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PRESS RELEASE

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Karina Campos

CSUSB Palm Desert Campus graduate turns internship into full-time career with the City of Indio

PALM DESERT, Calif. — For many college students, internships provide a valuable bridge between education and career — and for Karina Campos, a recent graduate of Cal State San Bernardino’s Palm Desert Campus, that bridge led directly to a full-time position with the City of Indio.

Campos earned a bachelor of arts degree in business administration with a concentration in marketing from the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus in May 2022, and she says that her coursework not only provided a strong foundation in business, but also helped her discover the breadth of opportunities within the field.

“My studies broadened my perspective and showed me the wide range of opportunities a business degree can provide,” Campos said. “It helped me define and shape my career goals.”

While still in college, Campos learned about an internship opportunity with the City of Indio through a social media post shared by Oscar Fonseca, the career counselor at the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus.

As a first-generation college student who worked full-time while pursuing her degree, Campos was determined to create professional opportunities for herself.

“Working full-time during college limited the extracurricular activities I could participate in,” she said. “Still, I knew I had to build my skills and gain experience. That motivated me to apply for every internship and job I could find.”

That motivation led to a paid internship in the City of Indio’s Economic Development Department, where she joined the marketing division as a marketing intern. Her role included a wide range of responsibilities — from social media management and graphic design to press release writing, website updates, media coordination and event promotion.

“My coursework at CSUSB gave me the tools to succeed,” she said. “I applied my communication, computer and writing skills daily. Everything I learned in class translated directly into my work at the city.”

Throughout her internship, Campos received mentorship from city leaders who recognized her potential. One of those mentors was Economic Development Director Miguel Ramirez-Cornejo, who offered career guidance and encouragement even before she joined his department.

“Miguel took the time to listen to my goals, give me guidance and even review my resume,” she said. “His mentorship showed me the value of leaders who invest in the growth of others.”

Her internship taught her two lessons that continue to shape her professional approach: the power of networking and the importance of adaptability.

“Building connections opens doors you don’t even know exist,” she said. “And staying open-minded — whether learning a new system or helping another department — makes you a stronger professional.”

Although she never imagined herself doing marketing in local government, Campos embraced the challenge.

“It was unfamiliar and at times uncomfortable,” she recalled. “But learning to embrace the unknown taught me resilience and adaptability.”

After about a year as an intern, Campos began to see a path to full-time employment. Her work ethic and dedication were recognized by her supervisors, and with the support of her director and the city manager, she transitioned into a full-time marketing assistant role.

“The transition was smooth since I had already been working with the city for a year,” she said. “I knew my team and the culture, but the responsibilities increased — and I was excited to take them on.”

Her initiative during the internship — including taking on additional tasks such as managing invoices, purchase orders and contracts for the Fleet Division — showcased her reliability and commitment to the organization. That dedication paid off once again when she was later promoted to marketing analyst.

She credits Public Information Officer Jessica Mediano for her continued professional growth.

“Jessica has guided me in areas like design and public relations, and her mentorship has been invaluable,” she said.

Looking back, Campos describes her internship as “life changing.”

“It showed me that I could combine my passion for marketing with public service,” she said. “It opened the door to a career I hadn’t imagined before.”

Now, she encourages current CSUSB Palm Desert Campus students to seek out similar opportunities.

“Don’t let fear hold you back — apply for every opportunity,” she said. “Even if you don’t land it, the process of applying and interviewing is valuable experience. No one else can create opportunities for you — you have to create them for yourself.”

Her education at CSUSB gave Campos the academic foundation she needed, and her internship provided the real-world experience to turn that knowledge into impact.

“It’s been an honor to use my skills to give back to my community,” she said. “I plan to keep saying yes to new projects and challenges, knowing each one will teach me something new.”

About the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus: The CSUSB Palm Desert Campus is dedicated to providing a transformative educational experience in the Coachella Valley. With a focus on academic excellence and community engagement, the campus offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs designed to meet the diverse needs of its students and the region.

For more information about the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus, contact Mike Singer in the Office of Marketing and Communications at msinger@csusb.edu or (760) 341-2883, ext. 78107, or visit the PDC website at www.csusb.edu/pdc.