Announcer: Welcome to Pima Community College Perspectives, a look on how education enriches our community. And now, here's your host, Nina Trasoff.

Paul: Hi, my name's Paul Scwalbach. I'm the Marketing and Public Relations Coordinator at Pima Community College. I'm sitting in for Nina today. As you know, this is PCC Perspectives, a half hour radio show devoted to how PC, Pima Community College impacts the community. Today's topic is Internships. And I have with me the honor of having Dr. Lorraine Morales; she's an Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Development. And we're going to talk about the various ways in which internships, which basically defined as, it's not extracurricular activity, but its real-world activity in which students go out find their own internships and see what life is like outside of the classroom. Anyway, Dr. Morales, I'd like to first ask you by. I'd like to start off by first asking you how many Pima Community College students take part in internships in a given semester.

Dr. Morales: Good morning, Paul, thank you very much for having me. This fall semester, we've had quite a huge increase in the student participation in internships. Over the last few years, we've had a few students participating, but this fall, we have about, a little over 350 students that are participating in a variety of fields; anywhere from business to computer-aided drafting. And way over half of those students are participating in health related professions and mostly in our post-bac teacher education program.

Paul: I understand that it's very important for nursing students to get that sort of real-world experience. Those are the clinicals that are part of their studies. And the same thing, of course, for teachers who want to get into the classroom. I've heard anecdotally that the students nowadays are eager to take a look at what the job situation is like and see internships as a bridge, sort of, between work and school. Of course, though, that the reality is that there's no quid pro quo for interns. They're not auditioning for a specific job. Let me just ask you the next question. How long does a typical internship last at Pima?

Dr. Morales: Typically, an internship will last for a semester. However, we are flexible and we can customize the length of the internship. It really depends on the employer.

Paul: Yes, yes, that does make sense, because I understand the Dee Luera, who's going to be the guest in the second half of our show, her firm, Parker Hannifin, offers two eight-week internships. And that allows them to get two students in during one semester rather than the one 16-week internship. What does a student get out of an internship in general?

Dr. Morales: Well, what they get out most is real world experience, real world experience and training in the field of their choice.

Paul: Yeah, I understand that, and I touched on this earlier, you know, we talk about PCC
giving an internship to a student. That's really a kind of a misnomer or a misconception, because the PCC students themselves are responsible for finding and pursuing the internship opportunities. They're the ones who get the, you know, they're the ones who hunt down the perspective employers. They're the ones who set up the interviews and set up the course of study. It's, in a way, it's mimicking the "real world" I guess you could say.

>> Dr. Morales: Absolutely. We provide the resources and the tools for the students to find the internships. We have binders at all of the campuses that help students to find leads and contact information so they can apply for the positions. But it really is up to the students to apply. At the college, we have a philosophy of self-efficacy to teach students to do for themselves. More often than not, a student walks in and they have an expectation that we're going to do everything for them, including writing their resume. [chuckles] And what we do is point them to the tools, to all of the resources that are available to them, absolutely with a lot of assistance from our counselors and our advisors to help guide the students through the process.

>> Paul: Yeah, before I got my job at Pima Community College, I was an intern in the paralegal program, and it was the responsibility of the students to go through the list, find something they like, do the interview, and get everything set up with their teacher and their intern. I was an intern at a law firm, and it was just a fascinating experience because you got to do all sorts of things that you only had read about in textbooks before. And plus you got to talk to the people who are in the field, the paralegals themselves, and just get a real-world, on-the-ground look at, you know, what it's like to work in a law office that, you know. I mean, the old saying is you can only learn so much from books, though you can learn a lot from books.

>> Dr. Morales: Well what you mentioned there is, you know, the working with the faculty; that is a definite advantage that students have with an internship, because the faculty are there to help to guide them, to coach them, and help them with the whole process. In the world of work, you don't always have that when you're applying for a real-world job.

>> Paul: Right. Right. And one of the things that distinguish PCC internships is that you're going to be working with someone at the professional level of the job that you may end up getting. You know, for example, if, you know, if you're working, using paralegals as another example, you're going to be working with a lawyer or a paralegal, not with an office manager, or a custodian, or somebody like that. Do interns get paid?

>> Dr. Morales: Sometimes. More often than not, they are unpaid; but some of the employers do pay the interns. The internships are for academic credit, which means that the internship is going to compliment and to enhance the academic program by Pima.

>> Paul: Yeah, that's one of the realities of the internships at Pima; you have a boss in terms of the mentor professional, and you have your boss in terms of the faculty member. So you've got a couple of bosses, just like in the real world. Anyway, that's what the student gets out of it. What would you say the business gets out of it?

