

Hofstra SEAS Students Say Co-op Experience is Invaluable



Four students, pictured above, from Hofstra's 2015 summer pilot co-op program - **Robert Kollmer** (Structure Tone), **Brandon Sinclair** (Jaros Baum & Bolles), **Michael Spencer** (Black Knight), and **Ed Kirby** (Walden Associates) respectively – talked to their fellow engineering and computer science students about their work experience and how it enhanced both their studies and their resumes.

During this February 24 forum at Adams Hall, **Phil Coniglio**, director of Hofstra's School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS) co-op program, explained the details of the co-op program, including the application process, the time commitment and the benefits to a student's long-term professional prospects.

Kirby praised his experience, saying that by the end of his term he was given his own projects and was on the phone dealing directly with contractors. He also said he now has a better appreciation for his classes and labs after better understanding their professional relevance.

Kollmer said students should expect the first few weeks of the co-op to be a time of getting acclimated to the company. By the end of his co-op experience he was working a night shift, gaining valuable supervisory experience and being treated like any other employee on the job.

When asked about what it was like returning to campus after being away for a semester, **Sinclair** answered, "I came back a much better student than I left, even though I didn't take a class." He also said he better recognized how his class work would help him in his career endeavors.

Spencer described his experience at Black Knight, which first involved working at their offices in Jacksonville, Florida, and then completing the program in Glendale, California. He spent

a lot of time doing database work and problem solving for his boss. "The problems my boss couldn't figure out he tended to hand off to me. It would be very gratifying to solve these. Each one was like a little puzzle or investigation."

Examples of Hofstra's growing list of co-op partners

Hofstra's second cohort of 16 co-op students began their work experience in January 2016. They represent all of the SEAS majors – five study areas in engineering and computer science. These students had a total of 150 interviews scheduled with 72 corporate partners. They were offered an average wage of \$18.50/hour. Participating firms (*see current list on back page*) are leaders in the aerospace industry, military high tech systems, component manufacturers, engineering consulting firms, utility companies and a computer services firm. Companies are located throughout the New York metropolitan area and have satellite offices across the US. These 28 students will work between 6-8 months and return to Hofstra in time for the beginning of the fall 2016 semester.



Phil Coniglio explains the co-op application process.

The co-op experience in many cases can lead to full-time job offers as companies have a unique opportunity to evaluate the potential and skills of their co-op employee. The program also has the added benefit of cementing ties between Hofstra SEAS and technology companies so that we can collaborate on additional initiatives, such as research and scholarship programs.

For more information about the Hofstra SEAS co-op program contact Phil Coniglio at **516-463-5548** or philip.m.coniglio@Hofstra.edu.

Or visit the Hofstra SEAS co-op program website at <http://www.hofstra.edu/Academics/Colleges/SEAS/co-op/index.html>