

INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Fiona Carter

Graduation Year: 2020

Semester & Year of Internship: Summer 2018

Major: Double Major in Information Technology & Math

Minor: n/a

Hobbies: Writing, reading, and playing or listening to music.

Campus Activities: Christian Fellowship Club, Vice President

Future Plans/Career Goals: Work in an environment where I can utilize my love of learning, problem solving, and helping people.

Hometown:

Pittsburgh, PA



- **Internship (company/your title):**

I interned at Duraloy Technologies, Inc. with the head of Information Systems and the Controller.

- **How did you find your internship?**

I found my internship through the Career Services Center at Pitt Greensburg.

- **What were your duties?**

A week before I began my internship, my mother was in a bank talking to a bank teller and it came up that I would be completing an internship over the summer. Later, she regaled to me that the teller had, unprompted, said that I should to try to learn as much as I could and not be afraid to ask stupid questions, and I took that advice to heart. I tried to glean as much information as I could get during my internship, and, in hindsight, I consider learning to have been my primary duty. As it turned out, I learned about a lot of things during my stay and with that came the occupational hazard of having to do a lot of things. Seeing as the MIS manager not only managed the company's information systems but was also an integral member of the accounting department, I learned about everything from software development and support to accounting closing and reconciliation. With this, I was responsible for credit and debit memos, account reconciliations, helping to close at the end of the month, translating software from Cobol to Java, and maintaining legacy software, among other things.

- **How many hours per week were you at your internship site?**

I worked 40 hours a week.

- **What did you enjoy most about your internship?**

I enjoyed learning about things that I never thought I would encounter. While I never thought that I would learn about how the market price of nickel is influenced by the electric car industry or how legislation regarding tariffs affects international shipping codes used, throughout the course of my internship I learned about those things and much more.

- **What was the most difficult aspect of the internship?**

The most difficult aspect was maintaining legacy software that hadn't been updated much since the late eighties in the face of rapidly evolving technology. Most often, it felt as if I was banging my head against the wall trying to get older programs to run on newer machines, but, on the flip side, finally getting things to work was an incredibly rewarding experience.

- **How did your experience at UPG in the IT and Math departments prepare you for your internship?**

My experience at UPG has taught me to take initiative, love learning, and not be afraid to venture outside of my comfort zone. I think that the liberal arts education that UPG provides teaches students not only about straight-up subject matter but also how to think about and approach that subject matter, which leads to more versatile and well-rounded students. In my case, I went into this internship with little to no experience with accounting, but I was able to pick it up as I went

because I have been accustomed to learning about many different things. Not only have I received an education from the classes I took for my majors, but also from the classes I took that were unrelated to my majors. Not only have I learned how to code in Java and prove the Fundamental Theorem of Calculus, but also how to learn and think.

- **How has your internship prepared you for a career?**

My internship has helped me prepare for a career by showing me what a career in IT looks like. I was fortunate to work alongside people who have been working at Duraloy for more than forty years, and even listening to them tell stories about the glory days taught me about the commitment necessary to hold a position for that long. Merely seeing the level of experience that they were able to achieve was inspiring. In addition, I was able to get a taste of the “real world,” especially with problems that are not always easily solved. Theoretical solutions to problems rarely work as you want them to, and part of the “real world” involves persistence and an ability to think outside of the box. I believe that these skills will serve me well in a career.

- **What recommendations do you have for other students about doing an internship?**

Like the bank teller, I would advise other students to go into the internship trying to learn and to ask stupid questions.

FC

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