>> Dr. Morales: That's a little more intangible. But it really is a way for them to give back to the profession. It gives them opportunities to bring in fresh ideas, new ideas, students to work on special projects. And for the employer, it will also provide a professional development
opportunity for them because they are able to mentor and promote their field.

>> Paul: Right, it's a good opportunity for them to take a look at what's out there in terms of perspective employees. Although the thing to remember about internships is that the U.S. Department of Labor has very specific rules regarding the duties that interns can perform. You know, they can't use interns to replace regular employees or to do work that regular employees do. Really, what it comes down to is a lot of times, the intern will be asked to do back-burner assignments that are labor intensive, and you know, there's a lot of different, you know. It depends, of course, with the field, but they're made to work in filing or doing a little bit of research that's not time sensitive, something that allows them to work at their own speed while not, of course, taking work away from the paid employees. Of course, we talked a little bit about what the students get out of it. I wonder if you could expand on that, especially talking about the intern-employer relationship.

>> Dr. Morales: Well, as I mentioned before, it is invaluable real-world experience. And what's most beneficial is that it provides the students opportunities to learn about the culture, the culture of that organization. And it also allows them to build up their resume and helps to establish a network, which is critical in today's competitive marketplace.

>> Paul: Yes, networking is, of course, everyone knows that networking is super important nowadays. What have you heard from the area businesses who are hosting our interns; what have you heard about how they have experienced Pima interns in the whole process?

>> Dr. Morales: I believe that we have a pretty good relationship with companies in Tucson. They are happy with the quality of our interns, and we have them coming back for more. We've had Merrill Lynch hosting nearly a dozen of our students. The Disney College Program had 16 students in the summer. And the roles of those students varied in, they did a little bit of everything, and they have opportunities to meet and greet with high-level executives at Disney World.

>> Paul: Can't go wrong spending a summer at Disney World, even if it does involve custodial work or something like that.

>> Dr. Morales: [laughing] Absolutely.

>> Paul: It's Disney World.

>> Dr. Morales: It's lots of fun.

>> Paul: What about the future? What improvements is PCC planning to make in the internship program?

>> Dr. Morales: I think probably the most exciting one is we have just purchased a web-based job listing service that's going to allow employers to place their internship information online. And that'll be a huge improvement over the binders that I referred to earlier, in making it a lot easier for students to find the internships. We'll also be able to inform students when an employer is going to be on a particular campus. And it will also allow them to post their resumes.
Paul: Ok, just to, just summing up here. Let's say there's a business out there who is interested in hosting an intern. What's the first thing they should do?

Dr. Morales: We have an excellent person who has been working in developing our and improving our internship program. Her name is Michelle Betzen. She works at Pima College, and her phone number is 520-206-4768.

Paul: Ok, very good. We're going to come back in a few minutes with Dee Luera; she's the head of HR at Parker Hannifin, a local firm. And we'll talk with an outsider and get their perspective on internships. Thank you very much, Dr. Morales.

Dr. Morales: Thank you, Paul.

[ music ]

Announcer: For more than 40 years, Pima Community college has helped prepare the citizens of Tucson and Pima County for good jobs and better lives for themselves and their families. We don't do it alone. We appreciate your ongoing investment in education, especially during these extraordinarily tough times. Your tax dollars combined with student tuition make it possible for thousands of southern Arizonians to get a jumpstart before transferring to a university, to get the training they need to stay competitive at work and to prepare for the jobs of tomorrow. Many of our students are seeking to restart their careers after losing their jobs and some their homes, during the recession. All of our students know, as you do, that the more you learn, the more you earn. We know that today's students are often juggling work and family, as well as school. That's why Pima offers classes at night and on weekends at six campuses, more than 180 other locations and over the internet. Our programs deliver education how you want it and give you the opportunity to achieve your goals at your pace. Today's Pima Community College students will be tomorrow's firefighters, nurses, police, teachers, and small business owners, the backbone of a safe, healthy, prosperous Tucson and Pima County. Thank you for your support as we continue to help you and your family build a better tomorrow. For more information, contact us at 206-4500, or visit us on the web at Pima.edu. Pima Community College, Developing Our Community Through Learning.

[ music ]

Paul: Hello, and welcome back to PCC Perspectives, our half hour talking about how Pima Community College impacts the community. Today's episode is on internships. Internships, the "real world", we've been calling it. For our second segment, our guest is Dee Luera. She's the Senior Human Resources Representative at Parker Hannifin Corporation in Tucson. Welcome, Dee.

Dee: Hi Paul, thanks for having me.

Paul: Great. I guess the first question I should ask you is if you could tell me a little bit about Parker Hannifin and what they do here and what they do worldwide apparently.

