Taking the Long View on Internships

When Travis Bullock met with the CAL Center’s Internship Coordinator, Rose Martens, in Spring 2008, he came in like many internship candidates. He needed experience to fulfill a course requirement and he didn’t know where to begin.

Martens interviewed him, helped him develop his resume, and enabled him to secure a paid summer internship at the Oswego County BOCES to serve as a Teaching Assistant. According to Bullock, that internship was a turning point in both his career path and his life. “It helped me become more confident in interacting with others and also served as a great resume booster with endless possibilities!”

Bullock graduated from Onondaga Community College in 2008 and is now a senior at Oswego State. After completing that first summer internship, he was invited back to BOCES for the summer 2009 session. He now continues working there as a substitute while completing his Bachelor’s degree.

Recently, Bullock followed up with Martens to express his appreciation for her guidance and support. “I am not sure if you remember me,” his letter began. Martens, who works closely with all of her interns to ensure that they find the best fit in an internship, did remember and was delighted to hear that his experience had been so rewarding. “I don’t always hear back from students about the long-term impact of their internship experiences,” she explains. “But a letter like this one helps to reinforce the importance of our internship program. The experience that our employers provide can have a profound impact on students’ lives.” These employers don’t only help students learn about a particular industry; they help them to learn about themselves, about what they want to do with their lives, and guide them to the next level in their academic and professional growth.

When Bullock wrote to Martens in September, 2009, he said, “I should have done this a long time ago, but I just wanted to tell you thank you very much. With your help I was able to find something that I truly love doing and can now see as a possible career after I graduate. It is also something I would not have even thought of doing had you not been able to locate it. I want to thank you so much for helping me secure that position because it is now something that I take great interest in.”

Many students continue working part-time at their internship site while they continue their degree, and some, like Travis, go on to build a career there. Participating in the Onondaga internship program helps students develop new skills, gain insight into potential career choices and apply their education while working in their chosen field. Through carefully supervised professional placements, students gain first-hand insight into their career choice with hands-on experience. The internship program provides many students with their first professional career-related work experience, enables them to acquire valuable experience toward a professional résumé; and often helps them to get their foot in the door with local companies and make networking contacts in their field.

For more information about the internship program at Onondaga Community College, contact Rose Martens at (315) 498-2494, or e-mail her at martensr@sunyocc.edu.

Career and Applied Learning Center Employment Services

Each year, approximately 900 students receive degrees in more than 50 areas of study from Onondaga Community College. Nearly 40 percent of students transition directly into the work force. These students are motivated and eager to begin working in their chosen career fields.

Employers are invited to work through Onondaga’s Career and Applied Learning (CAL) Center to recruit the College’s finest graduates through:

CALink
CALink allows employers to connect prospective employers with highly skilled and motivated graduating students and alumni. http://myinterfase.com/sunyocc/employer

On-Campus Recruitment
Employers are welcome to visit Onondaga Community College to recruit students and advertise their company and available career opportunities.

On Campus Interviews
Employers can arrange interview sessions in the CAL Center with Onondaga Community College students.

CAL Center Job Fair
The CAL Center sponsors an annual Spring Job Fair where students and employers can meet and discuss potential career opportunities.

Your Opportunity to Choose
Well-Educated Employees!
Our experience with the Onondaga Career and Applied Learning Center has been a rewarding one. The staff was most professional and responsive in assisting us with the recruitment of a student for our internship program in the Quality Assurance discipline. The student they referred required little training, has good demeanor with other associates, and has adapted readily to the multi-functional quality challenges faced in today’s global environment.”

—Bob Seiselmyer, Quality Assurance Manager, McQuay International

Tech Careers Discussion
Local Career Opportunities in the Technologies

The CAL Center held an Employer Panel Discussion on local Technical Career Opportunities on October 16th. Representatives from Inficon, Welch Allyn, National Grid, SRC Tec (a division of Syracuse Research Corporation), and CSC (a national IT outsourcing company) spoke about the types of positions they normally hire graduates with Associate Degrees in the Engineering and Computer fields. They shared salary ranges for Associate Degree and Bachelor level positions. They highlighted career pathways within their companies discussing internships and company paid tuition assistance programs for their employees to earn Bachelor and advanced degrees.

This information was shared with a full house of Onondaga students and faculty in the technical disciplines along with students, teachers and counselors from 5 area high schools including Oswego County BOCES.

“My goal in taking these senior engineering students was to have them understand the importance of making as many contacts as possible to help them network when it comes time for them to secure college internships. I feel very comfortable that this was accomplished. They all seemed to be more confident when they left the panel discussion than they did before they arrived,” said Ellie M. Peavey, C-NS High School Career Education Teacher/Coordinator.

The feedback received from the evaluation forms was overwhelmingly positive! 94% of attendees indicated that they thought the panel provided a good overview of local technical job opportunities and that they would recommend the panel to other students or faculty/teachers. 88% of the college and high school students indicated that the information would be useful for them in making career decisions while 100% of the faculty/teachers indicated the information would be very helpful in counseling students in career choices. Peavy said, “As I debriefed with my students en route back to C-NS, everyone was impressed with how well the company representatives articulated the information about their companies, the available jobs, duties and salaries, as well as the tuition assistance available. It left a very favorable impression about what is available in the Syracuse area.”

Two more Employer Panel discussions during college hour are planed for spring: Environmental/Green Careers in March and Business and Communication Careers in April.

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Career and Applied Learning (CAL) Center and CALink

Maybe you’re a business owner, and you’re thinking an Onondaga graduate would be a good candidate for your job opening. Or you’re an alumnus looking for a career change... or you’re an Onondaga student and need help navigating the often intimidating tasks of applying for jobs or internships.

