Building Bridges to Success: Employer Experiences with High School Internship Models

Presented by:

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- Leah Miller, Director of Human Resources, City of Moline
- Neil Gambow, Chair, Mayor’s Employer Advisory Council
- Maurice Jefferson, Floor Forman, Benvenuti & Stein Inc.
Overview of Internship Models
Moline Coal Valley School District and City of Moline Student Internship Program

- Created in 2022 to increase the work-readiness experiences for junior and senior students through exposure to six functional areas in the city (Parks/Street Maintenance, Engineering, Fleet Maintenance, Utilities Field Maintenance, Drinking Water Treatment Plant, Wastewater Treatment Plant), completion of work-readiness certifications, resume and job interview preparation and support, fast-track transition to identified programs at BlackHawk College, and possibility for future full-time paid employment with the City of Moline. Benefit to the City of increasing viable applicant pool for future positions/careers.

- Three-tier program:
  - Tier 1: Formal Tour of Six Functional Areas in spring for junior students
  - Tier 2: Six-Week Paid Summer Internship: Juniors rotate through six functional areas
  - Tier 3: Six-Week Paid Summer Internship: Previous participants select one functional area
Moline Coal Valley School District and City of Moline
Student Internship Program

- Process for student recruitment
  - Recruitment of students begins in the spring with the tour and the internship is held over the summer.
    - Recruitment at the high school starts with pulling our Xello data as well as speaking to our hands on classes such as Woods, Welding & CNC for Public Works and Consumer Ed, Computer Science & Business for Administrative.
  - Interns are employees of the City of Moline and paid minimum wage
  - In Tier 2, students primarily job shadow and in Tier 3 take a more active role and perform work
  - Challenges/How overcome

Awareness to Action: Promoting Equity in Education and Careers
Next Steps/Enhancements

- In 2023 added Administrative Internship with exposure to five different functional areas (Executive, HR, IT, Finance, Community & Economic Development)
  - Tier 1: Formal Tour of Six Functional Areas in spring for junior students
  - Tier 2: Two-Week Paid Summer Internship: Juniors focus on one functional area
  - Tier 3: Four-Week Paid Summer Internship: Previous participants selected functional area
Illinois Education & Career Excellence Network

Evanston Mayor's Employer Advisory Council
iKit Summer Internship Program

- iKit Summer Internship Program
  - Began in March 2020 with a re-allocated grant from Evanston Community Foundation
  - 10-week paid internships with local Evanston employers for Evanston Township High School (ETHS) graduating seniors
  - All interns registered as employees of the City of Evanston – Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program (MSYEP) for purposes of payroll and insurance.
  - Honed the program each year to meet employer needs
    - Training about how to manage a new graduate
    - Best way to onboard a student
    - Mentoring responsibility

- Process for student recruitment
  - Employers lined up 60 days before student application period starts
  - ETHS announces student sign-up dates through ETHS communication network
  - As applications are received, students are scheduled for initial interview
    - Explore career choices they checked on the application.
    - Resume review
    - Career readiness assessment
  - Placement commences after all the applications are in and students interviewed.
Just one formal question then leave open to the room – what should this be?

Maurice - tell us about when the young person showed up on your doorstep, how did you support them?

Leah - (Theresa thinking of something that won’t be in the interview)
iKit Summer Internship Program

- Prior to student assignment, employers required to submit:
  - Job description
  - Look for at least two work areas of engagement
  - Written assessment by employer at midpoint and end point
  - Attend mandatory employer training – how to successfully manage a young person right out of high school
  - Day-one onboarding schedule
  - Employer requirement check list (Vaccinations, background check, drivers license, etc.)
- 25-30 hours per week for 10 weeks
- Pay: $15/hour
- Interns are enrolled in the Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Roster
- Hire if appropriate
Next steps

- ETHS Superintendent set a goal of 800 work-based learning experiences for students each year
  - Expand iKit Summer internship program to 50 young people per year for summer of 2024
  - Include rising seniors in specific pathways
  - Expand MEAC employer roster to at least 80 employers covering all pathways

- Partner with the Evanston Collective – NEW INITIATIVE!!
  - Ryan Stadium Build - $850 Million. 3-year construction project.
  - NU Workforce Development Project
  - Assist ETHS development of more rigorous CTE platform – Arts and Innovation
  - $43 million CTE and Arts facility upgrade
Panel Discussion

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