



Fontana Unified School District

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NEWS RELEASE

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Fontana Unified High School Students Gain Hands-On Career Experience during Virtual Micro-Internships

FONTANA, CA – Six Summit High School students have sharpened their online technological marketing skills and learned what businesses are seeking in prospective employees during exclusive micro-internships with manufacturing company Tekton Hospitality.

The micro-internships – part of a pilot program with the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools' Alliance for Education – aim to teach a few specific skills in a short time. Held in a small-group virtual setting, the micro-internships allow students to ask in-depth questions, gain detailed feedback on their work and receive comprehensive coaching.

“Our students are always eager to gain hands-on experience, but there are often logistics that make it challenging to do internships while still in high school,” said Valerie McClellan, chair of Summit High School’s College and Career Technical Education Department. “This micro-internship model increases access to valuable internship opportunities for our students and inspires our industry partners to explore new methods of mentorship.”

Summit High senior Aaron Vera and juniors Yasmeen Abu-Awad, Mohamad Awad, Leilani Calzada Gonzalez, Harsh Patel and Steven Zaragoza engaged in 90-minute sessions on Zoom with Kimberly Unzicker, Tekton’s director of public relations and creative design. Students learned how to take and edit job-site and product photos, create websites to highlight the products and promote the products via social media. The micro-internship culminated Oct. 13 with the presentation of their work for constructive feedback.

“This internship was amazing in terms of allowing me to see not only how marketing is done in a company like Tekton, but also allowing me to use the same model in developing my own marketing style,” Vera said. “I also learned a life lesson: A lot of what we do is trial and error, so keep pushing yourself in every facet of your life.”

The micro-internships are aligned with the California Department of Education’s Standards for Career Ready Practice, which outline the fundamental knowledge and skills that students need to prepare for transition to postsecondary education, career training, or the workforce.

Upon completing their micro-internships, students received virtual badges, which can be displayed on resumes and social media to showcase the skills they acquired.

The Alliance for Education is a countywide network committed to working toward the common goal of producing an educated and skilled workforce.

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“We’re thrilled to bring this idea of micro-internships to fruition and connect students to the world of work in a new way,” Alliance for Education Coordinator Shehzad Bhojani said. “We’re grateful for the support of our partner districts like Fontana Unified that embrace opportunities for innovation.”

Bhojani said the county plans to establish best practices from the pilot program and create a template that will help districts and businesses execute the internship format throughout San Bernardino County.

“Fontana Unified is committed to preparing students to succeed in an ever-changing professional landscape – an effort aided by our robust CTE pathways and industry partnerships,” Fontana Unified Superintendent Randal S. Bassett said. “We are excited by the possibilities of these micro-internships and are proud to be part of a program that helps all students gain better access to vital career-building opportunities.”

PHOTO CAPTION:

FUSD_INTERN: Summit High School junior Yasmeen Abu-Awad presents a project for feedback at the end of a micro-internship with Tekton Hospitality. Abu-Awad was among six Summit students to engage in the micro-internship, which taught students best practices for marketing products.

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