

FLORIDA, CONSILIO PARTNERSHIP PROVIDES DIFFERENT PATH FOR SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

Entering its second year, three University of Florida students are set to receive hands-on e-discovery training at Consilio through a summer internship program, with an eye toward receiving a job at the company out of law school.

BY ZACH WARREN

As we round Memorial Day weekend, another crop of law school students are looking forward to an annual (though this year, virtual) experience: summer internships. But while many of these internships are law firm-centric, one partnership is looking to bring the internship trend to legal technology for students interested in a different path.

The University of Florida's Levin College of Law and e-discovery provider Consilio are partnering for the second straight summer to offer a paid summer internship program. Through the partnership, three of the school's students receive hands-on e-discovery training at the service provider, with an eye toward receiving a job at Consilio out of law school.

The internship begins with a high-level overview of e-discovery, asking students to work through the EDRM and make a comparison between what the real world looks like and what



theory looks like. The students then spend weeks rotating with different Consilio teams such as sales, data analytics, project managers and document review to receive a wide-ranging view of working at an e-discovery provider.

Last year's first iteration of the program saw three UF students work for six weeks out of Consilio's Charlotte location, said Danielle Brooks, the company's

director of global learning who has headed up the program. Due to COVID-19, that in-person component is transferring to online, and six weeks is being cut to four. However, Consilio has plans to reinstitute the in-person component in 2021, and is exploring expanding the program to other schools.

The internship is the dual brain-child of Florida law professor Bill Hamilton and Consilio Director

of Global Business Development Canaan Himmelbaum, himself a UF grad. While at Advanced Discovery, Himmelbaum was a regular contributor to Hamilton's yearly e-discovery conference at Florida. After moving to Consilio, he found the opportunity to do much more.

The goal of the program, Himmelbaum said, is to "give students the option of an alternative legal career. You go to law school, and everyone's hope is to go to an Am Law 200 law firm and make the big bucks, but you can do that same thing like I did, going to an alternative legal services provider."

And that alternative path is something that many of today's law students are clamoring for, Hamilton said, making working in legal technology an increasingly attractive option.

"Law students now know that what they have to do is be very proactive in terms of designing their careers," he explained. "They're looking with eyes wide open, and I think there's a sense on campus that maybe the traditional path of going to law school, getting a job as an associate, putting in long hours, and becoming a partner ... maybe that's not exactly what excites me. I love the law, I love doing these things, I want to work with clients, and I love technology too. There's another spot for me in the industry."

One of those students is Sofi Marescalco, who participated in the inaugural program last summer. Marescalco told LTN via email that she initially wasn't aware of the massive growth occurring in e-discovery before the internship, but on-campus interviews solidified her interest in the position. Now, after taking the Florida bar, she has accepted a position at Consilio.

"This internship opened up a whole new world that I 1) barely knew existed and 2) never imagined I would be a part of," Marescalco said. "I had heard of e-discovery in a very broad sense, but at the time I accepted the internship I definitely had limited knowledge. The internship program not only introduced me to this world, but gave me an in-depth look at what really goes on."

Hamilton said those opportunities are only expanding for current law students and others with JDs. While e-discovery was originally thought of as a highly technical discipline, he noted there is increasingly a place for those who bring a lawyer's mentality to the role.

"What we're seeing is the vendors that are competing at the top of the pile realize that what they have to have is well-rounded individuals that can not only talk the talk, but can deal with corporations, can deal with law firms, as well as work with e-discovery software," Hamilton said.

Consilio's Brooks and Himmelbaum agreed, saying that the program has continued to receive buy-in from Consilio's leadership, even during COVID-19, because of a mandate to keep bringing what Himmelbaum describes as "the full force of great people coming through the door."

In potential interns, Consilio is primarily looking for someone who can fit in with the company's culture. As Himmelbaum noted, "We're not going to do this and have somebody spend four weeks with us on a paid internship if we couldn't sit in a room with them and don't see them becoming part of the family."

And when he talks to Florida students, he suspects he gets more interested questions than many law firm partners. It helps, he said, that Consilio's internship program provides a collaborative alternative to competitive law firm summer internship programs, with a clearer path to employment at the end of the program.

"There's no guarantee here either, but if you work hard, it's not like you're competing against your fellow interns," Himmelbaum said. "You're all working hard together, and that's what we saw last year."

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