I started my employment at the Department of National Defence (DND) under the IT role on May 23rd, 2023 and finished on August 18th, 2023 giving me a total of 13 weeks of experience. Eric Marceau was my supervisor during my time at DND. In my IT branch, I was given the task of providing client support for those in the department and out of town, completing and maintaining/fixing laptops and Desktops for those clients.

The Department of National Defence’s mission is to Protect Canada, Defend North America in cooperation with the US, and Contribute to international peace and security. In support of the of the Canadian Forces 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; account/email management; server support; IT procurement; telecom (telephone and mobile) services; and IT asset management. Out 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 to over 21,000 users in the NCR.

My work consisted of two different positions: Imaging, and On-Site repairs and support. Imaging was the task of preparing laptops and tablets for clients to request. To perform this we must complete software and application updates that wipe old data for the new client. This gives them a completely new and fresh device for use. For Imaging we worked with company provided laptops and tablets ranging from Dell, Lenovo, and Toshiba products. Each product needed special treatment specific to them through small changes in preparations. Performing this task was quite simple but long, it required me to gather laptops and wipe the software off the computer and provide new software for the computer. The computer would also need to be put onto the domain. Before downloading I would need to check the time to see if it is correct and need to do some company product specific preparation for example Dell’s must have NVMe turned on. The process of downloading all the software takes up to 2 hours and in those hours, I would go to the next computer and do the same process. While cleaning them and making sure the process goes smoothly since there can be a lot of issues with downloads I can have around 30 laptops going at once. I completed imaging around 30-90 laptops in a day. Once finished the 2-hour long download, I would open and log into them and check Software Center application to see that all the software was successfully downloaded. If this was not successful I had to manually complete it. Software Center is very broken and can have many issues, the primary issue being the inability to open the application. To fix this I can either manually restart the software center through control panel or get a script that does it for me but generally this adds another 20 minutes to the process. Once this process is almost complete, you need to check if the Trellix (I believe to be McAfee previously), which is a security and virus checker that protects the PC, is up to date. Sometimes it will not be up to date and will need to be updated which adds a bit more time as well. But other than that, I can pack the bag away and mark it down for completed. Which then can be picked up by the team at Onboarding who deal directly with the clients receiving the new laptop. This is by far the most difficult part of the job since it was a lot of information to take in and due to its length of time to complete, can be lacking in engagement.

For my other position I had done On-Site repairs which is all about walking around and performing tasks given to me by my supervisor. The position consisted of using Assyst for tickets. Tickets are what provide the information of the task that must be performed, the location and name of the affected user. The tasks that I have experienced are monitor replacement/removal, desktop replacement/removal, providing computer accessories and DWAN issue resolving. Depending on the task I will take the resources that I need such as new monitors or desktops and one extra just in case it does not work. I would place those items onto a cart and make my way around buildings to reach the location. The campus is large so much of the time is spent walking around finding the desk or room. When I reach the room if the client is there, I introduce myself and say that I am there for the ticket that they sent. I then perform the task quickly and effectively making sure that it is completed to their satisfaction. Then I head back to the backrooms where I then mark the ticket as complete. Overall, On-Site was very enjoyable, the position provided simple tasks to me and made it so I could directly help people.

This co-op job can be performed at any level, it just takes time to train the person, it is not very difficult since if you know how to do it once then it can be done repeatedly. It just required experience and a little knowledge about computers. For that reason, I was prepared to perform this job effectively and make a good impression of my abilities. I met a lot of great people who helped and supported me on my way through the 4 months. They made my experience fun and worthwhile giving me good amounts of networking in the department. They made sure I knew it was okay to ask questions and to make mistakes. I also met some students from other schools and from my own school as well. Some students were from different courses. I made connections with them, and they gave me valuable knowledge that they had from their side of the college. The job did not contain knowledge from my course since the job had department specific problems. It’s all about learning and experiencing throughout the months.

Though I had a very exhausting experience it was enjoyable none the less. It was tough getting into the 8 – 4 rhythm and long commutes on public transportation did not help with that however, those around me made the challenges bearable. I appreciate the opportunities and challenges the college and department has provided me. Though I would have liked a bit of a break between work and school, it does not negate the fact that I am glad that I was able to prove myself, learn new skills and meet new people.