



AVENUE SCHOLARS
Your Foundation for Success



Newsletter Issue 3 Vol. 9 April 2021

Training Nurses

Fulton Homes provides vital connection

With careers in nursing identified as the No. 1 choice by many Avenue Scholars, finding a business partner who specializes in training potential nurse practitioners has been a highlight of a year marked by the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

DeMeria Bruce, the director of Fulton Homes Education Center, has been a silver lining in the grey cloud of COVID-19, offering training that leads to licenses for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA), Certified Medical Aides (CMA), and Phlebotomists.

"We are excited about the level of engagement of Fulton staff," says Canei Rodriquez, Postsecondary Healthcare Career Coach. "They are great partners: responsive, willing to customize programming, and willing to be true partners in our students' success."

Due to a chance meeting between friends a year ago, Bruce was contacted by Jamar Dorsey, Director of Community Engagement & High School Partnerships.

"Mr. Dorsey was very receptive of the opportunity and made the partnership happen for our high school students," Rodriquez said.



Bruce, who obtained her LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse) license from College of Saint Mary in 2013, had just obtained state approval for teaching CNAs. March 14 was the one-year anniversary of opening the Fulton Homes Education Center. After graduation and working in long-term care and as a traveling nurse for six years, Bruce returned to Omaha in May of 2019 to help out her family.

Bruce first turned to her long-time dream of turning the house she had inherited from Grandpa Fulton into an assisted living facility. While exploring her options for fulfilling that dream, a friend suggested to Bruce that she should "look into becoming a CNA

instructor.

"In August of 2019, I put together a plan, found some office space, and turned in all the necessary documents," Bruce said. "I got approved in March of 2020. March 14th was my first-year anniversary."

Bruce has one partner, her best friend Nesha Jones, a Registered Nurse, in the two-person operation.

"I do the lecture part," Bruce said. "Nesha does the hands-on training component."

Avenue Scholars and Bruce are happy with the early success.

Avenue Scholars provides only a portion of the students undergoing training at Fulton Homes. In 2020, the program trained



DeMeria Bruce, Fulton Homes Education Center director, lectures during a recent training session. Bruce provides training for CNAs, CMAs, and Phlebotomists.

72 total students from March through December.

"We're already at 45 this year," Bruce said in early March.

Fulton Homes also has partnerships with One World Health, College of Saint Mary, Workforce Development, and Care Builders, as well as some nursing homes and health care facilities. The number of hours, or weeks, of training required vary for each type of license: five weeks for CNA, two weeks for CMA, and six weeks for Phlebotomy.

By all measures, Bruce and Jones have proved to be a dynamic team.

"We have a 99.1 passing rate," Bruce says.

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Westside senior enjoys on-the-job experience

Omaha Westside senior Grace Roberts highly recommends taking advantage of the opportunities offered through Intern Omaha.

"I recommend it 100 percent to others," Roberts said. "You get experience in an industry you're interested in and you get paid to do it. Most internships are above minimum wage, which is more than many other jobs. I have had a great experience with all the people I've worked with."

Roberts was introduced to the program through a Westside High School guidance counselor. After learning about all the different programs offered, Roberts focused on an automotive service job at Baxter Auto.

"This one sparked my interest because I saw they did on-the-job training, and I wanted to learn more about cars, so that if something went wrong with my car, I would know what to do about it," said Roberts, who recently purchased her first car, a 2012 Chev-



rolet Captiva.

Starting in August, Roberts has worked at Baxter about 15 hours per week. The internship requires that students work 10 to 20 hours per week on the job. For the first six weeks Roberts shadowed a service advisor and "learned what they do." She also worked some hours in the 'call room.'

From there, Roberts is cycling through four service areas. In the fall

she worked in the Quick Lane, where she did oil changes, tire rotations, etc. Now, she is paired with a service technician, working on engines and brakes. Next, will be parts. The final stop will be in detailing, which involves "getting used cars ready to be sold."

Another requirement of the internship is that students attend a Work 1400 class at Metropolitan Community College to learn more about work skills, writing cover letters, filling out job applications, and doing job interviews.

