

University of Mississippi

eGrove

University of Mississippi News

8-30-2016

Engineering Students Benefit from Summer Internships

Ryan Upshaw

Follow this and additional works at: <https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews>

Recommended Citation

Upshaw, Ryan, "Engineering Students Benefit from Summer Internships" (2016). *University of Mississippi News*. 1600.

<https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews/1600>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Mississippi News by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.

Engineering Students Benefit from Summer Internships

Four recent participants feel better prepared for future employment and career success

AUGUST 30, 2016 BY RYAN UPSHAW



Several University of Mississippi engineering students spent their summer months engaging in professional development experiences to prepare for their future careers.

Chinelo Ibekwe, a junior from Lagos, Nigeria; Colbert Lehr, of Brandon; Linda Bardha, from Albania; and Miles Johnson, of Tupelo, have participated in a number of experiences that will make them marketable as they begins job searches over the next couple of years.

Ibekwe, a chemical engineering major, spent the summers of 2015 and '16 working with Goldman Sachs in its Private Wealth Management division. There, she researched structure products to advise clients on securities to minimize risks and analyzed daily price discrepancies for fixed income and equities, developing an Excel macro to maximize efficiency and reduce processing time by 50 percent.

She was also hired as a co-op student with Mars Food Co. Finally, she was offered an opportunity to work with Medtronic in Memphis, Tennessee, as a sourcing engineer intern.

The experiences gave Ibekwe a number of opportunities to see the various industries in which business and engineering work together, and helped her develop important skills for her future.

"I ended my internship (with Medtronic) with much more knowledge about the manufacturing and business side of the company," she said. "The experience helped me to answer questions I have about attracting medical technology into the health sector."

Ibekwe said she is thankful for the support from the Haley Barbour Center for Manufacturing Excellence and the National Society of Black Engineers, both of which helped provide these opportunities. Her goal is to work in global health policy.

Like Ibekwe, Lehr found his summer internship experience to be extremely helpful and allowed him to realize the world of engineering that awaits beyond the classroom.

An electrical engineering major, Lehr spent his summer working with Raytheon in Forest. He learned of the internship by attending an employer information session with Raytheon representatives, hosted by the School of Engineering.

His responsibilities as an intern included assisting engineers with the manufacturing and testing of APG-79 AESA radars that will be fitted onto F/A-18E/F Super Hornets and EA-18G Growlers, as well as preparing facilities for the production and testing of the next generation jammer.

Lehr's most challenging experience during the internship was determining how to program a top-of-the-line arbitrary waveform generator to generate a multitone waveform for test purposes, despite a lack of sufficient documentation for the product. He encourages other engineering students to pursue internships or co-ops before they graduate.

"Raytheon provided consistent, technically challenging work, which furthered my understanding of applying my education to solve problems," he said. "I also gained applicable engineering and career advice from professional engineers across the spectrum of experience."

Lehr enjoyed the fact that his company never limited him to one task or one specific product line. He reflected that he was able to serve the company in various ways while familiarizing himself with products and test processes that will help in determining a future specialization.

He hopes to return to Raytheon as an intern next summer with the possibility of full-time work there after graduation.

Both Bardha and Johnson spent their summers interning in Washington D.C.

Both Bardha and Johnson spent their summers

A computer science major specializing in digital

Follow us on social



Campus Briefs

Students Learn 'Real Politics' in Washington, D.C., Winter Session

OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates'

[Read the story ...](#)

More Posts from this Category

Thank You To Our Donors

Young Alumna Gives Back to School of Accountancy

OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy's new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying "thank you." "It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

[Read the story ...](#)

More Posts from this Category

Ole Miss In the News

Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to abate. The Federal Reserve's



Miles Johnson inside nation's Capitol in Washington, D.C. (Submitted photo)

media, Bardha interned with the Voice of America organization. Johnson, who is studying geology and geological engineering, interned with U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.).

Bardha found the internship opportunity with Voice of America as a result of her academic interest in digital media and the fact that VOA broadcasts in 100 countries and 61 different languages, including her own. The diversity of their work attracted her to apply for the internship program.

There, she worked with the Broadcasting Board of Governors and maintained some of their databases and a SharePoint site for an initiative to improve workplace satisfaction. She also created and maintained site content, met with action teams, organized workshops and delivered presentations.

Johnson learned about his internship opportunity through a UM alumnus who lives in the D.C. area. While working in Wicker's office, he communicated with constituents, gave tours of the U.S. Capitol to hundreds of visitors, conducted research on various bills for the senator and participated in hearings and briefings on pressing issues.

Completing internships outside the traditional scope of engineering did not come without challenges for Bardha and Johnson. Bardha recalled a particularly challenging situation where she had to step in to make a presentation for a colleague who became ill at the last minute.

"I had less than 24 hours to put together the presentation, which was for a large number of people including my supervisor and her director," she said. "However, I realized that public speaking is one of my strengths, although I was quite nervous at the beginning. The audience was engaged, and I received compliments for a great presentation."

Johnson noted that the research aspect of his internship was the most challenging part.



Linda Bardha at work in Voice of America studios in Washington, D.C. (Submitted photo)

"I would say that doing research on a variety of issues was a challenge because my seemingly miniscule task may help the senator make an important decision on policy issues, so I wanted to provide thorough and accurate information in each situation presented to me," he said.

Bardha graduates this year and hopes to begin graduate school, although she has not completely ruled out starting her professional career if the right opportunity presents itself. Johnson enjoyed his experience in D.C. so

much that he plans to return to Capitol Hill after graduation.

As competition increases for students seeking job opportunities after graduation, the need for internship experience has also increased. Many employers are seeking applicants who have already demonstrated that they understand their field and have some type of experience related to their fields.

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, 65 percent of bachelor's degree graduates from the class of 2015 participated in an internship or cooperative education experience, making their class the highest percentage recorded for any graduating class.

[Read the story ...](#)

[More Posts from this Category](#)

FILED UNDER: [2016/09-ENGINEERING NEWS SEPTEMBER 2016](#), [ENGINEERING NEWS ARCHIVE](#), [SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING](#)