

2022 MATC Summer Internship Program

Final Report

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Admittedly, I was a little apprehensive about applying for the MATC Internships, seeing as my major is in Architectural Engineering and all of the internships offered were related to other fields of study that were somewhat similar in some aspects, but not necessarily the same. Ultimately, I decided that any experience was a good experience and that now would be the time to try different career paths before going into my Junior year of college. That being said, I applied for the Civil Engineering and Construction Business options on the application, and I am so glad that I did. I have learned so much throughout my experience and met some truly wonderful people. It's safe to say that this internship has been a positive experience that has helped guide me in my career journey.

Right from the initial interview with Benesch, I could tell that this was a great place to work that would help me to foster so many new skills and relationships, and I was right. Jeff Sockel, the Omaha Division Manager, was the one who had given me the interview, and he had assured me that this was a place of opportunity. That it would be a job in which you would be given the liberty to make mistakes in order to learn (though not ones that would have serious consequences on safety). This was reassuring to hear since this was my first internship and I was bound to make at least a few errors.

From day one, everyone was so helpful. Whether it was their willingness to answer questions, to demonstrate, or to help problem solve, everyone along the way proved how much they were rooting for my success. Benesch continually demonstrated how dedicated they were to each intern's learning process and even had an intern success group where all of the interns in different districts would meet every Thursday with new presentations on ways to improve our overall internship experience. These

lessons themselves were always interactive in some way. After each meeting we were assigned a form of homework to help us get more hands-on. They even had us split into smaller groups with a mix of people from each district to come together and make a final project over real world ways that a particular region could improve aspects of their business.

Outside of this amazing internship workshop, throughout my hands-on experience with Benesch I have been pleasantly met with surprises, challenges, and responsibilities that I would have never thought possible during my first internship. The first two days were the typical orientation style one would expect with a new job, however, right off the bat the interns were entrusted with a high level of responsibility and purpose. By day three I was already in the field working on ADA ramps under the tutelage of another Benesch employee, and by week three I was ensuring these standards all by myself, aside from occasional check-ins from my supervisor.

This summer I worked on tasks I knew nothing about prior to this internship. Through asking questions, working hands-on with a mentor, or sheer adaptability, by the end I was able to proficiently assist with ADA ramps, joint sealing inspections, and even help with the design process on an up and coming project. To better understand the opportunities and responsibilities they gave us, let me first explain some of the tasks they assigned. Let's start with ADA projects, as this was what I spent the majority of my time on this summer. My job as an intern was to be what is classified as an inspector. I was assigned to a particular construction crew as they worked on ramps, sidewalks, and curb and gutter. I was meant to observe their efforts and ensure that they were complying with the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA standards). This meant

checking slopes for ramps and sidewalks so that it allowed wheelchair access and rain run-off, painting entrances for ramps on forms, complying with city standards for curb and gutter, making sure the concrete they mixed was the right ratio of mix and water, and ensuring that the crew abided by the temperature cut offs with pouring both ramps and curb and gutter.

Another task they would assign me would be to check joint sealing. This was usually done during a weather day, when my crew couldn't pour concrete. To start out, I would have to come into the office where they provided me with a list of 8-12 recently completed roads. From here, I would plan the most efficient route to complete the tasks and return back to the office with the final inspection maps. When I would get to one of the areas, I would look to make sure that all utilities, manholes, grates, inlets, curbs, and driveways were properly tar sealed (the thick black tar that surrounds the distinguished sections of a road). If I spotted a particular area that needed to be done or fixed then I would draw a circle or a box around that specific place on the map and take a picture. I did this task three times throughout the summer and often these missions would take all day because of how much surface area I had to cover.

The final task that Benesch would assign me was helping with the design aspect of Civil Engineering. It helped that I had already done ADA's in person so I was familiar with what these construction maps should vaguely look like, and I could understand many of the symbols within the map. However, the software Benesch used was both similar and drastically different from those used in the AE program. It took some getting used to, and I even took a day long LinkedIn course to become more proficient with the different capabilities of the software. Because I was only in the office for two weeks

before my internship came to an end, I wasn't able to get as submerged in this topic as I would have liked, but I was able to help with geometric coordinates on a preexisting draft they had made for an intersection in Omaha. This means that I found corner areas and curve sections on a sidewalk or curb and would pinpoint the exact location in relation to the rest of the map so they would be able to construct the new road and sidewalk as accurately as possible.

Overall, I am so thankful for the opportunity to intern for Benesch. I learned so much about Civil Engineering and the broader scope of Engineering as well. It taught me real world skills involving design software, ADA guidelines, problem solving, adaptability, and ultimately how to be a better, more passionate employee. In addition to all of these applicable workforce skill sets, it also gave me the opportunity to meet some really amazing people and form lasting connections. I appreciate how useful the MATC internship with Benesch was, and plan to return next summer!