While Roberts has enjoyed the Intern Omaha job experience, she plans to pursue a nursing degree when she goes to college.

"The internship was a great way for me to learn more about cars and to see if it might be something I would be interested in for a career," she said. "It's a good opportunity to get real-life work experience."

Engineering internship at Kiewit fits student

With his sights set on a career in engineering, Millard West senior James Chamberlain jumped at the chance to apply for an Intern Omaha position with Kiewit, the world renowned construction-focused engineering corporation based in Omaha.

Chamberlain says his interest in engineering was sparked when he took a CAD (Computer Assisted Design) class during his junior year at Millard West and "really loved it."

"Then when I heard about Intern Omaha and saw there were four internships available in engineering right there, I thought 'boom, that's what I want to do,'" Chamberlain said. He applied for all four and was selected to become an Office Engineering intern at Kiewit. Chamberlain said he got "moved into office engineering rather than field engineering" due to COVID.

Although the Intern Omaha internship will end in May, "This summer, I will sign up for a field engineering internship [with Kiewit]," he said. "Then, eventually there's a pretty good chance I could move into a college level internship."

Chamberlain plans to major in civil engineering in college, with a minor in business.

"They say it's pretty useful to understand financing if you want to be a project manager," Chamberlain said.

The Intern Omaha program was originally scheduled to begin in June, but due to COVID, Chamberlain had to wait until August. Once the Intern Omaha job ends in May, Chamberlain hopes to move on to the next stage of internship and



continue working at Kiewit through summer.

"It's been a bad year for most people but for me, after the internship started, things really turned around," he said. "I have a job with stable hours, I am getting experience in a profession I'm interested in, and I believe I have clear path to a stable job for a long period of time, even after college."

Getting paid while learning a new profession has been a great boost for Chamberlain.

"It helps a lot with college, and it pays better than most jobs — really good pay for high schoolers," he said.

Intern Omaha job attracts Benson senior

For Omaha Benson senior Mostafa Jack, enrolling in Avenue Scholars was an easy decision.

"When I first heard about Avenue Scholars and they announced the opportunity to get a free college education, I decided I had to go to the meeting and get into the program," Jack said.

In a similar mindset, Jack was immediately all-in when he heard about the job opportunities through Intern Omaha.

"I went onto my computer and filed for every internship I could," he said. "When I saw the one job description called for controlling and monitoring the water temperatures of boilers and chillers, I thought 'this could be very interesting.'"

Jack was originally slated to start working for Clearway Energy as an Operation & Maintenance Technician intern in June, but to COVID-19, he did not start his internship until Aug. 24.

During the first two weeks of his internship Jack watched videos of OSHA training. Work progressed to "taking temps off chillers, painting, and cleaning."

"As an intern, I am prepared to do whatever needs to be done," Jack.

Lately, "I've been taking readings off the temporary chillers at the Landmark Building in downtown Omaha," he said.

Jack will continue working with Clearway Energy as a technician intern until May. Then, he has the option, if a position comes open, to



stay on as an apprentice. However, Jack may have to postpone that option because he is signing up for the Marines Corps.

"I've wanted to be in the military since I was a kid," he said.

Beyond his potential military service and/or college, Jack looks forward to being a productive member of the community workforce.

"I want to have the balance of a good paying job and having fun," Jack said.

Fulton Homes

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Nesha Jones provides the hands-on training at Fulton Homes.

Rodriquez has been impressed with the training program at Fulton Homes.

"I love the opportunities they are providing for the community," Rodriquez said. "Her [Bruce] leadership is impressive. I think DeMeria and her partner Nesha are great role models for the students they serve and give them hope they can reach their career goals."

Bruce sees herself in many of the students.

"We come from similar backgrounds," Bruce says of the students. "I believe in them, and I provide extra education for them. I think the smaller setting works better for many of these students. I am always encouraging, assuring them they can do it. I am always offering them extra help; they know I am here for them 24-7. They see me and say to themselves, 'I can do something like that too.'"

