



Corporate Affiliates Program Increases Campus Visibility for Novacoast

Novacoast is a Santa Barbara based IT Professional Services and Product Development Company. Eron Howard, Novacoast's Vice President of Development and UCSB Alum, coordinates Novacoast's recruiting and intern program with UC Santa Barbara. Today, 25-30% of all Novacoast employees are UCSB alumnus. Based on the nature of Novacoast's business, they have very stringent skill set requirements for the type of customer facing consulting developers they employ.

Novacoast has been recruiting top-engineers exclusively out of UC Santa Barbara for over 5 years. Eron noticed, once the word got out about the quality of Computer Science majors who were graduating from UC Santa Barbara, competing for top quality software engineering graduates became more challenging as Microsoft, Apple, Google and others moved in. Novacoast was attending fall and spring career fairs on campus and discovered the best students were not the ones necessarily attending these events. They then decided they needed to step up their campus penetration efforts to attract the best and brightest prospective employees.



Eron Howard
Vice President Development

To assist them with their recruiting efforts, they joined the UC Santa Barbara Corporate Affiliates Program (CAP). This allowed them to significantly increase their visibility on the campus. They started with fall and spring information sessions to inform students about Novacoast and encourage them to apply for internships at the company. Information sessions are advertised campus meetings where companies have the opportunity to present to students an overview of their company and participate in interactive discussion forums. These sessions also allow students to have discussions with the company and submit their resumes for potential interviews in the future. Eron discovered that if he conducted a Novacoast information session during the first few weeks of classes in the fall with pizza and IPOD give-aways, the students would come in flocks.

This was a great start for filling their pipeline for interns for the year.

The main reason Novacoast has been so successful targeting the right students as future employees is because they have created a robust intern program. This is their primary avenue to cultivating full-time consulting developers. This program allows them to immerse the interns into the culture of Novacoast's business and ensure alignment of the intern with the career path of a Novacoast developer. The intern program generally lasts 6 to 12 months. They have anywhere from 8 to 15 UCSB Computer Science majors interning at any time. During this period, the intern has the opportunity to pick a project to work on and set his or her own deadlines. Once an engineer is promoted to a full time consulting developer, they will spend a lot of time in front of the customer representing Novacoast to Information Technology Director-level clients. Having the deep knowledge of Novacoast business practices and the ability to represent themselves technically, in front of high caliber IT professionals is paramount.

Another recruiting avenue that Novacoast has utilized is the UCSB Computer Science Capstone program (<http://capstone.cs.ucsb.edu>). This course is an industry sponsored two-quarter sequence of undergraduate classes that presents an opportunity to develop innovative solutions to real industry problems. Student teams work on challenge problems suggested by industry leaders. Solutions to these problems require innovative approaches that are at the frontier of the available technology.

Eron says "The UCSB Capstone program puts students in a real world project scenario; complete with specification development, timelines and deliverables." Novacoast has participated in the program 3 consecutive years, and with a team of 5 or 6 students, he hires at least one team member, each year, as a full time employee.

To learn more about how your company can work with UC Santa Barbara, contact Leslie Edwards (805-893-3944/edwards@engineering.ucsb.edu) or Chris Russo (805-893-5544/crusso@engineering.ucsb.edu) in the Corporate Affiliate Programs office.

industry.ucsb.edu