PALM BEACH TECH

INTERNSHIP FORUM FOLLOW- UP REPORT

"The Palm Beach Tech Internship Forum is intended to bring together Tech Executives, Education Partners, Corporate Members & Interns to highlight and identify internship best practices and discuss features of industry programs"

Palm Beach Tech Members & Partners,

On September 28th of this year, the Palm Beach Tech Association, led by our Education Committee held the Palm Beach Tech Internship Forum.

The gathering was to focus on working towards three (3) predetermined goals as defined by the organizing team of Michael Fowler *(NextEra Energy)*, Kevin Burch *(Office Depot)*, Cathy Miron *(eSilo)* Barbara Cambia *(Lynn University)*, and myself:

- **Build Academic Partnerships**
- **Identify Industry Wide Best Practices**
- **Develop an Intern Fellowship Program**

With the support of our members, partners, and staff, we identified Best Practices and the needs of a Palm Beach Tech facilitated Intern Program. The Education Committee will take on these tasks through, with several members leading an effort to take effect in the summer of 2019.

Additionally, it's important to note we would not have been successful in this effort without the support of several South Florida Higher Educational Institutions. Of the following, we also had four (4) Universities represented by High Level Administrators:

- **Lynn University**
- **Florida Atlantic University**
- **Palm Beach State College**
- **Palm Beach Atlantic University**

It's our hope that this continued effort will lead to further building our Educational Pipeline for technology jobs in the Palm Beaches and South Florida.

Sincerely,

Joseph R. Russo

Joseph R. Russo
Executive Director, Palm Beach Tech Association

FORUM OVERVIEW

The following are the raw notes from the two (2) breakout sessions. Each moderator was given a general direction of goals for their group, and were free to lead discussion in whatever way they saw fit:

- **Intern Program Best Practices** | Natasha Menon *(Florida Power & Light)*
- **Developing an Intern Fellowship Program** | Cathy Miron *(eSilo)*

Additionally, we took feedback from the panel
- *Moderator:* **Andrew Duffell,** President and CEO @ Research Park at FAU
- **John Duffy,** CEO @ 3c Interactive
- **Kevin Bruch,** Director of IT @ Office Depot
- **Savanna McGill,** Talent Acquisition Specialist @ Modernizing Medicine
- **Michael Fowler,** Vice President @ NextEra Energy Resources

Additionally, the Education Committee reviewed the conclusions ultimately drawn from each session and every discussion, and the raw data included in this report.

The following conclusions were determined by our team:

1. **Palm Beach Tech Fellowship** program should be instituted in Summer 2019, featuring a minimum of 15 participating companies hosting a total of 50 Interns

2. **Internship Best Practices** document will be finalized and released to members no later than January 2019, to be considered for programs in Summer of 2019.

MORE INFORMATION
Any questions? Anything we can do for you? Reach out to us anytime

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BREAKOUT CONCLUSIONS

INTERN PROGRAM BEST PRACTICES

How do we define Success?

- **Business Experience**: Understand a corporate climate, how to act professional in modern workplace, develop basic soft skills & general self awareness.

- **Skill Building**: Be able to build practical skills, both soft and technical. Technical would focus on programming languages, project management, and company processes.

- **Structured Program**: Provide a Mutually Beneficial program focused on empowerment while connected to classroom learning. Have internal development opportunities while paving path for Interns to return and potentially be Hired *(ideally with same company)*.

- **Networking**: Build long term relationships, especially with mentoring that can support skills growth in the long run. Also allow interns to become ambassadors to tell others about their jobs and experiences on campus and at local events.

- **Meaningful Work**: Work on real projects that have benefit to the organization, getting real world industry experience and feeling accomplished with real goals achieved. Prepared Excitement about industry/ Job Function, Application, what they learned to enhance their future career prospects with future employers, Knowledge, Positive Feedback

What are THE Best Practices?

- **Mentorship**: Every Manager should take time to mentor their Interns, either informally on a consistent basis, or formally on a set schedule.

