



Drupal Career Starter Program
Case Study

A busy New England not-for-profit masterfully leverages the expertise of a DCSP intern.

New Opportunities is an innovative community action agency that serves more than 67,000 people in 27 towns throughout Connecticut. The agency's programs are designed to help eliminate poverty and assist those in need. With an annual budget in excess of \$42 million, New Opportunities administers more than 50 social service initiatives, including Meals on Wheels, Early Childhood Development, energy assistance, and various workforce development programs.



The culture of community action agencies like New Opportunities often leaves them with a need for more bandwidth, like the Drupal-based communications department, where there's also a strong community-minded work philosophy. Seth Duke, the Director of Communications, recently engaged two *Work Experience Drupal* interns from the 2013 graduating class of the Drupal Career Starter Program. He was eager to help his team with a few important projects that could benefit from solid Drupal web applications. Both interns, who are working without any monetary compensation, are exceeding expectations. One; however, has taken on a particularly impressive task.

This more complex of the two intern projects is the development of a contract management web application to be used within the organization to manage grant contract data for more than \$42M in federal, state, local and private grants, which have numerous reporting and compliance requirements. Intern Mike Tripp was assigned to assist with this effort based on his background, training and confidence. The project requires:

- Myriad contract management functions
- Document management functionality to move New Opportunities' overall process toward being paperless
- Responsive design
- Different layers of security for internal staff
- A calendar of audits performed by the compliance department
- Data management for 80+ grants

In addition, as one of the larger, more innovative nonprofits in the community action sector, New Opportunities is also looking to build the application to provide similar agencies with an out-of-the box compliance solution. One more interesting element; while New Opportunities is in Connecticut, Michael Tripp is in Florida.



Even with the impressive scope of the project, the virtual aspect of the working arrangement is moving along effectively for both New Opportunities and Mike. The team keeps up with a weekly one-hour conference call, and relies on email to communicate on an ongoing basis. Seth explains, “We haven’t had any issues working remotely. It’s no different than working with a software vendor located in state.”

He believes part of the ease of the virtual set-up is Mike’s abilities; “I have been very impressed with Mike’s knowledge of Drupal...far deeper than I had expected.” He continues, “ I’m confident, the project being developed will not require any further polishing once it’s complete in order to take it to go-live.”

Seth has worked with both technical and non-technical interns in the past, and from his standpoint, “The knowledge gained from the Drupal Career Starter program is far superior to what I expected.” New Opportunities is not providing Mike compensation, but they feel like his abilities, coupled with his growing knowledge of their organization make him a great consulting candidate for future projects.

As usual, this WE Drupal arrangement has lots of advantages for the host and the intern. New Opportunities creates a professionally developed, turnkey system for their organization and others. They also find and gear promising Drupal talent for themselves and their industry to draw on in the future. For Mike, he has an impressive start to his portfolio, invaluable experience working remotely for a client, and project experience to share with his local community.

For more information on the DCSP, WE Drupal and other Drupal training, visit DrupalEasy.com. To learn more about New Opportunities, visit <http://newoppinc.org>.