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Back To School Special

CIWI: Creating Access, Exposure And Opportunities For D10 Young Adults In Architecture And Engineering, Construction And Real Estate Development

By Monica Wilson, CIWI Program Director

For Construction Industry Workforce Initiatives (CIWI), 2015 has been a remarkable year for our internship program. Not only did we deliver 16 internship positions with some of the Bay Area's largest and most active construction, design and real estate development firms (a 60% increase from 2014) but almost 70 percent of these internship positions (11) were secured by D10 young adults active with College Track, a local educational organization based on Third Street, and a key member of the CIWI family.

The Next Generation of Leaders: An Early Indicator

It was clear to me when I was reading resumes and cover letters during the spring, that this summer was going to be special. Not only had our young adults developed very impressive resumes but many had strong community development skills and experience. For example, we had several interns that had worked with YCD and other CBOs, the Warriors as well as with SF PUC. Our youngest intern this year is also a D10 Youth Commissioner. Another intern had a family member that worked (journeyman carpenter) with one of our sponsors and had grown up attending BBQs and other firm events. These were remarkable findings and ones that we wanted to leverage in the design of our Civic Engagement Program.

CIWI: Our Goal and Mission

CIWI is a fiscally sponsored project of Community Initiatives (a 501 c(3)) and to date a privately funded program targeted to young adults (18 to 21 years old) from lower-income households that are first generation college students with an interest in Construction, Real Estate Development, Architecture and Engineering, Urban Design and Civic Engagement.



These young adults have been largely unrepresented in our industry at the professional level. CIWI's mission is to provide direct opportunities and promote a path to long term employment within the construction industry.

CIWI: Sponsor Team

This year we hit an all-time high and secured internship positions with nine firms including four General Contractors (Cahill Contractors, Nibbi Brothers, Roberts-Obayashi, and Turner Construction Co.), three developers (Tishman Speyer, Related CA, and Strada Investment Group) and a first for the program, architecture and engineering firms, including Urban Design Consulting Engineers and Interstice Architects. Having design firms join the CIWI team this summer was a huge win and one that we intend to leverage going forward.

As well, our larger team includes John Stewart Company, Lane Partners, John Cahill Fund, Westates Mechanical, RFJ Meiswinkel, Decker Electric, Golden State Lumber and AlCal. Industry partners include SF HAC, SPUR, and AIA-SF.

CIWI: Insights from Our Interns

With nine sponsors, we had a very strong base to work with regarding intern placements. For example, Related CA interns Zaria and Zenay Clemmons, College Track, worked on Transbay Block 8 and also had internships with SFPUC/SSIP. Both sisters have developed strong backgrounds and understanding of public service in both the public and private sectors. Zaria, on her internship experience says, "I am enjoying seeing the intersectionalities of the work I am doing in both of my positions. I can see how the public sector needs the private and vice versa, in many different capacities and how that synergetic efficacy overall translates to a better San Francisco. Both Related CA and the SFPUC are responding to the unique and growing needs of San Franciscans with essential roles and services to the exponentially growing development of San Francisco."

As well, Joshay Jones, College Track, who worked at Hunters View (Cahill Contractors), grew up attending Cahill events with her step father and had this to say about the program, "CIWI is a life changing experience. It gives

youth who have knowledge, determination, and excitement about the redevelopment of our communities, a platform to be asked, and to also be heard. CIWI has opened my eyes to how important it is to not allow others to make decisions about my community, but to be an active voice and to voice my opinion and ask questions when plans/ideas are uncertain. All in all this a phenomenal program and I am proud that it was founded in a neighborhood like San Francisco's Bayview." Joshay will be returning to California State University, Long Beach where she is pursuing a Communications and Construction Management.

Finally, Emani Davis, College Track had these comments, "Before I was selected to join CIWI and placed at Tishman Speyer, I was active in various activities that pertained to my interest. However none of those activities gave me the opportunity to learn more about construction, city infrastructure, architecture, finances, and much more. CIWI allowed me to branch outside of my confront zone and enter into a world that was very distant from me. Working at Tishman Speyer gave me a unique perspective on all of the various aspects that play into managing and

creating a building. Because of this experience I am looking to take a few finance and engineering classes at Sonoma State University to expand my knowledge."

CIWI Program (Internship and Civic Engagement Components)

CIWI's program includes a 12-week intensive Internship component that provides 240 hours of direct technical experience. Our Civic Engagement program provides access, exposure, and opportunities for our young adults as to what it takes to be a leader in the Bay Area working on real estate, economic and community development initiatives. Over the summer, interns participated in approximately ten civic engagement events, including volunteering at a Habitat for Humanity development in SF's Ingleside community. Between both components, we deliver approximately 300 hours of direct experience and exposure.

D10 Highlights

This year we developed a very strong Civic Engagement program with an emphasis on D10.

For example, CIWI interns attended a CCII meeting

(Commission of Community Investment and Infrastructure) to learn about major development projects with an emphasis on Shipyard/Candlestick Point, Mission Bay, and the Transbay project areas. In partnership with College Track, we showed the very powerful documentary "Point of Pride: The People of Hunters Point" –which combines archival footage from the 1950's-70's with present day viewpoints. As well, the interns participated in a SPUR/Shipyard event, and we closed out the Civic Engagement program with a fantastic Meet and Greet with Tiffany Bohee, OCII Director, who delivered a very comprehensive presentation on housing, economic, and community development trends within San Francisco's project areas, with an emphasis on D10. This comprehensive and targeted four-part D10 series proved to be a remarkable program component, and clearly gave our interns exposure to the history of D10 and the community activism that occurred over the last 60 to 70 years as well as the opportunities available for the next generation of leaders in D10 as well as citywide. All students are now members of SPUR (Young Urbanists) and can freely attend amazing events, meet industry practitioners, and build their individual networking systems.

CIWI Civic Engagement "Meet and Greet with OCII Director Tiffany Bohee (center)."

As the students start returning to school, I feel confident that CIWI 2015 delivered an intensive and successful program for our young adults. More importantly, I look forward to seeing these young adults graduate from college, return to the Bay Area and become the next generation of leaders in D10 and citywide-- working on housing, economic, and community development initiatives.