

UCF Newsroom

DYNAMIC GOOGLE INC. ENERGIZES ASPIRING EVENT PLANNER

By Erika Finnimore

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Every morning, University of Central Florida student Jerry Estrada walks into his office, sits on his bouncy ball and begins work at Google Inc. in San Francisco.

Google hired Estrada as a summer intern in the Building Opportunities for Leadership & Development (BOLD) Diversity Program, which includes students who are underrepresented in the technology industry. Estrada, originally from Miami, is a senior Event Management major at the Rosen College of Hospitality Management.

Estrada works with Google's Inside Sales Team, helping to sign up new companies to advertise on Google, the largest index of Web pages in the world with 3 billion searches each day.

Just two weeks into his internship, a Google event planner invited Estrada to help with this month's Google Global Science Fair, a competition that attracted several thousand student participants from around the world.

"I know about 1,000 people that would have done anything to be in my shoes at that moment and, trust me, I made sure to embrace every second of it," Estrada said.

Premila Whitney, an instructor at the Rosen College, called Estrada "very motivated and dedicated" and said his work ethic, intelligence and personality will make an impact.

She was right. At one Google international sales meeting, the manager of a team in Buenos Aires, Argentina, presented Estrada with a potential opportunity to work in his office. He gave Estrada his email address and asked him to keep in touch.

Beyond the networking, Estrada has developed a love for Google's friendly, fast-paced and fun workplace culture. Employees can bring their pets to work, nap in the sleeping pods and enjoy complimentary meals at the office.

"Everyone is very driven, and seeing that is truly awesome," said Estrada, who hopes the internship will lead to an opportunity to work for Google as an event planner.

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Estrada encourages his UCF peers to take risks as they pursue their career dreams.

“Go with your gut, get out of your comfort zone and look beyond what you see.”

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