Intern: William Jang
Department: IT & Communications
Email: ████████████████
Phone: ████████
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Internship Experience

I was introduced to the BuilLACCD Internship Program through my Engineering Club Advisor at East Los Angeles College. The application process was straightforward and I received notice of my interview within a week of submitting the application. After going through the interview process, I was accepted for an internship position with the Communications Department at the Program Management Office (PMO). The only aspect of my internship process which differs from that of most other BuildLACCD interns is that I am being sponsored by Archdiocesan Youth Employment (AYE) for the first 100 hours of my internship and will then transition to the BuildLACCD Internship Program for 320 hours as all other interns.

My internship officially began on March 5, 2020 and from the first meeting with my managers in the Communications Department I immediately felt welcomed. They spent time explaining the daily, weekly, and monthly tasks I would have and provided me with the resources to complete said tasks. This meeting was very reassuring as I was not quite sure what I would be doing in the Communications Department. After this meeting my tasks were fairly straightforward, but if I had any questions my managers were more than willing to take the time to provide an answer. Through these interactions with my managers I learned a lot about how to communicate in a professional work environment and how this communication is essential to ensuring tasks are completed correctly.

However, after only working 28 hours as an intern my internship was put on hold due to the COVID-19 epidemic. During the two-week period in which both my school and internship were temporarily canceled the internship coordinator for the program arranged for me to work remotely for the IT Department at the PMO. Once again, I was put in another department which I knew very little about, but as with the Communication Department I was welcomed by the managers and fellow interns alike. Together, along with our internship coordinator, we collaborated on how we would communicate remotely to follow "social distancing" protocols and how we could best complete our assigned tasks. The projects I have been given makes me very excited as they allow me to learn new skills involving the development of websites and voice assistant AI. Also, as with all projects the communication and collaboration between myself, managers, and fellow interns is helping me develop my professionalism even when face-to-face interactions are not possible.

Currently, I am working on developing a custom Amazon Alexa Skill that will be implemented at Los Angeles City College. The objective of the skill is to provide students, particularly students who are vision impaired, a catered user experience that will provide to them directions to various locations on campus as well as pertinent information about said locations. So far, developing this skill along with my fellow IT interns has been a great experience as we have been learning about coding for Alexa and Amazon AWS. Also, personally I feel as I have grown professionally as well not only through my work with the Amazon Alexa Project, but also through my work in assisting the Internship Coordinator with various scheduling and project tasks which involve the interns in the BuildLACCD Program.

Overall, in the short time that I have worked as an intern for BuildLACCD I have gained many useful skills and experiences. My daily interactions with managers and colleagues have greatly aided in the development of my professional communication skills. I have done this type of communication before when working on group projects at school, but that communication was more often than not unorganized and informal. However, thanks to this internship and the inherent level of professionalism it requires I have very quickly learned how to speak and act in a professional setting which is vital once I enter my intended career path of being an engineer. Also, just as important are the technical skills of research and coding which I have learned thanks to my role as an IT intern. I look forward to completing my project and whatever else may come during the duration of my internship.