

The Buddle Findlay & Halberg Career Experience programme: Q&A with Sam Morgan

26 July 2019

Late last year, Buddle Findlay found out that the Halberg Youth Council members, mostly university students, find it really difficult to get work experience during the holidays so, with the help of the Halberg Foundation we created the **Buddle Findlay & Halberg Career Experience programme**.

The main objective of this programme is to assist university students from the Halberg Youth Council, who all have physical disabilities, to gain work experience.

Sam Morgan was the third Halberg Youth Council member to gain work experience at Buddle Findlay, joining our Auckland office from 15-19 July. We spoke to Sam before, during and after his placement to gain insight into his experience and find out about the benefits and challenges of the programme.

Before placement

Tell us a bit about what you are studying and your long-term career goals.

I am currently in my second year studying engineering and commerce at The University of Auckland. My long term career goals with reference to what I study is to hopefully finish university and start work as an engineer. From there I would love to work my way up till I can put myself into more of a management role within the company which is where my commerce background would help me to be successful in this position. This would allow me to be involved with both sides of my degree that I enjoy, engineering and commerce.

Tell us a bit about what you like to get up to outside of work.

Outside of university and work, I am involved in a community choir with rehearsals on Wednesday evenings which I enjoy a lot. I also love board games and card games, and am the treasurer for The University of Auckland table top gaming club, which I also spend a lot of time involved with. I also love boating and fishing and during the summer will try my best to get out on the water as much as possible.

What are you most looking forward to ahead of your work placement?

I am most looking forward to the opportunity to be put in a professional environment to get an understanding for how it is run. This offers me the opportunity to gauge whether or not it is something that I would be interested in doing.

What is the main thing you are hoping to gain from your placement?

An understanding of what the environment is like, and an ability to work on my organisation and communication skills while under some supervision, so that I can learn to keep up with emails and communication while still busy.

During placement

What are you enjoying most about your work placement?

The research projects that I have been given are my favourite as they are giving me a purpose and making me feel like I am doing something that is really helpful. On top of that, I am learning a lot, it's teaching me a few interesting facts that I might not have otherwise been exposed to.

How is the placement helping you?

It will help me in so many different ways. The research projects that I've been given are building on skills that I have learnt in the past and teaching me new ones. It has given me a great understanding of law in general, even though I probably won't go into law, I think having a general understanding is really useful. Working in an office environment has really helped me as it's often

difficult to get that experience and see what it is like before going into your first job.

Following placement

What are you most proud of, following your work placement?

I am most proud of the knowledge and way of thinking that I have gained surrounding the work experience. I have learnt a lot about the office environment, the law, and the different ways that professionals, like lawyers, might interact with me as a possible engineer in the future.

Did you enjoy working in an office? Was it in line with what you expected?

I did enjoy working in an office and it fit quite closely with what I expected, although the environment in the Buddle Findlay offices was a lot warmer than what I expected it might be.

How do you think this work placement has benefitted you and your career?

The experience exposed me to a different way of thinking about the other professionals that I will end up interacting with going forward. It also expanded my view on how the skills that I might learn from my current engineering degree will be able to be used in many different areas, not just going into an engineering role.

Has the work placement made anything clearer for you? Do you still have the same goal?

The work placement didn't change my goals around study too drastically, but it did make clear to me that the skills I will learn from study are far more multi-use than what I might have thought before. The experience also made clear to me that my physical ability does not need to be a hindrance to my performance or ability at work, and that I should not be scared to go into the workforce once I've completed my studies.

Would you recommend a work placement to others?

I would definitely recommend this placement to others. It has personally taught me so much about my own career, and I think the wide range of experiences within the placement means that it could have a positive effect on anyone, regardless of what sort of career you are pursuing.

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