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## Setting the Foundation

INTERNSHIP

BY CHAD KORT

It all started back at the Robert Morris career fair – I approached the Schneider Downs recruiter and mentioned that I have an interest in tax accounting. The recruiter informed me that the deadline to apply was the same day. With this in mind, I returned to my apartment and immediately applied for the position online. Fortunately, I received an invitation for an initial interview on campus. This, in turn, led to a second interview at the Schneider Downs office in Pittsburgh.

During my second interview, I met with a shareholder and senior manager. I then received an office tour and had lunch with two staff members, an experience where I was able to talk about the firm and their work experiences. A few days later I received a call and accepted the busy season internship. I was also offered the opportunity to participate in a summer tax internship.

My internship experiences provided me with insight into the real world of public accounting. At school, I learned about tax theory with individuals and business entities. During the internship, though, I was able to apply that knowledge to a real tax return. I quickly realized I would be exposed to areas of tax not covered in my two introductory tax courses at Robert Morris University. For not only did I have to obtain an understanding of the tax software necessary to prepare returns, but I also had to complete returns with which I was unfamiliar with and conduct research on specific areas of tax.

Everyone at Schneider Downs has been very friendly and welcoming. In fact, I was invited to the firm's Christmas party two months before I had my first day of busy season. There are lots of questions to ask and many friendly people willing to provide answers.

Overall, I enjoyed working with the tax department and discovering the differences between a spring and summer internship. Regardless, both taught me important lessons. As a senior manager who often interacted with the interns during the spring internship would say, "Today is the most important day of busy season" – the reason being: any work not completed today becomes postponed until tomorrow. I have found this saying not only to be true at work, but at school and life in general. Interning has set a foundation for a career in public accounting. I look forward to the challenges, opportunities, and rewards that come with this career path.

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