Jesse Fulcher, a MIS Senior with a minor in computer science, recently interned with Orbital Shift. Looking for more than just any internship, Fulcher found an experience that reaffirmed his career goals and set him up for success after graduation. “My internship with Orbital Shift has provided me with the ability to learn invaluable, real world experience that is impossible to learn in a classroom setting alone.”

What is Orbital Shift?

“Orbital Shift is a local online time clock and scheduling software that currently services clients in over 48 different states in a wide variety of industries. I have had the honor of working with their Client Success department as well as getting hands on training from their Development team. A typical day for me usually entails helping answering support emails and phone calls; checking in on clients to ensure they are happy with the software; working hand in hand with the development team on testing new features; helping design future changes to the site and even implementing my own projects. Overall it’s really helped me get a good idea of what working in the technology industry will be like once I graduate this spring.”

Why did you decide to pursue this internship?

“There were a couple of reasons that I decided to take on this internship, for starters in the MIS program, an internship is required to graduate so that was a large motivating factor, but also being a non-typical student and coming back to school after an extended period off, I know how important real world experience is to finding a job. When employers look at a resume, having a Bachelor’s degree can only get you so far. Where you can really stand apart from the competition is by having real world experience in the industry that you want to eventually work
in. Going back to school for me was not about joining clubs, making friends or to play sports, it was about finishing up my degree and finding a career for my future so I could provide for my family. I decided to take the internship with Orbital Shift because I believed it would help me achieve that goal."

**How did you get connected with Orbital Shift and their internship program?**

“I first learned about Orbital Shift when the Owner/CEO, Kevin O’Reilly spoke in an MIS class last year. At the time he gave us a presentation on how Orbital Shift worked, some of the features and benefits of the software. He showed us real world examples of how the clients could clock in and out, and send cover requests via email or text message. At the end of his presentation he mentioned that Orbital Shift was looking for talent, and offered internships. Immediately after class I approached Kevin to find what positions he was looking for and what types of internships he had available. Kevin gave me his information and I followed up with an email later that day. After emailing with Kevin I went through an interview process with some of the current senior developers and got to meet everyone in the office. Overall it was a very pleasant experience and it worked out well.”

**What would you say has been the most rewarding part of this experience?**

“The most rewarding part of this experience has been the friends I’ve made and the networks I’ve established. Since working here I have become good friends with a couple of the senior developers and consider my manager and Orbital Shift owner/CEO, Kevin O’Reilly, a mentor. Between the 3 of them I have learned invaluable knowledge of development, entrepreneurship, and business in general. There are tips and tricks that I have learned from them specifically that it would take years on the job to learn in other settings. Pete and Mike have continuously gone out of their way to help me learn more about development and have even worked with me outside of work on school and side projects. It is evident to me that they are investing in me and want to see me succeed.”

**What has been your favorite part of the internship?**

“My favorite part of this experience so far has been the process of designing, developing and launching Orbital Shift’s new mobile page. Development is something that I really enjoy and getting to do this at work has been a great experience. While working here I was given the task to design and develop a new and improved mobile version of our online time clock and [employee scheduling software](#). During this process I came up with a UI design, mocked up several different versions, got it approved by management and after building it, eventually launched it to our production site. This was a very exciting time because after this happened I realized that code I had created and designs I came up with were being paid for by clients to use online. As I had mentioned I’ve always had an interest in computer science but now I had the opportunity to apply that skill and passion to a career I enjoy doing.”

**How has your participation in this AE experience impacted your life as a student and as a person in general?**

“The participation in the AE experience has impacted my life in that I know what I want to do as a career going forward. I am a non-typical student who went back to school after working various types of jobs for the last 5-6 years and not being able to move up without my bachelor’s degree. When I went back I wasn’t sure what exactly I wanted to do with my life and that caused me to jump around and switch majors often. When I finally made the decision to go with Information Systems and Computer Science, I still wasn’t quite sure if that was what I wanted to
do for the rest of my life. After this experience with Orbital Shift, I’ve realized that software
development and computer science is something that I do enjoy and it’s something that I want
to focus my career on. Without getting firsthand experience and having the opportunity, I would
not have realized how much I enjoy working in software development.”

Have there been any challenges during the internship?

“I think in general it is a challenge to get an internship simply because you are asking a
company to take time, effort and resources out of their pockets in order to train and help your
career. Before being offered the internship with Orbital Shift, I put in a lot of work, attending
Technology Nights, various MISA meetings and trying to attend as many networking
opportunities that I could. Ultimately I met Kevin after a class presentation and I was able to
introduce myself and find out more about him and his company. This internship is not something
that was just handed to me or fell in my lap, I did have to seek it out and work for it.”

Has this experience reaffirmed your career goals or has it changed your mind in any way about
your career path?

“This experience has absolutely reaffirmed my career goals. When I first deciding to go into MIS
and Computer Science I had never worked in this industry before and to be honest I didn’t really
know what to expect. In the past I had always worked in sales or some sort of customer service.
The only thing I knew for sure about my future career is that I didn’t want to be in sales and saw
computer science as a good alternative. After working as in Intern here at Orbital Shift, I’ve
realized how much I really do enjoy programming and development and that I would much
rather be solving problems and writing code on my computer then selling and resolving billing
issues. Because working as a developer is such a different career then working as a salesmen,
I’m really glad I had the opportunity to see what the daily routine is like before
graduation.”

What advice would you give other students considering opportunities like this?

“If you’re a student and you have the opportunity to do an internship in the industry you want to
work in after graduation you should definitely take the opportunity and do it. Besides being able
to put on a resume that you have industry job experience, you will also get a much better
understanding of what it’s truly like to work in that industry. In my case, I realize that computer
science is not for everybody. Some people would go crazy if they had to stare at a computer all
day with limited interaction with people for 40 hours a week. I, however, found that I really
enjoyed it. All of the problem solving involved in programming gives me a lot of enjoyment out
of finally figuring out a tough problem. I would prefer not to have to deal with the general public
as I’ve done in previous careers and this internship really reaffirmed these assumptions and
helped make it clear what I want to do when I graduate.”