

Job Shadow Day



Article by Gabino and Kenneth, Juniors at Mt. Pleasant High School
Photos by Kit Kwan, City of San José Employee
Junior Achievement/City of San José articles

There are eighth graders here from Ida Price Middle School and juniors from Mt. Pleasant High School (Manufacturing and Technology). Students left from Mt. Pleasant at 8:00 in a charter bus and arrived at the City of San José at 8:30 a.m. While eating breakfast, we saw a presentation by Kelly Spivey and Adrianna Rivas on the agenda for the day. Shortly after, we went to the City Council Chambers, where the Deputy City Manager, Deanna Santana, talked of how she worked hard and became the youngest Deputy on staff. She is thirty-six years old. Ed Solis, from Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, who originally came from East LA, considered San Jose his home. His parents weren't expecting him to go to college; they thought high school was good enough. He went to the Marines, and got a scholarship as a wrestler to be able to complete college. Ed took us through the Lifeboat exercise to show partnership, which is what we learned today.



We were supposed to go the fire department, but then Adrianna assigned us to the Office of Economic Development. I didn't know what the Office of Economic Development meant. We thought it was about money. One of the responsibilities is to help youth find jobs in our community. We found out that we were going to be reporters and to interview the youth involved in today's program. We planned out our schedule, to be organized to go to as many departments as we could. This is what we found out.



Redevelopment Agency: Jaime Figueroa, a junior from Mt. Pleasant, is interested in working with Redevelopment. He would like to go to San José State University. It takes a long time to make a building because you have to get architects and contractors. At the beginning of the day, they looked over the models of the downtown, and he felt neutral about the day. At the end of the day, when we caught up with Jaime, he learned that it was more interesting. There were maps, alcoves, alarm systems, and much more. Edith Ramirez from the Redevelopment Agency was a great coach for the day.



In the hallway, we met up with Isaiah Schmalbeck and Stephanie Richardson, eighth graders at Ida Price Middle School, who visited with General Services Department. They liked the experience because they thought it was informative. Also they were exposed to the different types of jobs in the City of San José. They emphasized safety, and they had to be flexible since deadlines are always changing. There are a lot of different things to learn when there are many events to coordinate. They also liked that they would get to work with a lot of different people. Isaiah was interested in making glass structures, because it was a hands-on job. They also got to manage the sketches (drawings) at the new City Hall.

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Next, we went to the 2nd Floor to observe Human Resources. Students, Michael Rosas, Megan Robinson, Anthony Sheler, Long Tran, Aloyasia Basco, and Francisco, were listening to a presentation from Sarah Nunez. At the time of our interview, none of the students were interested in a career in Human Resources. However, they all understood how important an HR department would be to interact with them whether it is a private sector or a public sector job.

Then we stopped in at the Mercury News to get some advice on reporting. Janice Rombeck said, "Free press is the foundation of democracy." She also told us that her job is not to ensure that the Mercury News sells papers, but she did state that they were competing with the internet for readers. The press watches people in government to see that they are doing the right thing and report it either way. There are always different viewpoints, and nothing is black or white, but there are some gray spots in reporting, states Janice.

Now we went to the best department, the one and only IT. There we interviewed JP Mann and Francisco Padilla from Mt. Pleasant. They would like a career in IT in the future. They were surprised that there is so much technology at City Hall. The way of the internet and the way it works is very interesting to both of them. If they were in middle school, this wouldn't be so interesting to them; however, since they are almost finished with high school, they are more into it. They thought it was going to be boring today, but the IT team of Kathy and Vijay made them very happy to visit the City. JP hopes that he can intern with the City this summer to learn even more.

After a tasty lunch, we visited Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services where MaryBeth Carter showed us the plans for the new skate park. They are building it at Lake Cunningham. We were so into the conversation and looking at the plans that we forgot to ask about the day. Sorry about that, Oscar and Nathaniel.

All in all, at the beginning of the day, we were supposed to go to a department that we weren't focused on. Luckily we were changed to the Office of Economic Development with Suzanne Wolf and Kit Kwan as our guides to interview youth—as helping youth find jobs and learn about City government is one of the key activities of work2future in the Office of Economic Development. Working with Suzanne and Kit was very fun and interesting. We found out that reporting moves you around from place to place and keeps you very busy on Groundhog Job Shadow Day.

