

Tatsuya Shimokoshi, age 24, Pacific Island Club, Guam, Internship Summer 2017

Why did you choose this particular internship?

When I transferred to UCF Rosen College, I made lots of friends at the school with amazing personalities and a strong work ethic. Because of their influence, I decided to follow my heart and take advantage of the opportunity to intern overseas before someone else did. Guam is a U.S. territory so this wasn't very much of an international internship for me since I'm from Japan. I was quite hesitant on doing the internship mainly because International students can't take the whole semester off with the exception of the summer or the graduating semester. I only have two more semesters at UCF Rosen College, which also played a factor. I thought to myself that if I didn't take advantage of this remarkable opportunity that it will never come again. Before taking this internship, I was working at a global travel distribution company. It's an amazing company in Orlando for an international recruitment internship. I really loved the company and kept working there, but I also wanted to work in other areas of the industry. This is why I accepted the position for Ken Corporation. I'm sure that this experience will help me in the future.



Describe the process for applying for the internship.

I figured the process would be different. The hotel management company is called Ken Corporation. The recruiter for Ken Corp introduced some hotels that are willing to hire students for internships from the states. Once I decided which hotel to work for, he passed on my resume to the hotel's human resource department. After consideration, I then had my online interview scheduled. I accepted the offer three months before I left Orlando. HR gave me all necessary documents and agreement papers. I then talked with UCF Rosen College internship and international advisers for CPT letters.

Describe the process of getting a passport and visa.

I already had an active passport and visa. I don't know how American citizens apply for it, but I believe Internship advisers or an international department at the main campus will offer assistance.

Tell me how your parents, family and friends reacted when you told them where you would be interning.

Some of my friends did not know where Guam is, even though it is a U.S territory. My family was astonished. Guam is much closer to Japan than Orlando, so it was more convenient for them to visit if they wanted to.

Describe the trip to and from the internship.

The flight from Orlando to Guam took approximately 25 hours, with at least two or three transferring flights. I departed from Orlando International Airport to Georgia International airport through Delta. I only had 50 minutes to transfer for the flight to Narita international Airport, Japan. Lucky enough, I could stay in Japan for a few hours to see my family at the airport. Being at a Japanese airport it was very fitting since I can speak Japanese. I could manage a time schedule for next flight. Upon arrival in Guam, bellmen from the hotel staff picked me up and showed me all around town. The flight is long and exhausting. Also, Guam is 12 hours ahead of Orlando. If you want to work outside the country, you must check the time difference.

Tell me about your most exciting moment from the internship experience.

I was front of the house cross-training in positions such as front desk, guest service, bellmen, etc. While I was working there a Korean lady gave me \$1 tip. I was confused as to why she gave me a tip because I didn't do anything for her. She mentioned she loved my smile. Then I laughed and told her I loved her smile too.



Did you ever get homesick and if you did what did you do about it?

Never! Most of the employees lived in the hotel, so there was someone who I could always communicate with. We always ate dinner, hiked, and sometimes swam in the beach within the hotel property. There was never a time for me to feel homesick because I had so much fun.





Several months is a long time to be away from home, and in a foreign country, what's the biggest lesson you learned about long-term travel.

I've been away from home before. One thing I learned is that the people from Guam are very hospitable. No need to be nervous or anxious upon your arrival. The residents of Guam will take good care of you. It gives you the flexibility of adapting to other cultures. I was there for three months so I adapted pretty well.

What would you say to another student who is considering an international internship?

My experience didn't really feel like an international internship mainly because Guam is a U.S. territory. But that island has a lot of different cultures. You have to be open-minded to learn

about the other cultures and attempting to learn and speak the languages. The most prominent languages spoken surprisingly were Korean, Japanese, Chinese, and of course English. You can learn a lot about Guam before your departure. That way you will be good to go before you arrive. The first month of the internship is busy and you might get a bit panicky. You are never idle, so you do not have time to feel homesick. But preparing before your internship will help. All hospitality major people can work anywhere even where English is not the first language.

If you had the opportunity to do this again, would you?

Yes, the experience was life-changing. Guam is such a fascinating place. Guam is a very global place with visitors from all over the world. I would love to do the experience all over. Also, I'd love to work all over the world.

Do you think this internship will help you get the job and career you want? Why or Why Not?

Most definitely! The experience was very helpful for my resume. I was able to network and gained essential skills needed for management.

What's your advice for getting the most from an internship experience?

Observe the guests, learn what they like and go about providing good service. Colleagues are your closest friends so you have to always support each other. You don't necessarily need to be fluent in the language spoken. Show your personality and passion. Try to bring about your true potential.