



Advancing Aviation Through Internships

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The mission of the ISTAT Foundation is to promote the advancement of commercial aviation and humanitarianism, and the Internship Program acts as one of mission's principal pillars. Through its online portal, the Internship Program connects ISTAT member companies with qualified university and graduate-level students around the globe who desire to become productive members in the aviation leasing, airline, OEM, MRO, financing and trading industries.

In the past five years, 38 ISTAT member companies have hired interns through the Internship Program portal, providing employment to a total of 71 students, which, in many instances, has led to long-term post-graduate

employment. Of the students eligible for reimbursement of the reasonable expenses for relocation travel and lodging pertaining to the internships, the Foundation in the past five years has granted stipends totaling US\$143,318.

The portal allows access to select students from global aviation-focused universities that participate in the Foundation's other philanthropic programs and objectives. Participating employers are ISTAT member companies or individual ISTAT members seeking interns who can bring their passion and academic skills to the workplace. The connection of qualified student applicants with ISTAT members in turn achieves the Internship Program's goal of fostering the development of the next generation of commercial aviation industry professionals.

Murrae Ross-Eskell, managing director of Horizon Executive Search, has served as chair of the Internship Program for the past eight years and is most proud of the program's growth and development during her tenure. Together with her committee members, the Internship Program is invested in seeing new talent gain meaningful professional experience. "This is important because it provides the students with their introduction to the industry and further fosters their love for aviation," Ross-Eskell says.

Damon D'Agostino, president and CEO of Zephyrus Aviation Capital, a supporter of the Internship Program since its formation, believes that student interns are eager contributors



understanding of financial modeling and the real-world functioning of equipment trading from the supply chain to front-end marketing. Graduating this semester, Mahajan feels a “reinforced passion to become a part of the aviation industry, prepared to take the next step utilizing the tools from this technical and professional experience.”

The Internship Program portal connects applicants with employers through its straightforward software platform, while leaving the details of the employment, communication and hiring decisions entirely within the discretion of the employers. According to Program employer Joey Johnsen, CEO of Zeevo Group LLC, “the Foundation’s focus on aviation and global outreach attracts a candidate pool that is more diverse, both professionally and geographically.” You can read more of Johnsen’s remarks in the Internship Program Portal Recruiter Spotlight published on 24 September 2021 on the ISTAT Foundation News website.

the ISTAT Foundation scholarship outreach,” Ross-Eskell says. Aside from the growth in the number of companies and students engaged in the Internship Program, it is this type of meaningful impact that brings the Internship Committee the most fulfillment. The Internship Program aspires to continue growing, targeting 100 annual student placements by 2024.

As our careers continue to soar to new heights, our past experiences and opportunities are what ground us and provide us with the foundation to propel forever forward. When considering an investment in the future of our industry, the “rising executive” students, interns and young professionals are our most valuable commodity and will undoubtedly provide the greatest returns to of our industry. If you or your company would be interested in participating as a potential employer for purposes of the ISTAT Foundation Internship Program, please do not hesitate to reach out to

who bring a fresh perspective to the business. “More often than not,” D’Agostino says, “we are so impressed with the students, we offer them a full-time role when they graduate.”

Student interns have equally benefited from the invaluable experiences gained as a result of their participation in the program. Having the opportunity to apply their classroom knowledge in a work setting, interns have participated on substantive projects, models, analysis, forecasting and evaluations of present-day aviation topics. Rohan Mahajan, a finance MBA student at Embry-Riddle, Daytona, who is also an ISTAT Foundation scholarship recipient and ISTAT University graduate, is one intern who engaged in such types of projects during his time at iAero Thrust in Miami. Through his internship, Mahajan was able to reinforce his

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Ross-Eskell and ISTAT Foundation Chair Peter Huijbers, director at PH Aviation Asia, have further promoted this global outreach of the Internship Program through the development of the Africa and Middle East Subcommittee. “We discovered there was a lack of opportunities to obtain internship employment in the region, so we’ve put together an engaged group of individuals with extensive networks to focus on promoting internships to organizations beyond

the committee members listed below or email internships@istat.org. 

The ISTAT Internship Committee consists of Murrae Ross-Eskell (Chair), Kristen Chmielewski, Bruce Dankberg, Joey Johnsen, Bryan Lange, Fearghal O’Hanlon, Toby Page and Mahamane Touré.

The Africa and Middle East Subcommittee consists of Mahamane Touré (Chair), Ryan Barret, Nick Fadugba, John Howell and Lerece Rose.