

MYEP Participant Lands Future Work Opportunity with Balfour Beatty

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An invaluable investment in the lives of Charlotte youth. That is the contribution made when local companies decide to participate in the Mayor's Youth Employer Program (</Mayor/Youth/MYEP/Pages/default.aspx>) (MYEP) and provide work experiences for high school students. This past summer, construction company Balfour Beatty participated in the program and hosted Kaleb Montez Martinez.

Martinez, then a high school senior, arrived in a crisp blue button up shirt on his first day of work, elated for the chance to get hands-on experience while pursuing his career passion. "He was very professional. He was well spoken. He always had a lot of questions and he was trying to stay two steps ahead on any assignments that I would assign to him," recalled Somer Hulsen, Human Resource Generalist for Balfour Beatty. The company has an existing intern program for college students, and with Martinez on board, they hosted 14 students total in the Carolinas.

He has a strong interest in mechanical engineering and was paired with employees who had that background, further fueling his excitement. While working, Martinez was eager, detail-oriented, and made it his mission to absorb all knowledge offered. At the conclusion of their summer program, students working at Balfour Beatty produce a final presentation for the chance to secure a scholarship. Martinez, the youngest of the group, was determined to rise to the top.



"I'm going to win that money," he confidently proclaimed to Hulsén after learning about final

presentations. "Martinez was impressive and really worked the space," recollected Hulsen. "He probably could have been talking about mounds of dirt, and everybody would have been interested," she joked. "He just exuded confidence and was determined to win that money."

Martinez ultimately placed second and received a \$500 scholarship, which could be used to fund his college studies as he enrolled at North Carolina State University. He will be returning to Balfour Beatty in the summer of 2022 to participate in their traditional internship program.

"We have a really good hire rate with our interns. We're training them, and we want them to come back year after year. I would love nothing more than for Kaleb to come back year after year, and hopefully start full-time when he's ready," expressed Hulsen.

The MYEP has been a staple within the Charlotte community since 1986 and plays an instrumental role in providing youth with access to opportunity. MYEP helps to level the playing field by connecting youth with talented professionals, increasing their social capital and teaching them vital work skills that they may use in future employment. Through offering work experiences to youth ages 16 – 18 years old, the program prepares youth to not only earn a paycheck while fulfilling their career goals, but also to compete in today's workforce.

To learn more about MYEP and to gain information on how to become a host employer, please visit: <https://charlottenc.gov/Mayor/Youth/MYEP/Business-Partners/Pages/HostEmployer.aspx> (/Mayor/Youth/MYEP/Business-Partners/Pages/HostEmployer.aspx)

