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Juneau Construction Company Launches Virtual Internship Experience

The summer internship program at Juneau Construction Company has long served as a pipeline for young talent to gain valuable experience in the construction industry. College students in the program, from around the country, have learned first-hand Juneau's practices and experienced the company culture. For many, it has led to their eventual hiring at Juneau, one of the Southeast's premier commercial contractors.

A Juneau internship is all about gaining hands-on experience, but due to COVID-19, anything "hands-on" is off the table for now, which is why Juneau is taking an industry-leading approach to its internship experience and recreating it as a virtual/remote experience under a new banner: VIP2020 (Virtual Internship Program). Juneau will welcome 12 interns into the VIP2020 this summer, among them is one student from Florida International University: **Andrea Peña '21**.

"In the world of commercial construction, the ability to adapt to changes on the jobsite and in the office is the key to survival," **Nancy Juneau**, CEO, said. "In construction, plans are drawn out for months, if not years. Untold hours are poured into preparing for the smallest details. Yet in a blink, everything can change. In order to adapt to changes everywhere brought on by the pandemic, we have made this move with our summer interns. What more of a 'real-world experience' can we offer these soon-to-be college grads!"

Matt Algeo, Director of Field Operations, is one of the lead innovators of the six-week VIP2020. He said the goal for VIP2020 is to provide an engaging, diverse and comprehensive internship experience with Juneau, always keeping at the forefront the health and safety of everyone involved.

He believes the interns will gain valuable real-world construction experience, hone strong

communication and time-management skills, as well as gain knowledge of virtual collaborative platforms that are key to succeeding in a remote summer role—all responsibilities with which college students in 2020 are already familiar and comfortable.

“For these Gen-Z interns, a ‘transition’ to a more remote and virtual internship experience will be almost second-nature,” Mr. Algeo said. “Of course, it will look and feel dramatically different than what our interns have experienced in the past, but because of COVID, everything is different today. We simply adjust, adapt and move forward, and that’s what the VIP2020 experience is all about.”

Converting to remote work requires quite a bit of forethought as to how to design meaningful construction-related tasks and how to supervise them in a productive way. Juneau is confident it will provide a significant internship experience and has formulated a plan that can be clearly articulated to interns, so they are well-equipped to understand the tasks and outcomes they are responsible for by the end of VIP2020.

Each intern will spend half the program in Preconstruction and half in Operations, with a separate Manager for each session and everything supervised by a Mentor that was assigned to the intern at the beginning of his or her VIP2020 experience. By the end of each session, the interns will fully complete their curriculum and reflect on what was learned, both new skills and enhancements of existing knowledge.

“VIP2020 is an opportunity for us to continue building a talent pipeline,” Ms. Juneau said. “We do expect some of our interns to become employees and we want to give them a running start at that, while we continue to build upon the great relationships we have formed with colleges and universities. This will look entirely different than what was done in the past, but we know that it will be a valuable experience for all involved—one that none of us will ever forget.”

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About Juneau Construction Company:

Juneau Construction Company is one of the fastest-growing construction firms in the Southeast. Headquartered in Atlanta with offices in Miami and Tampa, the industry-leading company performs as Construction Managers, Design-Builders and General Contractors on high-profile projects in both the public and private sectors. Started by Nancy Juneau, CEO, and Les Juneau, President, in 1997, Juneau has gone on to become one of the elite contractors in the Southeast. According to the Atlanta Business Chronicle, Juneau currently ranks as the No. 20 Commercial Contractor in Atlanta and is the No. 1 Woman-Owned Construction Firm in Georgia. Juneau continues to excel in its core markets – Adaptive Re-use/Restoration, Commercial, Higher Education, Hospitality, Mixed-Use, Multi-Family, Senior Living, Student Housing – and is well-positioned to execute any product within these markets.