

How the Southwest Airlines' CHIP Program Prepares Technology New Hires for Success

One of the best perks of being a New Hire or Intern within our Technology Department at Southwest Airlines is participating in our College Hire and Intern Program (CHIP). I've had the absolute pleasure of being a part of CHIP as an Associate Hire and now as its current Program Manager. Our mission is to provide social, learning, and professional growth opportunities as well as mentorship resources to program participants. CHIP also helps reinforce Southwest's values of Warrior Spirit, Servant's Heart, and Fun-LUVing Attitude with New Hires, Interns, their Leaders, and the Technology Department. You might be wondering how exactly do we do all of this?

Well, in addition to our recurring Onboarding experience that familiarizes New Hires with our department, Company Culture, benefits, and more, CHIP members also get to participate in a variety of fun workshops and events during their first several weeks at Southwest Airlines. One such event is our Southwest Airlines Onboarding Lab, or "SWOL" for short. This is a three day workshop in which New Hires come together to create unique, innovative solutions to a problem statement or prompt related to our airline or industry. This workshop allows participants to flex all of their creative muscles, practice presenting to Senior Leadership and their peers, and learn about our Company, all while having fun getting to know their fellow Coworkers. As a result of each workshop, we also brainstorm fun, wacky ideas to better engage our Customers, share our Southwest Culture, and enhance our website and mobile app prototypes. And that's not to mention the massive first place 6-foot tall trophy and grand prize of receiving a free day!



New Southwest Employees and Interns celebrate winning the Southwest Airlines Onboarding Lab trophy

Throughout their time in the CHIP program, new hires have the opportunity to attend professional development events, lunch-n-learns, networking events with other Teams across the company, as well as training classes with our SWA University Department. Our Southwest Culture doesn't stop

in the work place we also love to gather outside of work, by hosting an occasional happy hour or by supporting our local sports teams (Go Mavs!). What I enjoy the most about our CHIP program is the multitude of volunteering events we can attend. Most recently I enjoyed volunteering at the North Texas Food Bank where we get to help combat hunger relief by sorting and packing donated foods that will be sent to those in need and other distribution centers across North Texas.



CHIP sorts food at the North Texas Food Bank



CHIP plays volleyball at the Headquarters volleyball court



CHIP participants enjoy an after-work happy hour

In addition to supporting our New Hires, we also love to support our Interns by making sure they also have a fabulous Southwest experience! So much so that we have a CHIP committee solely

focused on the overall internship experience, social events, and project management. The highlight of our intern program is that they get to work together on a group project with tenured Employees throughout their internship. Just this past summer, our Interns helped build a dashboard for our Network Operations Control (NOC) center dispatchers that will soon be officially launched. By completing a CHIP project, Interns gain hands-on experience working on real applications, projects, software development, and common technology best practices such as agile methodologies.





CHIP Intern participants reveal the dashboard created for our Network Operations Control

There are many opportunities to be an applicant for our Technology department, as an Intern or New Hire. Most recently we have posted an opportunity to join our family as an Associate Software Engineer which could be your chance to get involved with CHIP. We hope you check out our Associate Software Engineer posting that is opening on September 25! The CHIP Program would love to have you. In addition to the various programming offered by our Campus Reach program, it truly is a unique experience here at Southwest, and I'm so glad to have been a part of it! It's not always easy starting off in a large Company with around 60,000 Employees, but with the CHIP Program, there's always some friendly faces around the corner helping you along the way. Come join the Southwest family! Check out our [career page](#) for information on how you can join in on the fun with Southwest.

Applications for Associate Software Engineer roles open September 25, with summer internship opportunities opening October 1.