

Meet the Interns: How Jonathan Christian Powers Our Electrical Engineering Projects

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The Port of Portland's **Internship Program** gives college students an opportunity to apply their classroom education to real-life situations and develop the skills and work experience that will enhance their competitiveness for future employment opportunities.

In return, these college students give us lots of new energy and creative ideas.

Are you in college or know someone attending a local university? To give you a preview of what the Port's internship program entails, we asked our current interns to answer a few questions about their experience. Today, meet Electrical Engineering Intern Jonathan Christian.



Name: Jonathan Christian

Title and Department: Electrical Engineering Intern – Project Design

School and Studies: Electrical Engineering at Portland State University

Can you share a bit about your background and what drew you to apply for an internship at the Port?

I started my higher education at Portland Community College and am now a senior at Portland State University finishing up my Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering. I have held two previous internships: one with Metro's Cemetery Program and another with the City of Portland's Environmental Services. I was an intern with the City for nearly three years before coming to the Port in late June, a record-breaking tenure. I chose the Port because it oversees much of Oregon's Air and Marine transportation through its airports and terminals, meaning that electricity and timely maintenance are critical. Alongside the normal tasks assigned to electrical engineers, construction is in full force at PDX leading to diverse assignments and projects. I look forward to what the future holds.



In a few sentences, can you describe your work at the Port?

As I am still relatively new, I have been attending meetings to gain perspective on many of the projects occurring simultaneously around PDX. Outside of those, I am engaging in areas related to power, telecom, controls and even business. Specifically, I help verify work completed by contractors, researching EV (electric vehicle) technology, updating CAD drawings and performing field checks to ensure we have the correct specifications for our equipment. As of this moment, I have focused much of my time on the design our EV charging station project, but things are constantly changing. It sure makes for an exciting internship!

What do you find most rewarding about your work?

My work often exposes me to areas beyond what I've studied in school leading me to connect with a variety of departments. So far, I am gaining experience in project design/delivery, field-specific computer applications and maintenance procedures, which are all necessary in becoming an innovative and responsible engineer. In addition, the culture at

the Port is ideal for learning, growing and becoming immersed in multiple fields of engineering. My efforts are valued and aid in the success of projects; seeing the final product is the most rewarding.

What do you like to do in your free time?

I maintain a busy schedule, juggling school and work, but I enjoy traveling to new places, fixing anything ‘broken’ and tinkering with electronics. I also enjoy volunteering as I get to meet new people, better my community and just have fun. I have spent most of my time with organizations that target hunger and homelessness such as Potluck in the Park and the Oregon Food Bank. However, I am always looking to branch out and connect.

Our careers website plays with the idea that “We’re not what you’d expect.” What can you share about yourself that might surprise your Port colleagues?

Even though I enjoy traveling and now work at an airport, I’ve only traveled to three U.S. states. They are Washington, Oregon and California. However, I have traveled internationally to Asia. I aspire to do more international travel as well as venture beyond the west coast. Hawaii seems like a good place to start! Only time will tell if I can accomplish such a goal.

Want to join the Port of Portland Internship Program? **[Learn more and sign up for our job alerts now](#)** to receive email alerts when internships that match your interests become available.