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News Release

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Don Price and Shanea Headrick are learning on the job as interns.

IU Kokomo students gain job experience, benefit the community, with internships

KOKOMO, Ind. — Don Price uses the skills developed as an informatics student at Indiana University Kokomo to help local economic development efforts.

Price, 31, is one of two interns at the Greater Kokomo Economic Development Alliance, an opportunity gained through the campus' Career and Accessibility Center. He adds local commercial properties for sale to a state database, which is available to business owners looking for new locations.

“This has been a great opportunity to apply what I’m learning in class to a real product, that will be used by real people,” he said. “I’m so happy to have this opportunity.

For English major Shanea Headrick, the internship is a chance to write for an audience other than her professors. She produces a newsletter for the alliance, and writes content for its website.

“I’ve learned to evaluate my writing, to be sure it is appropriate for the audience we want to reach,” she said. “I would enjoy doing this as a full time job. It allows me to be creative and professional at the same time.”

Internships are a crucial part of the college experience, according to Tracy Springer, manager of career and accessibility services.

“Students who complete internships have a competitive edge in the job market,” she said. “Experiential learning is the best way to gain the experience employers are looking for when hiring. Internships also allow students to build relationships with people who can be professional references for them as they seek jobs after graduation, and sometimes lead to jobs within the companies where they were interns.”

While the students gain work experience, the economic development alliance also benefits from having them, said Chris Hamm, president and CEO.

“We enjoy hosting the talented students from IU Kokomo as interns, to accomplish many creative economic and community development projects with our multi-dimensional organization,” he said. “Their fresh approach, positive attitudes, and critical thinking skills add up to successful projects for their resumés, our organization, and the community.”

Headrick, 26, from Peru, appreciates the work experience and contacts she’s made as an intern.

“That’s key for me, because I’m preparing to graduate and look for a job,” she said, adding that for some students, an internship would be a way to see if they like the career they are considering.

“You can learn early if you don’t like it, so you can make other plans if necessary,” she said.

For Price, the internship confirmed he’s chosen the right career path. He wants to work in web design, computer programming, and with databases after earning his degree. His ultimate goal is to start a company that develops applications and websites.

“I have really enjoyed this opportunity to try out my future career,” he said. “I was intimidated to work on a government database at first, but it hasn’t been a big deal. This internship will enhance my resumé when I’m ready to look for a job, too.”

Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.

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