

What Can A Student Intern Do For You?

Mark Sipes, P.E.
Building Official, City of Phoenix

Happy Spring fellow members of the SEAOA!! We are reading the April newsletter which means that the first quarter of 2018 is behind us. The State Convention is just ahead of us in a couple of months and then, the first half of 2018 is done.

This is also the time of year that aspiring engineers are finishing their Spring semester and some of them have secured a job for the summer as an intern. Just what does an engineering intern do? What can they do for that matter? They haven't graduated yet so they can't really understand how to design a building. They haven't passed the FE exam so they really aren't EIT's or engineers in training. I've heard a few conversations during the dinner meetings that the students who do graduate don't have the skills your companies are looking for fresh out of the university.

So just what can an engineering intern do? They are students studying in our profession, wanting to graduate and work in our profession, and want to obtain their license as a structural engineer. Some of them aren't really sure of all of the details related to our profession, but they have a passion to continue. They are eager to learn and still know how to write computer programs, spreadsheets, and use most of those keys on that scientific calculator. They can do a lot.

Better questions on this subject are what can I do to promote our profession and how can I teach an intern how to read construction plans and/or code books? How can I have them update our GSN's and wind calculations? How else can they be used to help me and themselves. Also, consider having student interns year-round, not just during the summer. There are many that not only seek experience, but have financial needs as well.

I was fortunate to participate in internships with ADOT and the City of Phoenix. I valued the experience and gained so much knowledge that I managed to convince all of my past and present employers to start an intern program. I run into some of them from time to time and they are doing well. I really encourage our membership to reach out and hire interns and continue to grow the profession.

REQUEST FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

The SEAOA Newsletter committee would appreciate input from the membership about articles and information that you'd like to see in upcoming newsletters. The newsletter is an excellent place for the SEAOA membership to share opinions, ideas and information with the rest of the association. We'd appreciate input from the membership to make the next newsletter even more informative. Please contact Sal Caccavale (seccbc@cox.net) and Mark Sipes (mark.sipes@phoenix.gov) if you have any articles that you'd like to submit or if there are any topics you'd like to see in future SEAOA Newsletters.

