

**BlueSky Rotation 3 Report: Professional Growth and Learning Objectives in Enterprise
Technology Solutions [Payments Team]**

Sydney E. Walter

Walters1@ETSU.edu

November 14, 2025

BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee

CSCI-4905-800: Internship

Semester 7

Introduction

In my final co-op rotation with BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee's Enterprise Technology Solutions Payments team, I functioned as a core contributor on a high-stakes RTC-to-Azure DevOps (ADO) migration initiative, independently completing 20+ production-grade user stories that directly reduced team backlog and accelerated platform modernization. Though my role focused on configuration, workflow translation, and process execution [not code authorship] I operated at the level of full-time team members, delivering measurable value in an enterprise payments environment. This portfolio-ready report highlights how I exceeded learning objectives, applied academic concepts in real-world agile workflows, and sharpened a strategic career path rooted in technical precision, cross-functional collaboration, and business impact.

Learning Objectives

All objectives were fully achieved and extended through independent ownership of migration deliverables. I executed complex RTC-to-ADO transitions such as mapping work items, configuring build and release pipelines, replacing token delimiters, troubleshooting obstacles, and creating git repositories. This immersion greatly deepened my command of enterprise agile tools and migration governance.

My second objective, mastering proactive collaboration in high-pressure teams, was realized through daily syncs with Jason MacLafferty and active participation in standups led by my Team Lead Bart Whalen. I learned to articulate blockers, communicate my needs, offer my thoughts on potential solutions, and align execution with sprint goals. Finally, delivering consistently under competing priorities was proven by maintaining output quality while

balancing academic demands, demonstrating resilience and focus in real-world operational contexts.

Coursework Applied on the Job

My BlueSky coursework integrated seamlessly into enterprise execution for this specific rotation. Intro to Comp Sci. I & II provided the framework for understanding ADO work item hierarchies, dependency mapping, and release governance, which was essential for translating RTC structures into modern workflows. Additionally, my Software Engineering class prepared me for the Agile Project Management that I encountered on this team, and directly informed my contributions to sprint planning and backlog prioritization, enabling me to manage my scope and meet deadlines in live sprints.

Career Goals: A Focused Path in Infrastructure & Operations

This rotation, while deeply rewarding, confirmed that core development and code authorship are not my long-term passion despite the satisfaction of delivering migration stories at scale. Instead, it sharpened my commitment to Infrastructure & Operations (I&O) roles centered on user experience optimization, platform configuration, and operational excellence. I thrive as a solutions integrator: configuring and orchestrating existing enterprise tools (like Nexthink, ServiceNow, or ADO) to enhance system reliability, streamline workflows, and measurably improve how people work. My short-term goal (0–2 years) is to secure a Digital Employee Experience (DEX) Analyst or Platform Operations Specialist position, leveraging migration governance and monitoring expertise to drive compliance, performance, and user satisfaction. In the mid-term (3–5 years), I aim to advance into Senior I&O Engineer or DEX Lead, designing

proactive monitoring frameworks, automating operational workflows, and influencing tool adoption strategies that reduce friction for end users and support teams alike. Long-term (10+ years), I aspire to Director of Digital Workplace Operations, leading cross-functional initiatives that fuse infrastructure stability with human-centered design, ensuring technology doesn't just function, but empowers. This rotation didn't redirect me into development; it anchored me in the I&O domain where configuration, integration, and user impact converge.

Defining Professional Moment

The defining moment was being entrusted with full ownership of 20+ migration stories during peak team demand. These weren't training exercises; they were production-critical configurations that kept sprints on track and advanced payment system modernization. My work directly freed senior resources for higher-complexity tasks and earned consistent standup recognition. This wasn't just participation; it was contribution at scale, proving I can deliver enterprise value from day one.

Strengths of the Experience

Most Valued:

1. Production-impact work: Every story advanced a live migration roadmap.
2. Elite team support: Jason's expertise, Jeremy Mehaffey's leadership example, and Bart's encouragement created a culture of growth and accountability.
3. Repetition as expertise: volume of similar tasks transformed tool fluency into operational mastery.

Professional Network Expansion

I built three strategic relationships with enduring value:

- Jason MacLafferty (Migration SME): Daily syncs accelerated my ADO proficiency and modeled expert-level problem-solving.
- Jeremy MeHaffey (Manager): His 1:1 offered a masterclass in technical leadership and balance, now my benchmark.
- Bart Whalen (Team Lead): His consistent validation in standups reinforced belonging and momentum.

These allies form the cornerstone of a targeted network in platform engineering and payments operations.

Preparation Reflection

My academic foundation was strong, but pre-rotation ADO sandbox practice (via Microsoft Learn or labs) would have flattened the initial learning curve. Going forward, I treat preparation as competitive differentiation.

Conclusion

This final rotation in Enterprise Technology Solutions Payments stands as a pivotal chapter in my professional development, one that blended rigorous execution with meaningful team integration to deliver lasting value in a high-stakes enterprise environment. By independently completing over 20 production-grade RTC-to-ADO migration stories, I contributed directly to platform modernization, backlog reduction, and sprint stability; outcomes

that extended far beyond individual tasks to support organizational agility in a regulated payments ecosystem. The experience reinforced the power of structured agile workflows, proactive knowledge-sharing, and configuration precision in driving operational reliability, while the exceptional support from Jason MacLafferty, Jeremy Mehaffey, and Bart Whalen modeled the kind of collaborative culture that enables sustained success. More broadly, it validated the critical interplay between technical governance and user impact, echoing lessons from prior rotations in DEX monitoring and multi-tiered support. As I transition from co-op contributor to full-time professional, I carry forward a refined framework for preparation, documentation, and cross-functional alignment, principles that will guide my pursuit of I&O roles where existing systems are orchestrated to solve real problems for real people. This wasn't just an internship; it was a proving ground for building systems (and careers) that prioritize clarity, resilience, and collective progress.