Dee: My pleasure. Parker Hannifin has been in existence since 1918 based out of
Cleveland, Ohio. And to this date, that is where our corporate headquarters is. Here in Tucson, we are a relatively small facility. Overall, Parker employs approximately 62,000 employees worldwide. And here in Tucson, we have about 60 in a manufacturing facility on the southeast side of town.

>> Paul: What do you build?

>> Dee: Here in Tucson, we manufacture fluoropolymer motion control parts. And our particular parts go into fabs of semiconductor companies. They make wafers, and then they make chips, and our high-purity parts are used within those facilities. We also do, Parker Hannifin does everything else across the board that you could think of, but our particular group is the instrumentation group. And that's what we focus on, is primarily semiconductor parts.

>> Paul: So it's, it would qualify as a very high-tech industry then, in Tucson.

>> Dee: Very high tech and high purity.

>> Paul: High purity. Your position at Parker Hannifin involves what? What do you do?

>> Dee: Anything and everything [chuckling] having to do with human resources. I've been doing HR for about 20 years now.

>> Paul: How long has Parker Hannifin been hosting Pima Community College interns?

>> Dee: I'm real excited to talk about that, because we implemented this particular program a little over a year ago, and it was brand new to Parker here in Tucson. And for this particular department, at Pima, we utilize interns from their AutoCAD programs and specific classes. And the software that we use at Parker is called AutoCAD Inventor. Not many employers here in town use that. So we found that by implementing an internship, we could pull students from Pima, and they could get the experience that they needed using Inventor because it's really rare in Tucson.

>> Paul: So Inventor is the industry standard, would you say, for AutoCAD?

>> Dee: For what we do, it is. We design the parts from start to finish. And so the software is called Inventor, and they actually get to work on the designing of different parts, brand new parts, for Parker Hannifin.

>> Paul: So these are basically, this sounds cutting edge or the closest thing to it, I guess.

>> Dee: Mm hmm, yes.

>> Paul: It sounds very interesting. How did you first make contact with Pima? You said the program is about a year old. What was the actual process?

>> Dee: I made a phone call.

>> Paul: That's it.
[laughter]

>> Paul: It was that easy?

>> Dee: That easy, that easy. And Michelle Betzen was just coming onboard.

>> Paul: Right.

>> Dee: So it was, I guess, all in the timing.

>> Paul: Yes.

>> Dee: And.

>> Paul: No, that's great. You know, for our listeners, Michelle Betzen works at Pima as an advanced program manager. She's in charge of all the various internship programs, and we do have a lot of internship programs and externships and cooperative learning opportunities. What, how long does an internship at Parker Hannifin last?

>> Dee: We've got about two interns per semester, about eight weeks.

>> Paul: So they each work eight weeks?

>> Dee: Mm hmm.

>> Paul: How many hours would you say they work a week, or how long is each internship last in a typical week?

>> Dee: Right now, it's running about 20 hours a week.

>> Paul: So.

>> Dee: I'm looking to extend it past the eight-week interval. I'd like to have it for one full semester per intern. I think that it would be more beneficial.

>> Paul: Right.

>> Dee: We're looking into that.

>> Paul: Yeah. Twenty hours a week over 16 weeks, that sounds like a pretty intense experience for someone who's entering the world of AutoCAD and design. How have the students reacted, as far as you can tell, to the work they're doing, to the work they're doing?

>> Dee: I think they, when they initially start, they're a little tentative, because they've just finished the Inventor class, and so they're going to utilize it for the first time in the workplace. And they interact directly with our engineers, so that can be a little intimidating.
Paul: Right.

Dee: So we ease them into it. And they learn how to look at the actual part drawings, and then we put them to work. And we have a graduated process for them. So it's not so scary once they're into it.

Paul: Right. Right. And I guess it is a good system though. They get out of class after having learned how to use it in the classroom. And then they segue right into actually using it so they can use what they've learned in the real world. You touched on the relationship between the engineer and the intern. Apart from, you know, all the technical knowledge that interns are getting from working there, they also get, I guess, professional, you know, they get a taste of what it's like to work in a profession.

Dee: Absolutely.

Paul: And [inaudible] they may not have. You know, how does that work for them?

Dee: They're integrated directly into the engineering department, whereas, they participate in all the meetings, and they also participate, in part, in our complete employee meeting.

Paul: Right.

Dee: So they're part of us. And they get to listen in on customer conversations and discussions with regards to parts and what is needed by our customers, what we need to design for them.

Paul: Right.

Dee: So they are in on the initial discussions to, hopefully, the end of it. But sometimes the eight weeks isn't quite long enough...

Paul: Right.

