

MILLENNIALS IN THE MECHANICAL INDUSTRY

As a current member of the Hillman's Entrepreneurs Program at the University of Maryland and a sophomore at Montgomery College, Tiffany Nguyen started her Marketing/Business Development internship position in February. She is also part of Enactus, a club dedicated to using entrepreneurial drive, to make sustainable projects that can empower people within the community and/or nationally. She plans to transfer to University of Maryland and obtain her bachelors in Marketing with a minor in Technical Entrepreneurship. Read her thoughts on the construction in this short Q and A session:



FUN FACTS ABOUT TIFFANY

- Plays in the Chinese Volleyball Youth Club League
- Worked for Alliance for Retired Americans and Maryland Procurement Technical Assistance Program

What are your overall thoughts about the construction industry?

The industry overall is such a complex system that no one really takes into consideration. There are so many departments and steps to get an actual project started and completed, which is so fascinating!

How can our industry change to accommodate millennials needs?

The millennials are overall a very ambitious and tech-savvy group of people. We require room for growth and change. Providing internships for students and opportunities in which they can be involved with the company will help us gain the experience we need.

What skills have you learned during your marketing internship?

How to use social media effectively to market a business (Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube). I also understand the importance of managing contacts through Constant Contact. My favorite part of the job is being able to inform the S&D community about events and recognition through our staff newsletter, The Drip. It allows me to work in Microsoft Publisher and use my creative side.

What did you like most/least about your internship with Shapiro & Duncan?

I like coming up with my own ideas and being encouraged to get creative. I've worked at other companies that had very strict layouts of how their workers were going to work, or was just given busy work. I want to be viewed as a partner, not just a body or a helping hand. This has been one of my favorite internships because not only am I allowed to put my thoughts into an assignment or strategy, but I can also go to my supervisors for advice about school and business and have their full support. The workplace is more of a family rather than just a bunch of associates.

What do you expect to take away from this internship?

To get a good idea of what it is like working in a marketing/business development department. Also, to be able to learn more about the construction industry, gain new skills in networking and communication, and to be able to analytically forecast and identify trends and challenges in the industry.

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CEO Intern, Menaza Fernando is currently enrolled at Montgomery College majoring in general business and will transfer to the Smith School of Business to obtain a degree in accounting and information systems. She discovered this internship opportunity through a Facebook post her friend shared in February. Like Tiffany, she also is active in the Enactus program where she serves as their co-president. In April, both interns, participated in the national competition where they presented various community projects they worked on throughout the year. With more than 500 Enactus teams in the United States, they placed 9 and then top 17 nationally!



What was your first perception of the construction industry?

Initially, my picture of the industry included hard hats and business suits in the field. It has changed since. I now see how all of the various departments operate and the variety of skills needed to run the entire business.

How can our industry change to accommodate millennials needs?

I think the traditional perception of the industry needs to be changed. It needs to show more than just "getting dirty." There is so much technology now incorporated when building a project. This industry is much more tech-savvy and attractive than it's ever been.

What kind of projects do you work on for the CEO?

I assist the CEO with his monthly article for our employee newsletter, fundraise for our outreach events and register employees for company networking events. I also provide content for our blog, Pipedreams. Working on these projects has improved my writing skills and has given me the opportunity to understand how different departments run. I get to see the big picture as well as the key details.

What did you like most/least about your internship with Shapiro & Duncan?

I feel that I am able to engage myself in various activities and projects that I am assigned too, as opposed to prior internships where I am asked to do simple tasks repetitively. I like that there is structure, but also flexibility, allowing me to incorporate my own thoughts and ideas while getting feedback for improvement.

What do you expect to take away from this internship?

An internship should be more than just sitting at your desk and completing the same task day after day. I expect to be able to use my creative thinking skills and be challenged. The experience is important for my resume, but I also need real knowledge and skills that I can apply to my future.

FUN FACTS ABOUT MENAZA

- Born in Sri Lanka
- Fluent in English and Sinhala
- Captain of the Tennis Team in High School
- Has a mug collection from all over the world.

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A recent transfer from the University of Pittsburgh, Robert Rumeld decided to change his major from Architecture and Civil Engineering to Construction Management and move forward with his education at University of Maryland. In January, he joined the Shapiro & Duncan construction team helping with drawings, data entry and equipment tracking. After he finishes school he ideally would like a position in which he can direct, plan and manage a project.

How can the construction industry change to accommodate millennials needs?

I don't really think that millennials are any different than any other generation. However, growing up , the construction industry never really was advertised to me. I didn't know about the money in it or the different types of jobs. I think what makes this industry so unique is when engineering and business merge together. To be successful in construction management, you need to be knowledgeable not only in the building process, but also have a mind for business. Accounting, marketing and finance are usually ignored. I think the industry could really expand more if more people with these backgrounds were made aware of this overlap.

What do you expect from an internship?

I expect to gain more understanding about the workings of HVAC and to spend time in the field.

Future goals?

I plan to finish school next year, travel and become fully independent. Ideally, I want a position where I spend most of my time in the field, moving around, managing, planning and directing a project.



FUN FACTS ABOUT ROBERT

- Won an engineering competition at the University of Vermont when in high school
- Red-Green Colorblind
- Plays Basketball 2-3 times a week