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*"Our mission is to ensure
careers for committed students
of hope and need through edu-
cation/training and supportive
relationships."*

Community Engagement

*Avenue Scholars
excited to carry
positive momentum
through 2021*



JAMAR DORSEY

Hello all and welcome to the third installment of the Community Engagement Corner. My name is Jamar Dorsey and as the Director of Community Engagement and High School Partnerships 2021, I am excited to move forward with our partnership activities. Avenue Scholars believes we can all be active members of the Omaha community, and in this edition we are challenging our readers to become active.

Avenue Scholars staff are off to a wonderful start in 2021. Wellness has been a huge focus for staff and students. Each Avenue Scholars staff member has added to his or her tool belt strategies to promote personal wellness. The wellness plan allows the Avenue Scholars staff to remain motivated and passionate to do the work with students in the Omaha community. As the cold days are slowly fading away, we are excited about what this spring will bring.

Avenue Scholars "Power Hour" segment in the month of February featured Eric Ewing, Executive Director of the Great Plains Black History Museum. Ewing gave the Avenue Scholars staff and students a virtual tour of the museum — American History told through the eyes of the African American. Avenue Scholars staff and students also attended the Omaha Chambers Young Professionals summit March 4-5. This served as an opportunity for our students to build their professional network. Over the last two months students in both Flourish (an all ladies group of students) and Men of Standard (an all male group of students) met and discussed ways to deal with stress and remote learning. Avenue Scholars and the Do Right Right Now campaign have partnered to bring awareness to Covid vaccinations in the Omaha community. We encourage everyone to continue to practice social distancing and educate yourself on the benefits of getting the vaccination.

In celebration of Women's History Month, we will be hosting our next "Power Hour" on March 31. Our panel will be a group of women staff members at Avenue Scholars who will share their experiences in the workplace.

Lastly, Avenue Scholars shared information about its program at the Educator Rising conference on March 17. As we go into Spring, remember to challenge yourself to become an active participant in the greater Omaha community. Find ways to connect with someone or something that will make a lasting impact.

Until next time — don't conform to the environment, make the environment conform to you!

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AWARDS

Winter Quarter 2021

BRIANNA Jackson

Business, Young Professional

Brianna Jackson

is graduating from the Paralegal program at Metropolitan Community College.

She successfully completed an internship with the law firm, Fraser Stryker, and was offered a full-time job with them upon graduation. Her supervisor at Fraser Stryker states that Brianna is a quick learner, coachable, and exceeds expectations. When faced with a challenge, Brianna tackles it head-on with grace. Brianna is a great example of how hard work and dedications pay off!

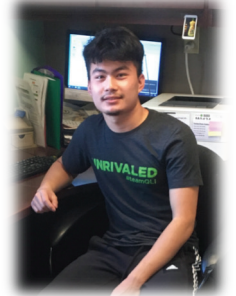


TONY Lashue

Healthcare, Young Professional

Tony Lashue is currently pursuing Nursing

at MCC. He obtained his CNA in 2019 at Quality Living Incorporated (QLI) and has since been a CNA/Rehabilitation Trainer there. Tony's supervisor and QLI's CEO both speak very highly of Tony's work ethic and his ability to care for and communicate with the residents at QLI. In 2020, Tony also started his own lawncare and snow removal business. Tony has been able to manage this business, work part-time at QLI, and earn As and Bs at MCC. Tony, who speaks English as a second language, is an exemplary student, but an even better employee and business owner.



ADOLFO Mendoza-Luna

Diesel Technology, Young Professional

Adolfo Mendoza-Luna is breaking new ground in the Diesel industry. He currently has a 3.5 GPA at MCC and will earn his

Associates degree this coming December. One of Adolfo's biggest hurdles was finding an internship within the field, but he was able to secure a position with NMC Caterpillar as an apprentice tech; it is an excellent entry-level job where he can grow. Adolfo has earned great feedback from his former and current boss, noting his dedication and extremely strong work ethic. Congratulations and keep striving higher.