Dee: ...for them to see the finished product. So that's another reason why I'd like to lengthen it.

Paul: They do get to see then, if not from beginning to end, they get to see the entire process.

Dee: Yes.

Paul: Which I'm sure is beneficial to them. But you know, with all those benefits, I guess, there comes a bit of a responsibility on their part. You know, what expectations do you have for your, you know, for the interns?

Dee: Well, when I bring them in, I do a regular orientation with them, and I set up exactly what is expected. And I expect them to participate as I would any other employee, and they're
treated as such. And some of them have never worked, period, so they’re learning how to show up for work on time and dress appropriately. I help them with their resume when they're done. And I always, just from an HR perspective, I look for internships on resumes.

>> Paul: Right.

>> Dee: That's a major plus. And I stress that with them.

>> Paul: Right.

>> Dee: So it's of great value.

>> Paul: Yes, you did touch on a point, but one of the things that we at Pima are finding is that employers, while they want specific skills related to their field, many of, you know, they're also looking for people who are, who know what it's like to work in an office, understand the professional responsibilities. And, you know, you touched on some things that sound very, you know, very rudimentary. You know, show up on time.

>> Dee: Mm hmm.

>> Paul: Wear a tie; don't wear thongs to, you know, don't wear flip-flops to work. [Dee chuckling] But I mean, these are things that if you've never worked in a workplace, they're going to come as a bit of a, well not a shock, but they'll be a bit of an eye opener.

>> Dee: Absolutely, absolutely.

>> Paul: Well, let me ask how you'd characterize the quality of the interns that Pima has been offering to Parker Hannifin.

>> Dee: Actually, the quality has been very good. I've only had one intern that, I don't believe, got as much out of it as he expected. And he was an older gentleman coming back into the workforce.

>> Paul: Right.

>> Dee: And so it was not what he expected. But the other interns are very excited about it, very excited about it.

>> Paul: And you're planning on hosting interns in the future, I take it.

>> Dee: Absolutely.

>> Paul: You know, we talked a little bit about what the student gets out of it. Parker Hannifin, you know, what's the advantage for Parker Hannifin to hire or to host interns?

>> Dee: Well, ultimately, it helps us distinguish whether or not they would make a good employee. And in one case, we do have an intern that has been with us for almost a full year. He was our second intern. He is now working as a contracted employee.
Paul: Wow.

Dee: And doing very well.

Paul: Wow, that's cool.

Dee: And it happens to be his very first job.

Paul: Well, that's nice to have work nowadays.

Dee: Yes.

Paul: Let me just, I'm going to switch gears just a little bit. You know, the conventional wisdom is that in Tucson, and really in many parts of the country, it's hard for employers to find, you know, qualified employees, especially if it's a scientifically esteemed field like you guys are in. What's Parker Hannifin's take? What's your experience been in that regard?

Dee: I've had a lot of difficulty finding design engineers. There's a nationwide shortage. So qualified design engineers that want to focus in the area of design that we have is extremely difficult to recruit for. So...

Paul: In that case, then, a resource like Pima Community College, which is doing, you know, which is training up, you know, students. How valuable is that to Parker Hannifin?

Dee: I believe our internships kind of perk their interest and get them interested in engineering from just the basic AutoCAD. So beginning, so if they find that they really enjoy being a part of the engineering department, that may...

Paul: Right, may lead onto.

Dee: It may lead on, and we may have a new employee in some future time.

Paul: Just finishing up here. What tips would you have for someone, a perspective intern, someone who's shown some interest? What should they, what's the one or two things that they really should know about themselves and know about the process?

Dee: I believe that they should really go in like a sponge, wanting to take in anything and everything that is handed to them, because that's essentially what is done. We hand it to them.

Paul: Right.

Dee: And we say, "Have at it, and we'll mentor you through this." And then, in turn, putting it on the resume.

Paul: Right, right.

Dee: So it's fabulous.
Paul: So there is an element of personal responsibility on the part of the intern.

Dee: Yes.

Paul: Himself or herself; nothing is being given to them.

Dee: They need to really look for it.

Paul: They got to take it.

Dee: That's right, grab it.

Paul: All right, well, Dee, I really appreciate the time you've given us here at *Pima Community College Perspectives*. You've been listening to Dee Luera. She's at Parker Hannifin. She's the head human resources representative. My name's Paul Scwalbach. I'm Marketing Public Relations Coordinator. We're glad you could listen in. Next week, we're going to be talking about another topic of interest to Pima Community College in the community, and we'll see you then.

[ music ]

Announcer: Tucson's Jolt.

Male speaker: Tiny impulses of electric current are produced.

Announcer: KJLL, South Tucson.