

Hire education

Boeing's internship program helps attract and develop key entry-level talent by Elizabeth S. Davis



While a student at the University of Washington last year, Lindsay Omta completed an internship with Boeing's Shared Services Group in Seattle, where she worked on improving work force management processes and supporting staffing and hiring projects.

"The opportunities and experiences I had last summer were instrumental in my professional development," said Omta, a native of Bellingham, Wash. "The position was extremely challenging. With the support of my team, I learned more in those six months than I thought possible."

Omta, who was hired full time by Boeing as a procurement agent in Common Commodities, Supplier Management, Commercial Airplanes, after she graduated in December, was among more than 900 college and university students from 150 schools who last summer got a taste of what it's like to work for Boeing as part of the company's internship program.

In 2009, Boeing's intern program was ranked 16th by *Business Week* out of the top 50 corporate internship programs. For Boeing, internships help it meet long-range

hiring requirements by attracting, acquiring and developing diverse entry-level talent in critical business areas such as engineering.

"A major program goal is to provide interns with a meaningful experience and exposure to our dynamic workplace. One objective of Boeing's summer intern program is to encourage the next generation of workers to consider making Boeing part of their future," said Bud Fishback, Global Staffing senior manager for College Programs with SSG. However, "it is not a guarantee that all summer interns will find permanent employment within the company," he said.

The recruiting and hiring process begins when recruiting teams visit campuses across the country early in the school year looking for upcoming graduates with key skills and talents. Appropriate candidates are selected for an interview and offers are made, with interns starting work in May. Qualifying students must be enrolled in a college degree program and are typically in their junior

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or senior year. The program is highly selective: Only one in 85 students who applied last year was accepted.

Once on the job, interns receive a working knowledge of Boeing programs, products and services. They go on tours, attend special classes and networking events, and participate in mentoring opportunities. Last year, intern program leaders launched a blog, Interns@Boeing, to encourage collaboration and dialogue among interns across the enterprise.

Boeing's interns for 2009, working in 22 states, supported business management, communications, engineering and other key jobs. They had opportunities to apply their classroom learning to everything from contracts and procurement to human resources to airplane configuration and the P-8A Poseidon program.

“They tackle complex and challenging projects and bring fresh perspectives to help us build the products we deliver to our customers,” said Fishback, adding: “Our current employees have a breadth of knowledge they can pass on to the newer generations. As we look forward to getting our interns for 2010 on board, this great collaboration is one more way to foster a highly skilled and motivated work force and keep Boeing going strong.” ■

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For more information about internships at Boeing, visit www.boeing.com/collegecareers

Boeing's 2009 internship program

The Boeing Company and its heritage companies have had internship programs for years. One of the earliest was established in 1952 between McDonnell Aircraft and Washington University in St. Louis as an on-the-job training program for students completing an engineering degree.

Boeing's current internship program dates from 2003, when the company centralized the Global Staffing organization.

By the numbers

Here's a look at Boeing's 2009 program, by the numbers.

902 interns in 22 states

45 states represented by interns working at Boeing

50 schools represented by one intern each

6,754 students who have participated in Boeing's internship program since 2003

PHOTOS: (Left) College intern Lindsay Omta (right) receives a lesson in 737 flight-deck wiring from assembly electrician LaDawn Skinner at Boeing's Renton, Wash., factory. After graduating in December, Omta was hired full time by Boeing.

MARIAN LOCKHART/BOEING (Above) Some of Boeing's 2009 interns collaborate on a group exercise during orientation in Seattle. The annual event introduces summer interns to the company and allows them to network. **JIM ANDERSON/BOEING**