

Saluting the 'Rock Stars'

Indiana INTERNnet Celebrates Internship Excellence

By Katie Coffin

All winners are pictured with David McKinnis, Indiana INTERNnet board chairman.

Indiana INTERNnet is Indiana's only free internship-matching program linking employers, students, high schools, colleges and universities. The goal is to help create or expand high-quality experiential opportunities within Indiana that provide real-world work experience to supplement classroom learning.

On February 6, the seventh annual IMPACT Awards luncheon recognized six individuals and organizations for their internship success in 2012. Ivy Tech Community College sponsored the event, which featured record-breaking nominations and attendance.

The following winners were honored:



Cody Adams Intern of the Year (college/university)

Achieving results is one of the corporate mantras at Roche Diagnostics, and human resources intern Cody Adams certainly met that criteria.

His first project was to serve as a liaison between Roche and the YMCA for the first annual summer camp for employees' children. Because of Adams' superior project management, the pilot program was a huge success. Roche is planning a program expansion in 2013.

Adams also played a crucial role in one of Roche's largest human resources projects in 2012 – the Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work application process. He met tight deadlines and overcame other obstacles in order to successfully complete the project. It was announced in January that Roche debuted on the list at No. 89.

"I think Cody's innate commitment to excellence was evident throughout this project," notes Chelsea DuKate, talent and organizational development consultant at Roche. "He was an excellent team player and went out of his way to contribute to our success."

In addition to these projects, Adams also volunteered to lead the community service committee. He helped plan a day in which 47 employees worked eight hours cleaning, painting and doing other heavy manual work. He also ensured the workers had proper attire, food and information.

Adams continues to work with Roche on a part-time basis. DuKate says the organization is pleased to have him.

"Achieving results was very important," DuKate explains, "but it is also Cody's can-do, positive attitude that sets him apart."



Alison Mansfield Intern of the Year (high school)

As additional emphasis is placed on earlier career planning, high school internships are becoming more common.

One success story is Homestead High School student Alison Mansfield. Kristen Bowen, community outreach coordinator at Lendingahand.net, says Mansfield became a key member of their team as a communications intern.

Mansfield was responsible for writing articles for the monthly newsletter, which is distributed to more than 100 of the organization's business partners, 17 partner charities and numerous friends of the program. She also created and maintained a blog and managed communication for community outreach initiatives.

Because of her outstanding performance on those projects, she was additionally asked to create a Lendingahand.net brochure for Allen and Kosciusko counties and to rework several existing marketing pieces. This enabled staff to distribute more concise and relevant materials to community members.

Bowen recalls that the largest and most significant project Mansfield tackled was creating

videos about partner charities. Mansfield developed questions, coordinated meetings, conducted interviews, and filmed and edited the videos. These now serve as a strong marketing tool for Lendingahand.net and the charities that were featured.

“Alison made significant contributions, utilizing her superior writing skills, creativity and professionalism,” Bowen shares. “She went above and beyond in every aspect of her internship.”

Casey Spivey Intern of the Year (non-traditional)

One measuring stick of internship success is whether or not the opportunity leads to permanent employment. After serving as the 2012 governor’s public service summer intern, Casey Spivey is now a full-time benefits specialist at the Indiana State Personnel Department (SPD).

“Casey basically went through a 12-week job interview with our organization with outstanding results,” states Nicole Russell, division director of talent acquisition for the Indiana SPD. “To go from student to governor’s intern to state employee is a feat to be acknowledged.”

Spivey made an impact by assisting in the development of sourcing and recruitment plans for “hard-to-fill” positions. One organization she aided was the Hoosier Youth Challenge Academy (HYCA). She equipped the academy with a career fair plan – including advertising contacts, a detailed timeline, session speakers, newspaper ads and flyers.

“The HYCA now consistently has a large qualified applicant pool to choose from,” Russell notes.

Another of Spivey’s major projects was branding. She worked on developing web 2.0 initiatives for Google+, podcasts, an intern blog, Facebook and QR codes. She also designed T-shirts for talent acquisition recruiters to wear at career fairs.

“Casey took this professional internship as a learning opportunity and provided the state of Indiana with creative new ways to attract applicants and comply with policies,” Russell declares. “She was both motivated and enthusiastic about all of her tasks and projects.”



Sara Pennington-Busick Career Development Professional of the Year

Although Sara Pennington-Busick thinks big and leads a team that serves hundreds of students, she also passionately dedicates quality one-on-one time to those students and recruiters.

