

**PORT OF SEATTLE**  
**MEMORANDUM**

**COMMISSION AGENDA**

**Item No.** 4b

**Date of Meeting** March 6, 2012

**DATE:** February 24, 2012

**TO:** Tay Yoshitani, Chief Executive Officer

**FROM:** Kim DesMarais, Sr. Manager, Employment  
Derek Bender, Employment Program Coordinator

**SUBJECT:** Special Order of Business: Internship Employer of the Year Award

**BACKGROUND:**

The Port of Seattle has been proud to offer internships to high school, college and graduate students for the last 49 years and has designed a program to provide qualified candidates with valuable work experience to supplement and enhance their academic programs. In return, the Port derives the full benefit of students' capabilities to assist in a wide variety of departmental operations and special projects. Although most of our interns are hired full-time for the summer months, many continue to grow and build a wealth of experience as they continue their internship into the school year.

Our internship opportunities are very competitive and ask students to apply via our [website](#) for positions that align with their degree programs and career aspirations. Any student that is interested in our program is required to upload a cover letter and resume as well as provide us with a list of supplementary documents that give the Hiring Manger information regarding their coursework and expectations of the internship. Most of our internships are posted online in the month of March and set to begin when the successful student candidate completes their Spring term.

Last year, the Internship Program hired a total of 27 paid interns from local high schools as well as regional and national colleges and universities. Since 2008, the Port has hired 107 interns into a wide array of positions that have supported both our maritime and aviation sectors. Many departments throughout the organization like Accounting, Aviation Operations, Construction Services, Engineering, Environmental and Planning just to name a few, support the program on an annual basis. With a goal of providing student interns with a true quality experience, we ask for their input in making their internships as valuable as possible by aligning our opportunity with their individual goals. For college and graduate interns, we ask them to create specific learning objectives as part of the application process. This way, the interns can work with their supervisors in not only accomplishing the tasks outlined by the department when creating each

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unique job description but also by developing a scope of work that aligns with their academic interests.

On February 2, 2012, representatives from Seattle University recognized and awarded the Port of Seattle as the *Internship Employer of the Year*. This award highlighted the efforts by the Port to provide high quality internship opportunities for students attending Seattle University. Derek Bender, who organizes and coordinates the Intern Program for the Port, accepted the award in front of roughly 35 employers prior to Seattle University's annual internship fair. Our program encourages students to put their skills and decision-making processes to work, partnering with Port staff to offer validity to their ideas and credibility to their solutions. This award acknowledges the Port of Seattle's commitment to fostering the next generation of community leaders and provides an avenue for students to apply their academic learning to jobs that may lead to a Port-related career in the maritime or aviation sectors. It reaffirms that our student opportunities make a positive difference and builds strong partnerships with regional academic institutions like Seattle University.

### **OTHER DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS SPECIAL ORDER:**

- Internship Employer of the Year Award presented on February 2, 2012, by Seattle University.
- Information about the Port of Seattle's Internship Program.