Onondaga now has a “one-stop” career center that can meet the diverse needs of employers, alums, and students. The Career and Applied Learning Center — “CAL Center” for short — opened in the Fall of 2007 in the Mawhinney Hall lobby and is getting busier by the day. “We’re getting the word out to employers and alumni, to let them know we’ve a resource for them,” said Dianne Fancher, director of academic initiatives and the CAL Center’s director at Onondaga Community College.

In addition to working one-on-one with students and alumni, the center offers career related panel discussions, on-campus recruiting, and an annual spring job fair. It also has CALink, an online career database, which offers online career resources to students and alumni, and connects them to employers and community agencies through online job, internship and volunteer opportunities (see page 1 for more information on CALink).

With the CAL Center and CALink, students and alumni can receive career related support on-campus or online, and connect to employers with just the click of a mouse.

Services we provide to our students and alumni:

- CALink
- Volunteering
- Internships
- Job Shadowing and Informational Interviewing
- StrengthsQuest™
- Resume and Cover Letter Writing
- Interviewing Strategies (including recorded mock interviews)
- Job Searching
- Local Employer Information
- Job Fair and Employer Panels
No Place Like School for Volunteering

College students are busy. Balancing school, work, and family obligations is a challenge. Adding volunteer work can seem like an overwhelming task. And yet, students know that volunteering helps their community and demonstrates to employers that they are motivated, hard-working, and care about more than just a paycheck.

That’s why the CAL Center’s Service Learning and Volunteer Program is promoting campus-based opportunities for students who want to make a difference, but don’t have time to volunteer off-campus. These programs include the ESL Mentoring Partnership which helps international students improve their language skills, the Children’s Learning Center which provides daycare to preschoolers whose parents are students or employees at Onondaga; Operation Gratitude which sends letters to troops who are serving overseas; and, the Craft of Caring which meets on campus to knit and crochet handmade gifts for local non-profits.

Volunteerism helps students build strong resumes by enabling them to show employers what they have done, and also what they can do – both as engaged citizens and as up-and-coming professionals.

Top Ten Reasons to Hire an Onondaga Community College Grad!

1. With more than 12,000 students enrolled in nearly 50 degree and certificate programs, Onondaga is the second largest undergraduate institution in Central New York. Onondaga was the fastest-growing community college in the 64-campus SUNY system, and named one of the fastest growing in the nation by Community College Week in 2007 and 2008.

2. Onondaga students are among the most diverse in the region representing every race, religion, age group, economic sphere, and political persuasion. They graduate with an appreciation of difference and respect multiple view points preparing them to be cooperative and respectful team players. While approximately 80% of our students come from Onondaga County, we have students from elsewhere in New York state, across the nation and in 2009 alone students came to Onondaga from more than 22 countries including South Korea, Ghana, China, Canada and Japan.

3. Onondaga students are eligible and encouraged to participate in community volunteer opportunities. All Onondaga students are eligible and encouraged to participate in community volunteer opportunities.

4. Onondaga’s campus-wide commitment to environmental sustainability is producing graduates who understand and care about the challenges facing our world and are ready to support employers’ efforts to reduce their carbon footprint.

5. Onondaga offers degree programs that prepare students for careers in some of our most challenging fields including, allied health professions, green technologies, homeland security, criminal justice, and human services.

6. Onondaga’s campus-wide commitment to environmental sustainability is producing graduates who understand and care about the challenges facing our world and are ready to support employers’ efforts to reduce their carbon footprint.

7. The Career and Applied Learning (CAL) Center Internship Program provides employers with highly-motivated, skilled students capable of meeting the challenges of today’s workforce. These students are currently working to complete their degree and wish to supplement their studies with real-world experience.

8. The benefits to employers are:

   • The opportunity to use your student’s worksite performance for permanent hiring decisions.
   • An excellent way to satisfy your temporary and seasonal employment needs.
   • Reduction in recruiting costs, training time and employee turnover.

9. Students are generally available part-time during the fall and spring semesters and full-time during the summer.

10. Onondaga students have the opportunity to gain real-world experience through internships, service-learning and community service to enhance job readiness upon hiring.

The CAL Center Volunteer Program also matches non-profit community agencies with students interested in volunteering their time and talents. These opportunities allow students to assist your organization with day-to-day operations and special projects while earning experience in their career field, developing a sense of social responsibility, and contributing to the community. All Onondaga students are eligible and encouraged to participate in community volunteer opportunities.

Food Bank is pleased to partner with Onondaga and the internship program. The internship coordinator was very responsive to our business needs by quickly sending us candidates and advertising our internship posting. We were able to get a qualified intern within two weeks of contacting Onondaga Community College. The intern is professional, friendly, eager to learn and willing to learn all the different aspects of Food Bank accounting. We look forward to continuing our relationship as we work toward filling the fall 2008 intern position.”

—Kathleen Stress, Internal Communications Director, Food Bank of Central New York

Your opportunity to shape the education of your future employees!
Career and Applied Learning (CAL) Center
Mawhinney Hall, Room 145
Onondaga Community College
4585 West Seneca Turnpike
Syracuse, NY 13215-4585

"The Onondaga Community College Career and Applied Learning Center has been instrumental in FedEx Ground's continued recruiting success. Whether it be scheduling a recruiting event, posting flyers, or web exposure, the office's cooperation is indispensable in regards to the placement of their students in our workforce. Currently, FedEx Ground employs forty-nine Onondaga students."
—Michael Salvagni, Human Resources Representative
FedEx Ground

Upcoming Events

Volunteer Fair: FEBRUARY 10, 2010
Environmental and Green Careers Panel: MARCH 2010
Business and Communication Careers Panel: APRIL 2010
Spring Job Fair: APRIL 21, 2010

"The Link" is a publication of the Career and Applied Learning (CAL) Center at Onondaga Community College.
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