

Holder/Manhattan Impressed with CEFGA High School Intern

Summer vacation was just beginning. Some rising seniors were hanging out at home. Some were flipping burgers. Some were bagging groceries down at the local supermarket.

George Brown made a different choice.

Recommended by his construction teacher, Kevin Ward, at McEachern High School in Powder Springs, GA, George enrolled in the Construction Education Foundation of Georgia (CEFGA) Summer Intern Program. George wanted to make money, sure. But he also wanted to learn the things that you can only learn on the job.



CEFGA Summer Internship participant George Brown displays an Irwin tool bag full of Channel Lock® pliers, Vise-Grips® and other fine Irwin Tools. George received the tools for successful completion of the classroom portion of the internship program. “All the things we talked about in the classroom were useful on the job,” George said. “I was glad to know about things like non-verbal communications and the effects of a positive attitude. Those are things you normally don’t think about, but they can have a lot to do with how you get along with people.” George attended 16 hours of classroom training to help prepare him for his summer job with Holder/Manhattan Construction, building The New World of Coke.

George spent two days in the classroom learning people skills like making a good impression, getting along with his co-workers and building a strong relationship with his supervisor. He learned that being a safe worker was his responsibility, and his alone. Then he reported to the jobsite.

George was hired by Holder/Manhattan Construction. He spent the summer building the New World of Coke. Did he make some money? You bet he did. A lot more than a burger flipper would.

Did George learn anything? “I know how to use all kinds of tools and machines,” George said with a big smile. “I’ll bet there’s not one other person at McEachern who knows how to use a vibrating concrete finishing machine. I know how to set up a submersible pump to get water out of someplace you want dry. I know how to measure accurately with tapes and laser measurement devices. When new guys came on the job, I’d be the one to show them what to do.”

“George Brown is the best young man I’ve seen in a long time. I’ve never met a nicer guy,” said Holder/Manhattan Construction’s Jerry Baker and George’s supervisor during his internship. “He can learn anything. Show him something once and he can do it from then on. And does he ever stay busy! Give him something to do and he gets it done fast. If he didn’t have a specific assignment, he’d find something – pick up trash, sweep the floors, straighten up supplies – he was always doing things that needed to be done.”

Not bad for a summer intern. Was there more to learn? George really perked up and said, “Yeah, leadership skills. I watched Mr. Baker real close. He knows how to get people to use teamwork to get the job done. Mr. Baker likes to make the job fun, telling jokes and stuff, but he’s dead serious about doing the job right. Doing things the right way, and most importantly, safely. I learned to think about safety all the time.”

“Also, I learned what a positive attitude can do for you,” George continued. “Everybody on that jobsite looks out for you and for themselves at the same time. It’s a great place to work.”

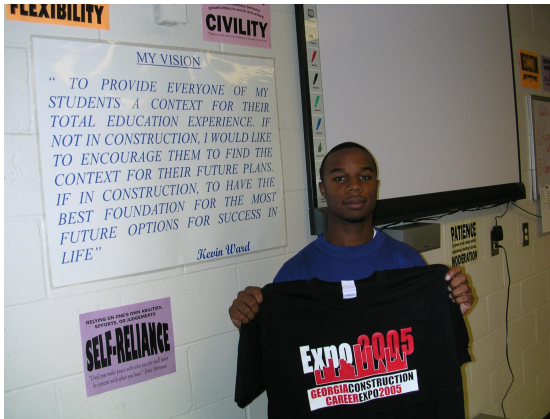
George’s mother, Mrs. Muriel Brown, is glad George participated in the program. “Every day George would tell me about all the things he did and all he was learning,” Mrs. Brown said. “He was really happy with the way the Holder people treated him. He was excited when he came home from work. I could tell he was really enjoying it.”

Asked if he would do another summer as a construction intern, the big smile returned and George said, “I sure would. I want to go into construction. Now that I see what it’s really like, I want a career in construction. Working with great people, learning new skills everyday, and making great money – what’s not to like about that?”



George works on his power tools skills in the construction laboratory at McEachern High School in Cobb County. “Our students will master using a number of hand and power tools safely,” said George’s teacher, Kevin Ward. “The things they learn in the construction classes will serve them well regardless of what career they pursue. Of course, I hope George chooses construction. He’s good at it.”

But for now, George is back in the construction classroom at McEachern for his senior year. “George will have a chance to learn about carpentry, electrical, plumbing and masonry. He’ll not only study these subjects, he’ll do all kinds of hands-on projects to practice what he learns in the classroom,” said his construction teacher, Kevin Ward. “All the skills that George will take away from construction classes here at McEachern will make him much more valuable as an employee of a construction company. We don’t train people to just be workers. Our programs prepare them to be the boss.”



“I want a picture next to Mr. Ward’s vision statement,” George said, holding up his tee shirt from the Construction Career Expo 2005. “Mr. Ward says he wants us to have the best foundation for our future options. Well, the construction classes here at McEachern combined with real world experience in the CEFGA Summer Intern Program have given me a vision of what I want to do. I want to make a career in construction.”