“Sara is an individual of extreme dedication, drive and focus,” explains Patrick Donahue, director of the Indiana University (Bloomington) Career Development Center and Arts & Sciences Career Services. “She is always upbeat, always willing to listen and extremely modest about what she has accomplished.”

And she has achieved quite a bit since beginning at IU in 2006. Pennington-Busick’s many changes and additions to the IU Career Development Center and Arts & Sciences Career Services include:

- formulating a new model for faculty and employer relations;
- creating and implementing an employer advisory board;
- partnering with the international studies department to develop a global graduate brochure;
- developing and implementing, with her team, the Parent Partners program, a service in which parents provide internship and job postings as well as networking opportunities; and
- creating a series called artWORKS: Career Perspectives from Creative Professionals, with the goal of exposing students to a variety of creative career paths. Since 2006, there have been 18 events with 927 students participating.

In addition to that work, Pennington-Busick also teaches a class – Marketing Yourself for the Job and Internship Search. Her students learn interviewing techniques, resumé-writing skills and strategies for internship searching.

“I have participated in panel sessions during Sara’s class and her level of engagement is incredible. On many occasions, I see Sara staying after class answering student questions and providing support,” Donahue says. “She is truly an amazing career services professional, colleague and friend.”





Tracy Morgan accepts the award for Slingshot SEO.

Slingshot SEO Employer of the Year (for-profit)

Interns hit the ground running from Day 1 at Slingshot SEO in the “Search Scholars” program. Not only are they guaranteed one or two resumé-worthy projects, they also receive an abundance of professional and personal guidance.

It begins with the intern on-boarding program titled “Slingshot Boot Camp,” in which new employees learn how they fit into the organization. Following boot camp, interns sit down with their appointed mentor and develop goals that set the tone for the entire internship. Mentors and interns interact throughout the internship, sometimes collaborating on projects, job shadowing or simply having coffee together.

Tracy Morgan, human resources generalist, designed the Search Scholars program using in-house resources, and she earned the support of the leadership team. The program has various openings each semester for positions in marketing, human resources, sales, client management, development and research.

“Tracy has worked tirelessly to build a robust and effective internship program,” remarks staffing specialist Ashley Billman. “Her main priority is providing a valuable experience to our interns through professional development training, resumé-worthy projects and networking events.”

At the end of the internship, the company hosts an intern appreciation lunch to celebrate accomplishments. The interns present projects, experiences and takeaways to management, supervisors and the CEO.

“The Search Scholar program helps mold interns into young professionals, readying them for corporate careers,” Morgan offers. “The Search Scholar program aligns with the company business goals while also instilling habits and behaviors that set interns up for success in the real world.”



The Children's Museum of Indianapolis' honor is accepted by Karla McLaughlin.

The Children's Museum of Indianapolis Employer of the Year (not-for-profit)

What makes the internship program at The Children's Museum of Indianapolis (Children's Museum) truly special is the team of internship supervisors. They are committed to mentoring and making an impact on the students. Simply put: They give back.

“A few years ago, I did a survey of the mentors to find out why they wanted to mentor,” recalls Karla McLaughlin, intern program manager. “The overwhelming answer was that they wanted to give back to the students because someone helped them.”

This is not the first time The Children's Museum has been recognized for internship excellence. Vault.com recently honored the organization for offering one of the Top 10 best internship programs in the non-profit sector. The museum's dedication to mentoring was one of the reasons it was selected.

In 2012, The Children's Museum hosted 43 interns, who collectively logged nearly 10,000 hours of work. McLaughlin noted that the summer interns described their mentors as “good listeners, teachers and encouragers; challenging, engaging, nurturing yet having high expectations; and concerned and conscientious.”

McLaughlin says the mentors are proud of the meaningful project work and unique professional experience they offer. They are most proud of the lasting impact these internship experiences have on the students.

“Interning at The Children's Museum of Indianapolis has given me a new perspective on my purpose here at college,” wrote David Cath, former intern, in an email to his supervisors at The Children's Museum. “I am learning to effectively use my time, skills and the resources given by the school to facilitate intellectual and professional development.”

McLaughlin reacts: “When we receive a letter like that, we know we have made an impact!”

INFORMATION LINK

Resources: Learn more about intern excellence at www.IndianaINTERN.net