

# Dun & Bradstreet Credibility Corp. Invests In The Future

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Before seven rising seniors embark on their final year of high school, Friday marked a different type of graduation at Dun & Bradstreet Credibility Corp. in Malibu — the end of a rigorous summer internship.

The company brought on seven students for six weeks this summer, culminating in a momentous celebration where each of them received a \$4,300 college scholarship.

“Finish high school, then we hope you go to college, graduate and come back and replace us,” CEO Jeff Stibel told the students during a presentation attended by about 100 parents, school district officials and company employees.

During their time with the national credit-building firm, each student was assigned to a specific department: finance, social media, legal, marketing, creative strategies or technology. This summer also marked the first time the office hired high school interns.

“We had very mixed feelings about bringing in high school interns,” Stibel joked on Friday.

And what internship is complete without a rookie mistake?

Technology interns Robert Butchko and Luke Larson learned that the hard way this summer when they accidentally crashed the company website for a day.

“We changed something on the website, which accidentally took everything down,” Butchko said in a video recapping the interns’ summer journeys, eliciting raucous laughter from the group.

Accidents aside, each student came a long way during their time at D&B, getting hands-on experience in fields they might study in the future, along with figuring out what they “don’t want to do,” as Stibel put it.

Ariel Silverman, who interned in the finance department, was relieved to be working closely with professionals as opposed to some of her friends, who had less glamorous summer internships.

“I have a lot of friends who are working in City Hall and doing filing all day,” she said. During her



## Justin Nelson

Justin Nelson was one of seven rising seniors who interned at the credit-building firm this summer.

summer, though, she helped identify \$267,000 worth of tax savings for some of D&B's clients.

Larson, the only intern from Malibu High, said it "definitely feels great" to have completed his technology internship. He's considering applying to UC Berkeley.

Santa Monica High School's Nikan Namiri, who interned with the marketing department, is thinking of applying to USC or UC Berkeley.

"I just started off as someone who wanted to learn a lot about business," he told *The Malibu Times*. "I ended up learning so much."

Other interns included Michael Botfeld (legal department), Perry Arnold (creative strategies) and Justin Nelson (social media).

The inaugural internship program blossomed out of an ongoing partnership between D&B Credibility Corp.'s EdAhead Initiative and the Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation. Under EdAhead, the company matches each employee's contribution and gives a second match to local public school systems equal to the total aggregate match of the office employees' amounts.

Earlier this year, D&B Credibility Corp. gave the Education Foundation a check for \$180,000, and matching donations pushed that total to \$330,000.

The credit firm wanted to go beyond its donation, though, and asked the Education Foundation how it could help more. Thus came about the idea for a high school internship program.

"The rationale behind this was to do what so many companies did for us," Stibel said. "I interned all through high school and college."

But it wasn't all just work. The tight-knit group of interns formed a special camaraderie during their time at the office, which overlooks the Malibu Pier and coastline. They competed in a t-shirt design contest, organized group hikes at Solstice Canyon and attended an executive luncheon together. Another plus was the office's break room, which features foosball, a pool table and other activities to help with the work day at D&B Credibility Corp.

Perhaps one intern put it best: "I don't know how they achieve the [work and play] balance here, but it's pretty perfect."