

A PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP CONNECTING YOUNG ADULTS TO PAID INTERNSHIPS IN THE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT INDUSTRY



avanath₊

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Since 2020, **Urban Alliance** (UA) has been introducing high school students to careers in the property management and real estate/leasing industry. Through the Property Management Pathway, young adults get exposure to early career and work-based opportunities as they work side-by-side with industry professionals.

Avanath, an investment firm that acquires, owns, renovates, and operates affordable, workforce, and value-oriented apartment communities across the U.S. is a big part of giving Urban Alliance students access to this rewarding industry. Interns learn different skills and receive real-world work experience with mentors supporting them along the way.

The company became an Urban Alliance Property Management Pathway employer partner in 2022 and has hosted six interns in the Detroit, Chicago, and Greater DC regions. Interns are working at Avanath property sites including Acclaim at Lake Largo in Upper Marlboro, Maryland; Academy at Drexel Court and Scotland Yard in Chicago; and North End Village and Cameron Court in Detroit.

“Participating in Urban Alliance’s Property Management Pathway program has allowed our leaders to gain fresh perspectives, experiences, and ideas from the students. This year’s mentors gained a greater understanding of diverse backgrounds and experiences, which has aided in cultivating an inclusive and respectful workplace culture,” said Dana Bartlett, Talent Acquisition Manager at Avanath.



Tisha Franklin interned at Avanath’s Academy at Drexel Court and now teaches in Chicago Public Schools

“Tisha came to Drexel not knowing what to expect but open to learning everything we had to offer, and she fit right in. She was very pleasant to work with, a quick learner, eager to do her job at all times and that helped me a lot. We wanted to keep her forever, but I knew she had her own career path set. It was a wonderful experience for me, and we would welcome an Urban Alliance intern at any time.”

**Vicki Price, Community Manager,
Academy at Drexel Court, Chicago**

STUDENT VOICES

FELICIA ANDREWS graduated from Chicago's International Charter School (CICS) Longwood High School and Malcolm X College. Felicia is currently working at a chiropractic clinic as she begins to plan a return to school and study nursing. She enjoyed the internship at Avanath and recognized it as an opportunity to build confidence in "a lot of areas," she said.

Her mentor, Community Manager Sean Drumgoole, commends Felicia's contributions and said, "I appreciate her hard work, dedication, helpfulness and positive attitude. She can count on a highly favorable recommendation from Avanath." The Urban Alliance relationship continues post-graduation for Felicia and she appreciates the long-standing connection as an alumnus. "I really appreciate how they are consistent in looking out for their alumni and checking on us. It really goes a long way with me," she said.



Felicia Andrews and Sean Drumgoole



D'JUANTAE KIMBLE graduated from Cesar Chavez Public Charter School in the Greater DC region and is currently working as a maintenance technician. He enjoys using his hands for maintenance work including problem-solving, repairing faulty outlets and light fixtures. He has a passion for cars and automotive technology.

In addition to the skills learned on the job, D'juantae was able to improve how to communicate and engage with others in a professional environment. The internship at Avanath has put him on the path to a career that is in-demand. D'juante now holds the IREM (Institute of Real Estate Management) and Edge 2 Learn (E2L) industry certifications. The internship "gives young adults like me a chance to have a first step into a career that you can benefit from in the long run no matter what career path we pursue," he said.

"Together with Avanath we are empowering young adults to reach for the stars and pursue their version of the American Dream. We look forward to continued growth and success knowing that partnerships like these are the cornerstone of positive change in our communities."

Alphonso Amos, Executive Director, Urban Alliance, Detroit Region

A CONVERSATION WITH DANA BARTLETT AVANATH TALENT ACQUISITION MANAGER

What has been the greatest benefit for Avanath to be an employer partner in Urban Alliance's Property Management Pathway program?

Participating in UA's Property Management Pathway program has allowed our leaders to gain new fresh perspectives, experiences, and ideas from these students. This year's mentors gained a greater understanding of different backgrounds and experiences, which has aided in cultivating an inclusive and respectful workplace culture. Developing these relationships with the students has also allowed Avanath to tap into a unique talent pipeline that is open to learning and exploring.

What was the key factor that led you to want to participate with Urban Alliance?

At Avanath we are committed to building strong communities and enhancing the lifestyle of our residents through service. What better way to provide service to our community than mentoring and preparing high school students for the workforce.

How do young people benefit from the internship at Avanath?

Students are given an opportunity to explore a career in property management. They are paired with industry leaders and afforded firsthand experience into the life of a property management professional, while developing essential skills such as communication, teamwork, problem solving, and time management; skills that are transferable and valuable regardless of the career path they chose. Too often, youth are not always equipped with readiness before entering the workforce. Partnering with UA provides an avenue for preparation.



Pictured left to right: Dana Bartlett, D'juante Kimble, and Ramiro Forti, UA Internship Program Lead

What would you tell other companies about becoming a UA partner?

Like Nike says, "just do it!" Becoming a UA partner is an opportunity to engage with and support young people in our communities. This partnership also gives access to a pool of motivated and diverse young talent and opens the door to collaborate with other likeminded community organizations.

Why is it important for your company to invest in the future of young people?

Avanath is committed to positively affecting and expanding opportunities in urban communities. A high majority of the 2023 interns came from challenging backgrounds and faced many opportunity barriers. Partnering with Urban Alliance helps to bridge those opportunity gaps.