

MEET

The Interns 2019

CAREER
BOUND

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M E E T

Iris Armenta

Employer: Solid Form

Education: McMinnville High School

For Iris Armenta, artistic creativity goes hand in hand with technical precision and knowledge. After Iris was born, her mother chose to stay home for 2 years, instilling a love of art by plastering the walls inside with butcher paper. Iris remembers painting the papered walls, releasing her imagination and establishing art as an integral aspect of life at a young age.

A far cry from scribbling on butcher paper, Iris recently completed the visual arts pathway at McMinnville High School, culminating her experience by taking AP studio art with a focus on 2D painting. After randomly taking an entry level welding class senior year, Iris merged her newfound interest with talents of old and won the state championship title for “Welded Sculpture” through SkillsUSA.

Now, working for Solid Form as an Entry Level Fabricator, Iris has found her calling. Each day is a different project, and she often is given tasks to complete entirely on her own. Although initially Iris doubted her welding knowledge and capabilities, she has learned to love the amount there is to learn and has been growing in self-confidence as the summer has progressed. The supportive environment Iris has discovered at Solid Form is hardly foreign. Iris identifies her parents as her biggest inspirations specifically because of their unwavering nurture and care. “I know I can go to them with anything and they will always be there for me, which I appreciate.”

When not welding, painting, or drawing, Iris can be found outside playing with her new Great Dane/Lab puppy, Lady.

Though Iris cites fabrication and art as her primary career pathways, she notes, “I’m not exactly sure where life will take me but there is still so much for me to learn and so much opportunity for growth in both fields.” She anticipates perhaps owning a business someday, overseeing the creation of new art daily.



M E E T

Marckus Smith

Employer: Solid Form

Education: McMinnville High School

After experiencing a serious childhood BMX biking accident injuring his growth plate, collar bone, and shoulder, Marckus Smith's left arm ended up three inches shorter than his right. However, the setback did not deter him from developing a passion for welding in the slightest. After pursuing the skilled-trades pathway in high school, and helping Deven Paolo, Owner of Solid Form, create new MHS signage, Marckus now works full-time at Solid Form and is teaching himself to weld ambidextrously.

Though Marckus clearly has personal ambition to spare, he recognizes the influence of supportive figures both in his personal and work life. At home, he deems Teresa Grell, a previous teacher turned parental figure, his role model. "I was struggling and homeless and she took me in, teaching me what it was like to be an actual kid." Even though he graduated this past June, Marckus still lives with her and considers her family. Additionally, in the workplace he is quick to acknowledge appreciation of coworkers functioning as mentors, "My favorite part of working at Solid Form is all the experience I'm surrounded by. Everyone has been doing fabrication a lot longer than me but they support me and want me to grow and become more skilled."

In his free time, Marckus can be found swimming in rivers, working on car motors, and practicing welding in his garage.

Ideally Marckus would like to focus his work on custom infrastructure and metal art. When asked about his future as a fabricator, Marckus says, "I see this field taking me really far in life because there's a high need for people who are still willing to use their hands and build buildings and create all the things that no one realizes need to be made."



M E E T

Kyle Cool

Employer: Fackler Construction

Education: Dayton High School

For 2019 Dayton High School graduate Kyle Cool, pursuing a Career Bound position at Fackler was nearly second nature. As a third generation carpenter, Kyle's father and grandfathers, on both sides, had successful careers in construction. Kyle remembers growing up around tools and even occasionally assisting his family in building projects. Observing his family's dedication to their work and willingness to do anything for each other, Kyle cites the Cool men as his primary mentors in life.

The hands-on element of work, as well as working in an ever-changing outdoor environment, are Kyle's main reasons for loving the field. In high school, Kyle utilized his creativity by participating in InvenTeam, a group who designed and built an automated chicken coop for the prestigious Lemelson-MIT program.

Now, working as an Entry-Level Carpenter for Fackler, Kyle says his job focus changes daily: from digging trenches and pouring concrete to the precise concentration needed to frame and build elaborate structures.

During his free time, Kyle is likely hanging outdoors: hunting, fishing, golfing, competing in dirt bike races, or maybe casually making his friends laugh with his unique talent for silly voice impressions.

In the future, Kyle aims to start up his own construction business, own an apartment complex, and eventually purchase and run a storage unit facility.



M E E T

Kyle Bertagna

Employer: NW Rapid Manufacturing

Education: McMinnville High School

Self-identifying as a jack-of-all-trades, Kyle Bertagna graduated from McMinnville High School in 2018 and like many new graduates, wasn't sure which step to take next. In an attempt to start saving money, Kyle decided to work as a Part Laborer for NW Rapid Manufacturing. True to his versatile nature, he quickly found that breaking out 3D printed parts, bead blasting out the residual powder, dyeing parts, and testing then finished parts fit incredibly well with his love of organizing and sub-organizing. Additionally, he enjoys the small business dynamic of developing personal relationships with his coworkers rather than just becoming a number in a corporate setting.