- **Intern Culture**: Every intern should be able to ask lots of questions - a culture of open communication and engagement should be fostered. Cultural Inclusion and Emotional Intelligence should be consistently assured by Managers.

- **Manager Checklist**: Each Manager should have their own list of expectations before an Intern is placed with them. They must understand goals, have proper applicable training, and experience to share

- **Team Building & Trainings**: Allowing interns to develop a teamwork mentality should be developed in various ways. Social events for just Interns, projects they can work on together, and regular training sessions specific to their needs and company processes.

- **Preset Goals**: Clear and concise goals of internship goals. There should be clear & set expectations, structure for measuring defined objectives & tasks, and a final assessment or evaluation.

- **Cross Training:** When possible in larger organizations, hands on cross training with other departments and teams should be implemented to increase the diversity of topics covered and skills developed.

- **Multiple Assignments**: Each intern should receive multiple hands on assignments of real work *(not just busy work)* for a variety of experiences and skill development.

- **Ending Survey:** Both the Interns and their Managers should receive surveys on what did and did not work, what should be improved, and what best outcomes were.

- **Program Evaluation:** Every Intern should have an interview with Manager(s) to discuss their personal outcomes, potential improvements, and potential next steps for their career.

- **Capstone Project & Presentation**: Have a pre approved Capstone project that can be worked on throughout the internship, to be presented formally at the end of internship. Upon review, it should also look to be formally implemented.

DEVELOPING AN INTERN FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Benefits to a Palm Beach Tech Program

- **Screening**: Sourcing prescreened Intern candidates, noting hard & soft skills, for companies dependent on their hiring needs saves time and delivers needed talent.
    - *NOTE* Each company would maintain their own standards or hiring, and suggesting an Intern it would not assure placement.*

- **University Relationships**: Maintaining strong contacts with local universities and attending career fairs allows companies to save time, and streamlines process of schools and professors reaching out to many employers.

- **Statewide Recruitment**: Palm Beach Tech will visit universities both locally and throughout Florida to recruit talent, assuring a diversity of skills can be represented. Additionally, career centers wouldn't need to vet unknown employers

- **Reduced Cost**: Factoring cost of recruitment into Membership saves staff time and costs associated with building pipeline.

- **Fostering Pipeline**: Connect students and companies long term, even outside of internships as part of overall pipeline between education and industry.

- **Non-Traditional Benefits**: The program could also be opened to non traditional students *(i.e. those not from college)* and provide an opportunity for career success. There could also be opportunity for interns to work for multiple companies on multiple projects.

Program Components

- **HR Expectations**: Have a clear set of standard HR expectations at forefront, to assure interns meet basic requirements

- **Tracking Interns:** Maintain a CRM type system of candidates to build relationships, noting where they're from, where they're placed, and if they get hired.

- **Feedback Survey**: Have a standardized form for feedback loop to improve program for both interns and their managers. This would be both during and after the program.

- **Compensation:** Each company must agree to provide some form of compensation, either salary, hourly, or stipend to take part in the program.

- **Community Service**: Interns should volunteer time to teach STEM at summer camps and workshops around the community, potentially organizing efforts and curriculums on their own.

Events & Networking

- **Fellowship Kickoff:** Have a program kickoff event where both interns and industry leaders are in attendance at a social setting. Short presentations and welcomes are had while interns will have to meet one another and form project teams.

- **Community Events:** Interns must attend several local meetups and events, including some hosted by Palm Beach Tech to network and learn.

- **Fellowship Graduation**: In addition to their capstone presentations at their companies, the Fellowship Capstone must be presented at a final year end showcase open to both students and the community.

Weeklong Training
"Intense Fulltime bootcamp"

- **Tech Component**: Hosted by Palm Beach Tech, it would focus on both soft and hard skills (Project Management, UX, Data, Coding Languages) as well as what to expect.

- **Business Component**: Hosted by 1909 and utilizing the CO.STARTERS Curriculum, it will focus on developing entrepreneurial capacities in Interns.

APPENDIX A - ATTENDEES

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Palm Beach Atlantic University

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APPENDIX B - RAW DATA