Andres Fuentes (Civil Engineering, 2015)
Associate Engineer
Full-time, 40 hours per week
Paid

What do you do as an intern at this organization?
Here at Penfield & Smith I mainly do work using the program AutoCAD Civil 3D. Engineers come to me and give me tasks to help them with their projects. For example, I was once asked to look up a neighborhood in Santa Barbara and trace out the streets, making a street map.

How did you find your internship?
A good friend of mine’s dad works as the head of facilities for University of Santa Barbara, the California state school for this area. He does a lot of work with Penfield & Smith, so he recommended I check them out. Use your connections well!

What do you enjoy most about your internship?
What I enjoy the most about my internship is the exposure to so many different types of projects and practicing professional engineers. I have worked under civil engineers, structural engineers, traffic control engineers, waste-water engineers, and even the marketing department. I am being exposed to what it means to be a practicing professional engineer, something you really don’t learn in school.

What do you find challenging?
What I find challenging is that at school, you learn mostly design aspects of engineering. You learn how to calculate how thick a concrete slab should be depending on the weight, what the diameter of a pipe should be, etc., but here I am not involved in that process at all. At P&S I get those specifications from senior engineers and then just draft them in AutoCad. At times, I lack intellectual stimulation.

What advice would you offer to someone who wants to make the most of an internship like yours?
To make the most out of an internship like this, I recommend you always try and keep yourself busy. However, never get too busy! If you tell three different people you can help them out at once, you will end up doing a so-so job on all three projects when you could have just focused on one or two. Its easy to get carried away with helping people, but its also very easy to bite off more than you can chew!

About the Organization
Penfield & Smith
Santa Barbara, CA

Penfield & Smith Engineers, Inc. is a privately held, employee-owned company founded in 1946 in Santa Barbara, California. In addition to our Santa Barbara Corporate Headquarters location, we have regional offices in Camarillo, Santa Maria and Lancaster serving Ventura County, San Luis Obispo and northern Santa Barbara Counties, and Los Angeles County and the Antelope Valley, respectively. We provide our integrated engineering, surveying, traffic, planning, and construction management services to public and private clients throughout the Central Coast and Southern California. With a reputation for providing the highest quality and service, we value our 80% client return rate as well as each new client that values our commitment to quality.