Of course, the job has not been without mishaps. Once, Kyle painted an entire order of parts the wrong shade of grey. Although he felt terrible at first, Kyle is no average employee. Rather than be deterred by the challenge, he was energized to improve and not make the same mistake again. This trait of perseverance and work ethic is something he cites as coming from his fictional hero, the young Spiderman. In both the comics and movies, Peter Parker is an average teen whose life grows increasingly confusing and chaotic as time progresses, much like Kyle's situation after completing high school. Despite that, Peter finds passion in the details of life, namely the feat of saving the world on a daily basis. Kyle draws inspiration from this message and similarly seeks to manage the unpredictable nature of life by taking security in his own character and capabilities.

Uniquely, Kyle decided to join Career Bound on recommendation from his supervisor to help explore the options he has for the future. Kyle is thankful his supervisor has such reasonable expectations and encourages him to pursue new things, rather than selfishly try to keep him at NW Rapid.

Upon reflecting on Career Bound's influence in his life, Kyle stated, "When I attended Career Bound's first meeting, I had already been working at my job for about a year. But that's not to say I haven't learned anything in my time as part of the program. Really, I've had lots of learning experiences. This program has made me realize that companies don't hire entirely on requirements and degrees, but instead on who you are as a person, which is quite an eye opener. In many ways, Career Bound has been just that, an eye opener."



M E E T

Bevin Schrag

Employer: OnlineNW
Education: Dayton High School

When asked what her talent is, Bevin Schrag boldly claims she has the ability to talk comfortably with anyone—despite being naturally introverted. Perhaps this characteristic is a result of her vast interests spanning from lighthearted roller skating to exploring the impact of technology on rural communities. Or perhaps, Bevin’s internship position at OnlineNW has given her the confidence and enthusiasm to communicate without restriction.

Already a creative writer and an aspiring graphic designer, Bevin cites her job description as truly having it all: coding a website, running social media and marketing, content creation, and writing articles for “Innovate Dayton, Innovate Oregon”, a literary mentorship initiative for students at Dayton High School of where Bevin recently graduated. Uniquely, Bevin began working at OnlineNW part-time at the beginning of her senior year of high school. Since then, she has established herself as an asset to the company, earning rave reviews for exceeding expectations time and time again. She notes, “It’s all ongoing, I’m getting the chance to grow in a lot of ways. Overall, I appreciate the connections I’ve gained through work. I’ve been connected to lots of people who can help me in my professional life. I get to talk a lot and have the freedom to break things and learn from that.”

Always seeking out a new story, Bevin identifies Claire Wineland, a terminally ill youtuber and 2017 TEDx Talk speaker, as her personal inspiration. In her TEDx presentation, Claire spoke on the power of perspective when dealing with a challenging situation, unknowing teaching Bevin that “success” begins with having an optimistic outlook.

After a long day of being creative at work, in her free time Bevin is likely continuing her creative output by writing in journals, reading, painting, or drawing.

In the near future, Bevin will continue at OnlineNW as a part-time employee as she prepares to attend Chemeketa Community College in the fall to earn a degree in Media Design. In her own words, “I could see my career taking me to work with high school kids, teaching technology to rural communities. I would totally dedicate my life to that. I could find purpose in that work, find creative freedom, and like my job.”



M E E T

Hayden Meek-Avedovech

Employer: OnlineNW

Education: Dayton High School

Though you wouldn't know it now, from 7th to 12th grade, Hayden Meek-Avedovech did not cut his hair. The endeavor of self control ended with his graduation from Dayton High School this past June as he finally donated his foot-long ponytail. Truthfully, the act to grow his hair out was a random decision, but the endurance needed to wait six years for a haircut, is a trait prevalent throughout Hayden's life and his summer position at OnlineNW.

Hayden's career interests are grounded in technology, namely computer science. However at OnlineNW, a local internet service provider, his job is to learn a bit of everything. Rather than opt for a traditional fixed summer job, OnlineNW decided to provide Hayden with a holistic opportunity to work on rotation in a different department of their company every few weeks. As a result, Hayden has explored the positions of field techs, equipment sales, customer support, and router re-setters. He likens the experience to "taste testing careers" and cites that his role, "sees how all the jobs function together to create a whole."

Despite having to relive a "first day on the job" in each new field every few weeks with a different set of coworkers, Hayden does not let it go to his head. In the words of his personal inspiration, Spike Spiegel, an anime character, "Whatever happens, happens." Hayden explained that in stressful and uncertain situations, Spike's mantra has always stuck with him.

In his free time, he challenges himself by playing video games solely in Japanese, one of the few languages he doesn't know. He is "fluent in four languages, confident in zero", two of the four languages being computer codes Java and C++. Additionally, Hayden spends as much time as possible with his friends. He even has plans to carpool to Chemeketa each day this fall with several of them.

In the upcoming years, Hayden envisions himself completing his associates degree through community college before transferring to a large public university to have a specific career focus in cyber security.



