Date: Monday, August 21, 2023

To: Christopher Elliot

From: Claude White

Subject: Computer Science Co-op Work Report

My co-op at the National Defence (DND) started on the 23rd of May 2023 and ended on August 18th, 2023. When I got there, I was first introduced to Anita, who would be my supervisor for the summer co-op. She was a great supervisor and kept me updated on how I was doing and how I could improve. In general, Anita was great to have as my supervisor. I was also introduced to most of the team I would be working with. Everyone there is very nice and always ready to help.

In support of the CF mission, Director Information Management End-User Services

(DIMEUS) is responsible for providing a centralized enterprise desktop and

infrastructure IM/IT support for the National Capital Region (NCR) Defence Wide

Area Network (DWAN). Services provided by DIMEUS include: a centralized service

desk; site support services; network management; account/email management;

server support; IT procurement; telecom (telephone and mobile) services; and IT

asset management. Our Service Desk provides a single point of contact for first

level IT support, in both official languages, which allows DIMEUS to provide Defence Wide Area Network (DWAN) IT support services to over 21,000 users in the NCR.

To start my every day at DND, I would start off by login on to my computer and checking for any new emails, for clients I was trying to get in touch with or my employer. Then I would open the tools I needed for the day, for instance, Interaction Desktop was the program I used all the time because it was how I received calls and set are status (i.e.: On Call, On Lunch). Active Directory was another app I used daily to manage users and verify their information. I also used a tool called BlueBox a lot which helped me remote into the client’s desktop and check which drives they had access to. Additionally, we used Assyst to make and check up on tickets for the clients calling. These were the main programs used in our day-to-day in addition to the Microsoft suite (i.e.: Outlook, Teams). If ever I had a question regarding what the client was calling about there was always someone there happy to help with my question and even more people on Teams groups ready to help us make sure clients get the best support possible. This gave me confidence that I could help clients with any questions they had. Later in the day around 11 AM, I took my lunch which was 1 hour. This gave me plenty of time to either go and get something to eat or relax a bit before the afternoon. My afternoon schedule changed a couple of times during my co-op this summer. At the start, I would take calls in the afternoon as well to familiarize myself with the programs and to help with all the calls that were coming in. Then I was introduced to tickets that came from the Portal team. These were generic tickets made by clients. This team was a bit behind so in the last 2 hours of my day I would ask this team for a couple of tickets to help them out. I would then contact the clients and help them with their issues or close the ticket if it was already resolved. Lastly, for the last third of my co-op, I helped the CEM (Common Electronic Mail) team for the last 2 hours of my day. With this team, I would pick up tickets myself and complete them right away. These did not require me to make calls, we only had to send emails, because I was usually adding/removing members to shared mailboxes in Outlook.

In my co-op, I worked on 3 different computers. At the start, I was working on a desktop which was in my cubicle and unfortunately was slow, so we had it replaced quickly and then I was perfectly set up to help clients out efficiently. These machines were equipped with Intel CPUs, 16 GB of RAM, SSDs, and Windows 10. Later in my co-op, I was given a laptop so that I could start doing hybrid work, which meant I worked from home 3 days a week and was in the office 2 days a week. I really appreciated the opportunity to work from home as I learned to manage working at home, which is a great experience since Covid-19 made a lot of jobs hybrid. In the work I was doing I was not using any programming languages except a bit of batch scripting for creating scripts that would copy text to my clipboard. This would greatly help with productivity.

During this co-op, I used a lot of the skills I learned in the Hardware and Operating Systems. For example, we practiced interacting with clients and how to converse with someone who doesn’t necessarily know all the tech terms we usually speak in the “IT world”. The Business in the Workplace class I had also helped a lot. This class helped us get comfortable talking to people and interacting in a professional milieu. Especially with constructing professional emails. In my job at DND I had to send a lot of emails and knowing how to correctly format an email was very useful. During the co-op I also learned many skills, for example, good ethics in the work was very important and was even part of an online course we took during this summer. I also learned how to manage and use the Assyst ticket system which can be useful in other jobs that can require the use of ticket systems.

In my first year in Computer Science, I feel like I was well prepared for the co-op I had this summer. The classes covered a wide variety of subjects which gave me a great foundation for developing and improving the skill I had and learned throughout the year. Especially in the Hardware and Operating Systems class, I learned a lot of technical skills that helped solve problems clients had with Windows machines. I feel like introducing more teamwork early on could help us get acquainted with different people earlier and get us used to interacting with strangers (before we get to know them better). Personally, I would have liked a 1-week break before School restarted instead of having it at the start of the summer because I felt thrown into another semester without any rest.

At the end of my summer, I felt happy with myself and proud that I had worked for the Department of National Defence for a whole summer. I am happy they gave me an offer and I am glad I took this opportunity. I really liked the team over there and wish them all the best. A summer co-op is really a great way of gaining experience and building connections. Thanks, Chris and all the team at DND for this great summer.