CO-OP VS COVID-19 VIRUS

There is no doubt, Corona Virus created challenges for everyone. Every aspect of society has been affected. The Swanson School of Engineering (SSOE) CO-OP Program is no exception. But there is good news.

Unprecedented exceptions have been made by faculty, staff and employers for students to gain the experience and credit they seek through the co-op program. Employers helped by adapting work schedules to include flexibility, staggered work visits and in some cases, provided complete remote work assignments.

While this is not ideal, it is working. Students have reported positive feedback with the changes and are still able to learn and challenge themselves. See some of their stories on the next pages.

Mike Formica, today As the President of Neya Systems, Mike seeks co-op students to mentor. He also assists entrepreneurs in start-ups of their own.

"When I hire new employees out of school, I always look for co-op experience. Those kids come out of school better prepared and with a stronger conviction and confidence in their skills. Plus, it's a great way to differentiate you from a stack of resumes." Sounds like solid advice, Mike.

Pitt Alumni Spotlight

Mike Formica

Mike was a student at Pitt from 1987-1992. In his four years, he majored in Electrical Engineering, was a 4-time All-Big East performer in Track and Cross Country, a member of the University Honors College and still had time to co-op starting his sophomore year.

On co-op, Mike worked for a company that developed products used in factory automation. This is when autonomy and manufacturing became his passion.

After graduating, Mike received a commission from the US Navy and graduated from Nuclear Power School. But as Mike says, "I found myself wanting to get back to automation." So, he moved back to Pittsburgh and joined a company where he could continue his work in automation.

"My co-op exposed me to a world that turned into a career and a lifelong passion."

Since then, Mike has started and sold several companies and continually looks for co-op students to mentor and hire full time. "I've been fortunate to be surrounded by great engineers over the years."
Co-op Student of the Year Criteria:

***Excellent academic record
***Outstanding work contributions with co-op employer
***Volunteerism or contributions to the co-op employer or university community
***Must have completed all three rotations

Ideally, there will be one nominee from each department. Students must be nominated either by their employer or by their academic department.

Co-op Employer of the Year Criteria:

***Sustained commitment to cooperative education at the University of Pittsburgh
***Quality of projects and assignments

The co-op program is fortunate to have strong employer partners and smart, capable students. The Co-op Student of the Year and Co-op Employer of the Year awards recognize the time, effort, and hard work these parties have contributed. This is the time of the year to think about those outstanding companies and individuals and to submit nominations for the 2020 awards.

HARD HAT AREA

"I was hired through SME USA to work for a contractor that is building a wind turbine park. I am in charge of the quality control operations for the turbine foundations and access roads." Each turbine is taller than a football field once it is topped out, so it is exciting to work on the foundations that hold the turbines up. Also, it is rewarding knowing I am working on renewable energy infrastructure."

Julia Jones, Civil Engineering

The Co-op Employer of the Year and all Pitt Student of the Year nominees will be honored at venue and date yet to be determined. We look forward to receiving your nominations. Please submit by October 26, 2020.

Submit nominations to Maureen Barcic at paub2m@pitt.edu. You may also contact Maureen with any questions pertaining to the nomination process or co-op in general.
"Currently, everyone in the brewery has been required to wear a facial covering at all times. Everyday we step foot on the brewery campus, we have our temperature scanned."

*Jared Renz*

*Sara Kron* working remotely for Philips Advanced Innovations. Sara is in Research and Development.

**American Textile Company**

"In addition to production of normal company items (pillows, bed sheets, blankets, mattress covers etc), ATC mass produced hundreds of thousands of masks in their El Salvador plant, which they donated to UPMC and local businesses."  Malik Talaat.

*Malik Talaat* Industrial Engineer Co-op

Daily duties include AUTOCAD shadow board drawings, case pack testing and assisting the samples team.

**Emily Richard**, electrical engineering student, at Pioneer Power Group in Wexford, PA. They are a small start-up company that provides electrical systems analysis studies to its customers. To help the communities surrounding their locations in Pittsburgh and Maryland, the CEO committed to donating ten meals to local food banks for every study completed.

"I am currently on my first co-op rotation with FedEx working with the Safety and Performance Analyst’s team. They provided me with a laptop and a monitor and have been more than helpful. FedEx has done a great job keeping me engaged and productive during my first rotation."

*Victoria Likovich*

*Joshua Young,* a chemical engineering student, working in Quality Assurance with Mine Safety Appliances in Jacksonville, NC.
PITT Proud

Zoe Yarsky showing her Pitt Pride while working at Bombardier Transportation in project procurement.

Representing PITT while working from home, Joseph Wright, catches the live stream of Northrop Grumman launching their new Minotaur IV. (On screen behind him). Joseph is currently working on the NSROC III sounding rocket operations contract.

Sophia Napolitano, a civil engineer student, on site at Procter and Gamble in West Virginia. Sophia is working for Mascaro Construction.

Nicole Thompson, in the field with Rycon Construction. They are working on an apartment building in Pittsburgh that will be LEED Certified. Rycon Construction staggers home and office work to help with social distancing.

Olivia Nolt, Co-op Office student Intern.

Olivia, a chemical engineering student, completed a year long co-op with Johnson & Johnson. She has worked for the co-op office since Fall 2019. Olivia is scheduled to graduate this December. We will miss you.

Important Dates

Fall 2020 Co-op Virtual Job Fair
September 27, 2020 – September 29, 2020

Recognition Luncheon
TBD

CO-OP ED

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