

High School Summer Intern Finds Full Time Position with A&B Sheet Metal

By Irene Wazgowska, CEFGA Feature Writer

Underneath his hard-hat and shoulder-length hair, stands Matt Pricher. He's a 17 year old Dacula resident; someone you'd take as a regular teenage high-schooler, if you didn't know better that is.

Matt started his freshman year at Dacula High School. At one point he decided that he wanted to graduate early, and began going to school year-round his sophomore year. Because his school didn't offer the opportunity to go to summer school, he attended Faith Academy, where he graduated from.

While in school, Matt signed up for an internship with CEFGA. Shortly afterward, one of CEFGA's partners, A&B Sheet Metal, Inc., selected him as a summer intern.



Four days a week, 10 hours a day, you can find Matt at the Brun-Pak Publix Data Center, in Alpharetta. He's working with A&B Sheet Metal, helping them install air conditioning duct work. The data center will be home to all of Publix's Southeast communications.

Matt's dad, Donnie Pricher, is likely to have had an influence on the path his son has chosen to follow. He's a crew foreman who works as a structural steel fabricator and erector. Donnie admits though, that he didn't think his son would go into the field. But, he says that he's "glad he's in it."



Crystal Johnson, A&B' Sheet Metal's Accounting/Human Resources Manager, says that Matt was her prime candidate for the summer internship. In his application, he wrote that he wanted to learn the ropes so that he could advance in his field. He made it clear that he wanted and needed hands-on experience to really understand how things operated. Crystal was impressed:

"From the moment I met Matt he has been a breath of fresh air. His poise and confidence at the initial meeting stunned me. Matt asked questions about A & B Sheet Metal that no other intern asked; questions that affect his future such as, 'is there a chance at a permanent position? If hired permanently when would my benefits be available to me such as insurance, 401(k), etc?' He is a focused young man that is willing to learn, willing to listen and has great respect for his superiors. Matt strikes me as the type of individual that could achieve great things in this industry to the point where I can see him owning his own construction company one day."

This coming fall, Matt will begin taking courses at Gwinnett Technical College. He will be working towards a two year degree in HVAC/Heating and Air. Along with his classes at Gwinnett Tech, he's considering participating in the 4 year sheet metal apprenticeship program that A&B Sheet Metal offers. He'll have a full schedule, especially because A&B has recently made the decision to take him on as a full-time employee. Fortunately for him, they'll be working around his schedule.

Melissa Pricher, Matt's mom, recalls how when he was younger he used to help his dad around the house. She says that this, seeing how his dad loved his job, and how the two of them would talk about his line of work, peaked Matt's own interest. She credits CEFGA's internship program and says that she was "absolutely impressed." Without it, she "doesn't think he would've gotten his foot in the door." She appreciates the fact that the organization "treated him as an adult [which] gave him self-confidence." With this opportunity, the choices her son made before and is making now, she's "seen him grow up as an adult."

When it comes to Matt's take on things, he says he's "glad I got a job." He likes the hands-on work and that his coworkers are gracious. "They treat me fine, like I wasn't younger than them; pretty equal." He's pleased where he is and "likes things so far." He wants to "keep this line of work and move up through the company." As long as his relationship with A&B remains strong, he doesn't see himself going anywhere... but up.

While Matt is a teenager who enjoys hanging out with his friends and seeing movies, there are some differentiating factors. Unlike some of his peers, he's earning a sizable income for someone his age; much of which is being saved for the home he hopes to one day own.

Matt may not be forthcoming with every goal he's got in mind, but his mom is helpful in filling in the gaps: "Matt has ambition to go further and be a foreman, estimator or project manager. He wants to learn from the worker's standpoint and move up."

No one doubts that Matt will be successful.

The way Matt carries and presents himself to the world will allow him to go as far as his dreams can take him.

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