



2016 Tax Season Internship Testimonials

Jesus Moreno

My experience at Cray Kaiser has been outstanding. There were challenges that have been overcome, several concepts learned, and skills that have been developed and strengthened. While this was my first internship at an accounting firm, it was not my first internship in a professional setting. Here are some challenges I faced and things I learned.

In the beginning, I felt very nervous and sometimes even clueless. The nervousness was expected, but after the first day, a federal tax update seminar, I felt overwhelmed with all the information and asked myself what I had gotten myself into. Another challenge I faced was during training; again, the abundance of information simply felt excessive so it was challenging to take concise notes that would allow me to later remember all that was said. The challenge that seemed most nerve-racking towards the end of the experience was having to call clients about open points.

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Just as I felt nervous and unsure in the beginning, with time, I was able to face these challenges, overcome them, and learn from them. I learned that I was not the only one to feel nervous and sometimes clueless. After speaking with the other interns, I realized we were all in it together and were there to help each other. I learned that a lot of the language and concepts that felt like an abundance of information during training stuck in the back of my mind and were familiar once I encountered them. I learned that it is a great idea to write down what I want to say to the client over the phone, rehearse it once or twice, and speak clearly and confidently.

Some of the skills I developed include researching and paying attention to details, especially while looking for answers. I learned that it is very important to always carry a notepad and pencil when speaking with anyone who is giving directions. I also improved my skills in working well with others, especially in an office setting.

Several aspects stood out about Cray Kaiser as an organization that deems it unique, but the ones that stood out the most were the following: First, I loved the intimacy and friendliness among the whole crew. The position or rank of each employee or partner did not seem to matter at any given point. As an intern, I never felt any less of a person or employee than anyone else in the office, including the partners. That was a huge part of the experience I loved. Another aspect that makes Cray Kaiser unique is how during and even after all the hard work, the ring leaders, usually some or all of the partners, would find ways for us all to remain happy, have fun and enjoy ourselves. It seems the goal was to keep us engaged and looking forward to going to work every day. Goal accomplished!



Ben Tjoelker

My internship at Cray Kaiser was truly a positive experience. I was exposed to a variety of different projects, which helped reinforce what I had learned in my classes. Sometimes, it can be a lot easier to learn through hands-on experience than from reading out of a textbook or listening to lectures, and I definitely feel that I learned and grew a lot as a result of this experience.

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While interning at Cray Kaiser, I had the opportunity to work on tax returns for a variety of entities, including corporations, partnerships, individuals and even trusts. When I expressed an interest in audit, they found ways for me to assist on several audits over the course of my internship. I also worked on a review alongside one of the full-time staff members, which required us to travel to the client over the course of a week. Being able to work on many different projects helped me discover what I was interested in. I believe they cared not only about the work I did for them, but also what I learned from my experience as well.

I would definitely recommend interning at a firm like Cray Kaiser. The variety of tasks that I had during my internship was more diverse than what some of my peers were doing at other firms, and I think this will give me an advantage as I enter my career. Furthermore, the support and encouragement I received from the staff members made me feel welcome even during challenging moments. Everyone at the firm has an evident passion for the work they do and the clients they serve. Overall, I would say my internship experience at Cray Kaiser was one of the most valuable components of my education so far, and I think it has prepared me well for life after graduation.



Aliya Arslanbayeva

My name is Aliya, and I am an international graduate student from Kazakhstan. I had a great experience with Cray Kaiser, which I would love to share with you. I started my internship in January 2016, and I had an opportunity to work in different fields of accounting. I am very grateful that I had a chance to work on compilations, preparation tax returns and audit.

First, we started training on updates in preparation of corporate and individual tax returns. Then I joined the audit teams in the suburbs of Chicago. At this time, I have learned about materiality, assertions, risk and misstatements and how these concepts were implemented in each of the procedures that we were performing. Audit team members were very patient in explaining and helping me understand how our testing and findings will subsequently affect following procedures. Also, actual experience testing and documenting work helped me during my audit class that I had this semester.

I grew both professionally and personally. This experience increased my confidence in my path that I took two years ago starting my Master's program far away from home.

As tax season approached, I started to do more individual tax returns. Cray Kaiser's tax department was training and guiding me through various taxation issues and how they affect taxpayers. I have learned how to work with various tax and accounting software. Working on different returns at the same time taught me how to prioritize and be accountable for every minute spent on a particular client.

I was taught to do so many things in a short time and learned a lot from the different projects in tax, accounting and audit. This is my first time working in the U.S., and I have been very lucky to be in such friendly environment. This experience was extremely valuable and unforgettable for me.

I can describe my internship as exciting, challenging and beneficial. I grew both professionally and personally. This experience increased my confidence in my path that I took two years ago starting my Master's program far away from home.



Melanie Ross

I would like to thank Cray Kaiser for allowing me the opportunity to join the firm this 2016 tax season to work and learn in an environment where everyone was respectful, supportive and knowledgeable.

I was able to work on a variety of returns (personal, trusts and business) to add to my own personal strengths and learn at my own pace.

I joined the firm as an intern, but not your typical intern, rather one who comes with many years of experience in the financial services industry and a certification in financial planning. I had just completed the Enrolled Agent designation and was looking to enhance what I learned and apply it with practical experience in preparing both personal and business taxes.

Working at Cray Kaiser was the perfect environment for me. Training was provided from a talented group of CPAs in the tax department who were always there to answer any questions or help with any problems that arose. I was able to work on a variety of returns (personal, trusts and business) to add to my own personal strengths and learn at my own pace.

The firm is very efficient and runs with an open door policy from the supervisory staff to the partners. This creates a better learning environment and allows one to work directly with the partners. Everyone is treated with respect and encouraged to learn on an independent level.

As an intern, or anyone who is looking to join a tax accounting firm, I would recommend applying to Cray Kaiser. The depth of learning you will receive, the range of clients you will encounter, and the chance to work with the best is invaluable. It is a perfect mid size firm, which allows you to be involved with all aspects of the job and see the beginning process of the tax preparation phase to the end, plus work on a variety of other assignments.

I can attest that anyone who is looking to hire an accounting firm can be assured that Cray Kaiser operates with high standards and employs a staff that is professional, competent and trustworthy.



Parul Singh

Working at Cray Kaiser has been an influential experience for me, and I am so grateful. I couldn't have wished for a better management team. They understand the true meaning of an internship, which is to learn what an individual does not already know.

Every time I had a question, I did not hesitate to ask because the attitude and personalities at Cray Kaiser are really bright and encouraging.

The whole atmosphere is phenomenal. The partners here at Cray Kaiser practice an open door policy, which is not only helpful to the interns, but also to the current employees of the company. Every time I had a question, I did not hesitate to ask because the attitude and personalities at Cray Kaiser are really bright and encouraging. It was easy to talk to everyone here, and when the conversations are sincere and comfortable, you get to learn about something new every day. Communication and organization is key when working for a company such as this one. You're not only preparing tax returns, you also need to remember days, if not weeks, of information that you will ultimately get back to and finish. I came here with little knowledge about tax accounting. When I first walked through the entrance, the office alone intimidated me because I never experienced working in such an environment. My internship gave me so much knowledge, confidence and experience. Cray Kaiser has granted me the ability to be ready for the next steps in my career.

Are you interested in becoming an intern at Cray Kaiser for the next tax season?

Email CK staff at info@craykaiser.com to find out how to apply.