Bootstrapping the First IT Job Offer

Every employer wants experienced candidates, sometimes even for so-called “entry-level” jobs. How can an inexperienced candidate get a foot in the door? If financial circumstance allow, just taking more classes (up a bachelors degree) is an obvious play. So is loading up on technical certifications. Low income students, however, and students not well adapted to traditional academics may need a backdoor OJT play. Here is that play:

* Volunteer your way into experience. Churches, schools, charities, community centers can always use the help.
* Portfolio your way into experience. Show off your talents on the web, on YouTube, on social media, in apps you build.
* Network your way into experience. Go to every meetup in town that has anything to do with technologies you care about. Chat people up. Don’t lie. Just tell them you have a passion and you are looking for a shot. Get to know people who know people.

# How Can CFA Help?

CFA can set up mock businesses internally to do things CFA wants done. That includes lab management for labs of donated equipment (which CFA can re-donate when it is refurbished). That can also include digital media productions for images, stories, and videos that are culturally appropriate to CFA recruiting demographics. To get more experienced help with all this, consider posting internships with partner colleges. If there is funding attached to those internships, so much the better. Let experienced students manage other students. Everyone upskills that way.