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talkingSTORY 

Talking Story with BMM Testlabs Native STEM Interns

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As the summer heat swells in Las Vegas, BMM Testlabs AISES Internship has begun again with two new AISES members being welcomed into the program.

The BMM-AISES Internship is offered in partnership with The American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) whose mission is to place more Native Americans into STEM careers.

BMM makes the paid Internship available to members of AISES organization who meet the criteria for the 10-week program. Interns are housed at the UNLV Campus and spend their weeks learning the processes of testing and evaluating gaming products and gaining a deep insight into the various career paths available in the Casino Gaming industry.

While we usually feature a Tribal Gaming Regulator in this column, we thought we would switch gears and introduce two of our newest BMM AISES Interns Jonah and Sean in this issue.

Sean Eaton, Ft. Lewis College, CO

1. As a 2019 AISES - BMM Testlabs Intern can you share with our readers a bit of what a typical day in the Lab looks like?

I get to the lab by 8:30 am and will usually get some coffee and oatmeal that BMM provides, which is very nice. If I am not finishing up any checklists from the previous day, I will ask around to see what currently needs to get done. Typically, I am setting up games on machines, getting terminal checklists done, or verifying payouts on a game. Setting up games can differ based on what type of game it is. I've learned how to set up three games so far. Many checklists deal with basic features the games should have like displaying required information to players and recording information casinos need like 'money in.' I test to verify those features are working correctly. If I am verifying payouts, I will play the game for most of the day trying to get all the different symbol combinations, usually with the assistance of a simulator program to force combinations. We can take a lunch break when it works best for us. The atmosphere here is very relaxed and friendly, which I enjoy. I have been going to lunch around 1 pm for 30 minutes; there is also the option of getting to work 30 minutes earlier and having an hour-long lunch break. Then, I'll head out of the office around 5 pm.

2. What school are you currently attending and what is your current major?

I am attending Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. I am majoring in Computer Engineering.

3. What Tribe are you an enrolled member of?

I am a member of the Navajo Nation.

4. How are you acclimating to life in Las Vegas?

Life in Las Vegas is nice. It is a lot hotter than what I am used to, but I hardly experience it since I am indoors and busy for most of the week. It is a nice temperature in the mornings and evenings when we go to work and get back from work. I like that there are a lot of places to eat and shop are within walking distance of UNLV. The Strip is fun and interesting to experience. After work, I might go eat out somewhere, do some grocery shopping, or take it easy in my room since I'll have to go to bed in a few hours. I do more stuff on the weekends, and there is a lot of entertaining stuff to do here, and it's nice that a lot of it is open 24 hours. It's also great that another intern is here with me because it's very easy to hang out and do stuff together.

5. What kind of insight has the BMM Internship provided you as you consider future STEM opportunities in the Casino Gaming Industry?

It's shown me an industry I hadn't thought about before and opened my eyes to the variety of jobs available to me. Before getting this internship, working with gaming machines was already appealing to me because I love learning about how things work and technology. The work has been enjoyable, and I will definitely consider entering this industry in the future.

Jonah Sandoval, Gonzaga University, WA



1. As a 2019 AISES - BMM Testlabs Intern can you share with our readers a bit of what a typical day in the Lab looks like?

A typical day would be coming in, possibly grabbing a coffee, then reporting to the machine I was currently working on the day before. Then, I would run certain tests like emulation, regression, or gameplay for the machine. During the testing, if I had any questions, I would be able to ask multiple people working around me. Then, around the middle of the day, I would take a 30-minute lunch, where I may go for a short walk outside. I would then come back to the machine I was working on to continue testing. Short breaks are worked in during the day as well.

2. What school are you currently attending and what is your current major?

I am attending Gonzaga University majoring in Electrical Engineering.

3. What Tribe are you an enrolled member of?

I am an enrolled member of the tribe Ohkay Owingeh.

4. How are you acclimating to life in Las Vegas?

I am acclimating to life in Las Vegas very easily. I have met many people at work, UNLV, where I am staying, and people around the area. Everyone that I've met has been very nice and respectful. While the weather is warmer than what I'm used to, I enjoy seeing the sun every day.

5. What kind of insight has the BMM Internship provided you as you consider future STEM opportunities in the Casino Gaming Industry?

This internship has opened my eyes to the gaming world. I realize that companies like BMM are heavily relied upon by casinos and gaming manufacturers for casino games to be successful in the field. After I graduate, I will now consider working in the gaming industry.