with varied career options, a low cost of living, and limitless networking opportunities,

young professionals are choosing to relocate after their time in Delaware. According to Scott Malfitano, a vice president at CSC, this steady drain of talent “has consequences for the state’s workforce, communities, and economic development. If we want to secure a strong future for Delaware, we need to cultivate a talent pipeline for the state and capture the attention of young professionals when they are here.”

These workforce concerns from both the state’s business community and inquiries from companies looking to call Delaware home prompted

“WSFS Bank is incredibly excited to partner with an organization like Intern Delaware. Their commitment to providing learning and networking opportunities to interns throughout the state aligns with our focus on developing talent and giving our associates resources to help them succeed.”

– Patrick Best, Intern Delaware board member and vice president & manager of talent acquisition at WSFS Bank

Malfitano and four other leaders to establish Intern Delaware, a nonprofit aimed at developing the state’s future workforce by providing opportunities for young professionals to connect with the First State’s economy, culture, and community. In the fall of 2019, Intern Delaware launched with the support of four founding members (CSC, Adesis, M&T Bank and DuPont) and 20 company members to provide their summer 2020 interns with a professional development program focused on the benefits of building a career path in Delaware.

“I am thrilled to be a part of this organization that is doing so much to build the workforce of the future,” said Mark Hutton, an Intern Delaware board member and group vice president at M&T Bank. “By working together as a network, we can make a greater impact on talent retention rates in Delaware by creating a uniquely valuable internship experience.”

With access to an estimated 200 to 400 interns at these companies, Intern Delaware planned a series of exclusive events to connect with the state’s top business and government leaders, build meaningful professional networks, and gain exposure to the opportunities that make Delaware a desirable location to build a career.

“Intern Delaware has helped me improve my networking skills by giving me the opportunity to network with professionals and other interns.”

– Jonathan Martinez, intern at Belfint, Lyons & Shuman

Pietrobono of ChristianaCare, Dr. Tony Alleyne of Delaware College Scholars, and Kelly Basile from the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce.

Interns learned about the unique benefits of working in the First State, chief among which are Delaware’s “community and strong network of professionals,” as identified by CSC intern Grace Slate. The featured speakers also shared their insight regarding leadership, success, mentorship, and networking.

The organization’s inaugural summer has left a significant impact on their career aspirations for many interns. “This program allowed me to see the wide variety of career fields represented in Delaware and ways that each industry and its professionals thrive,” reflected Stephanie Ross, an intern at Agilent.

For interns who grew up in Delaware, Intern Delaware’s program revealed a new side to their home state. “I was never aware of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and business environment development,” said Abigail Houseal, an intern with the Delaware Prosperity Partnership. “Intern Delaware showed me the potential of the First State as a place to start my career.”

Reflections from interns affirm what Caroline Letner, the nonprofit’s program coordinator, experienced when she moved from Boston to work with Teach for America. She was impressed by the state’s capacity to drive change and make a difference, which is what attracted her to Intern Delaware’s mission.

“This first year demonstrated that when our communities collaborate together towards a common goal, we exponentially increase our potential to tackle challenges that will make a lasting impact on Delaware,” explained Catrina Jefferson, a member of the board and CSC market manager. She and the other board members are enthusiastic about what lies ahead for the organization. “We look forward to partnering with additional organizations to develop the future workforce, fuel the talent pipeline, and strengthen Delaware’s economy.”

To learn more about Intern Delaware and how to get involved, visit www.interndelaware.com. ■



Kana Turley will be a senior at Regent University in Virginia this fall. She served as a communications intern for Intern Delaware this past summer.

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