

AISES GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COUNCIL

US PATENT AND TRADE OFFICE, WASHINGTON DC - JULY 1, 2015

Intern Panel

Participants: *Rusty*, Digital Archiving (NASA GSFC); *Asia Leavitt-Miguel*, Business Development (ASRC Federal); *Roberta Glenn*, Geography (USDA/ASRC Federal); *Lance Foust*, Corporate Communications (ASRC Federal); *Savanna*, Aephis (USDA/WINS); *Robert*, Aephis (USDA/WINS); *Winston*, Animal plant health (USDA/WINS)

What drew you to STEM fields?

- Winston: Wanted to learn about tribal law- but realized the deficiency in environmental law so decided to intern to gain more professional experience in the area while in school.
- Roberta: Climate change is important to Alaska so I decided to pursue geospatial sciences
- Rusty: I'm studying communications so im not really in STEM, but I do see the technological advances being made and the impact they are having on the way we communicate with one another
- Robert: I received a bachelors in landscape architecture, masters in natural resources so environmental law seemed like a relevant next step
- Lance: opportunity- that's where the jobs are and I can see that there is a big need for technology
- Asia: I'm currently undeclared and exploring so I haven't been hooked on a STEM field just yet

Name a challenge and/or an accomplishment of your internship thus far?

- Rusty: I'm the 1st person in this internship so my mentor and I are learning as we go
- Savanna: challenge East vs. West very different attitudes
- Roberta: Big cities, hard to navigate, using metro was a big accomplishment
- Winston: 1st wk hard to learn the language and dynamics of the office place, using past experiences to navigate the workplace
- Lance: ASRC Federal government contractor wide-range quarterly newsletter to work with folks across the various government contracts has been rewarding.

How did you find your internship opportunity?

- Someone came into my calculus class to let me know about various internships, and we also had employees from NASA come by.
- Learned from students who participated in WINS before
- Learned about internships through ASRC

How to attract you to work for federal government?

- Wanted to come to DC and make some money
- Public service is a great way to reach native americans, they want other opportunities besides military
- Loan repayment & telework
- Experience, I was looking for a new experience, seeing a new place and how other people live

What are some hindrances you see to joining the federal government?

- Lots of hoops and paperwork to get through

- Education gap
- Communication – a big issue, it’s hard to really know standards, rules and regulations, etc.
- Rules – can be daunting to know about so much protocol and responsibility
- Technology throughout government is outdated and could be improved

Are there any ways that you can see the federal government partnering with native country?

- NASA partners with tribal colleges and teach them about intern and professional opportunities
- USDA supports rural organizations and groups, helps people recognize that they do care about rural communities and utilize partnerships

How do we, at the federal level, and you, the students, inspire others to pursue STEM?

- Fascination that there are things have yet to be discovered
- How to use science degree to help out with issues at home, i.e. climate change
- Seeing role models in science
- It's ok to be smart! 😊
- Give back more than you’ve taken
- I was scared of science but inspiring young women and engaging them to explore other opportunities in STEM is very rewarding
- Mentors! Especially if they don’t have anyone in their community to look too, also when the students have to leave their family/community.

What would an agency need to do to entice you to come work for 10 years?

- An exciting job opportunity
- What am I going to learn? How would I be able to utilize that experience for the rest of my life
- By providing opportunities to stay connected to culture/tribes/communities + a way to give back
- Have a community
- Let them know about the impact you’re making just by being present and being the voice for your culture and native country overall

Native American support groups; do they help? Are they even a factor? Do they exist?

- I think they would be a great influence, harder to adjust when there isn’t anyone else going through your same transition
- Helps professionally as well as personally
- Helps to continue networking and know that there are others out there going through the same experience
- When moving to a new area and leaving home it is helpful to have others relate to your experience
- Shows that natives can be successful and you have someone to go to with questions and decisions especially because we often cannot turn to family and community – the first and sometimes only person from family to go outside

What advice could you give to younger generations?

- Take advantage of opportunities, look for opportunities specifically for native American students
- Although my tribe is fairly conservative but I was told to take chances so tell them to get out of comfort zone especially professionally. It will help you grow
- Imagine yourself outside, learn from professionals, seek advice from those before you
- Make it a learning experience and think about what you can take back home with you

What did you do for fun while you were here?

- Museums – Free!
- AISES hike, getting out and exploring
- Good food
- Soccer games, concerts, sporting events

What do you want to do before you leave?

- Visit the library of congress and get her library card
- Meet the president? 😊
- Find a good mentor
- Attend UNITY the tribal youth gathering at the white house, will be nice to see 800 native students gathering together
- Go up to the top of the Washington monument
- Would like to meet/exceed my expectations of this trip
- Find a few leads on how to come back to work out here

Closing thoughts? Words of wisdom?

- I did not know that so many organizations and agencies were working in native country, it is really great to know
- It would be good to have better word get out about opportunities – would like to see future continuation/progress of opportunities for students
- Networking is importance, reach out to youth, sometimes you may need to be the first person to say something/initiate the conversation
- Whole experience is very overwhelming, it was good to have someone to check-in and make sure you know about how to advantage of opportunities
- Networking is the key to future, we're all different students but we have same goals and face a lot of the same challenges. WORK TOGETHER
- Thank you, for the chance to speak. Entry-level positions are often overlooked when it comes to opinions.
- A general appreciation that a lot of people are working to the native voice out.