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AirPark Columbus College Campus to Career Spotlight



Featured Employee: Jose Loyo Hernandez

BS, Robotics Engineering Technology, Purdue Polytechnic Institute Columbus
Test Engineer, Cummins Inc.

Born in Mexico, but raised the majority of his life in Columbus, Ind. Jose Loyo Hernandez has had the opportunity of a lifetime thanks to his family and people in the Columbus community.

Jose enjoyed all of his elementary, middle, and high school years in Columbus and feels very fortunate to have the positive experiences he's had.

"I had a mentor, named Jesus Escobar, my junior year of high school through the TuFuturo program, and he emphasized both internships and scholarships," said Jose. "He worked for Cummins, volunteered for CEC, and was just an awesome individual."

Jose's advice is to take many classes in high school to experience different career options. He said that the Project Lead the Way pre-engineering classes were also extremely helpful to explore what all is out there workforce-wise.

"I learned to focus on my studies. But, coming from a family with a language barrier provided an added hurdle. My personal desire was to learn academically and succeed through schooling."

But, Jose didn't have to leave his hometown to keep his educational journey going. Because he had growth opportunities and his family in Columbus, he decided to go to Purdue Polytechnic to get his four-year bachelor's degree in robotics engineering technology. And he got to work on a few different career trial experiences, as well.

"I really liked video games, Legos, and trying to figure out how I can fix things," said Jose. "I was not cut out to be a lawyer. I knew I wanted to be an engineer. But, the hard part was trying to figure out what type of engineering I could do. When I found out Purdue Polytechnic had a robotics program, I was very interested."

During his time at Purdue Polytechnic, Jose had two different internships during his senior year and then worked full-time. He said that he really enjoyed his opportunity to be an intern at Cummins.

"They treated us so well and gave us incredible experiences. I learned so much in a positive work environment and felt the value that I was able to add to the team," said Jose. "Even as an intern."

What Jose does now is mostly mechanical work at Cummins. He's a big fan of doing something career-wise because you love it. Which will hopefully turn into something financially rewarding, as well.

"My dad was working crazy long hours and my mom would wake up at 3 a.m., work, clean, cook. She never got a break. I was the oldest in the family," said Jose.

He was the first in his family to go to college, but his younger brother is following in his footsteps. He started college this fall.

"The immigration system is outdated and oftentimes broken, but the biggest thing my parents taught me is that 'a lot of stuff can be taken away, but no one can take away what you know.'"

Because of the educational support from his family, and incredible types of career exposure and mentorship, Jose wants to help others in the same type of way.

Now a mentor himself in the TuFuturo program, he will work with a mentee through a two-year commitment and journey with them to see what things the student is interested in, introduce them to new experiences and share past experiences. The whole experience is to get the mentee thinking about different types of career options, etc. and to start the whole networking process, an important component of career development.

"The mentorship through TuFuturo definitely helped to define my career focus, sharpen it, and assure me that 'this is something I want to do.'"

Jose's extended family is still in Columbus, including his own nuclear family. Jose wants his children to have the same type of educational resources that he had and still has within the community.

"In Columbus, you have so many educational resources available, including processes, mentoring, internships, advice, guidance and the Education Coalition! There's really an abundance of help – which is awesome!"