

Paving the Way

Published on Apr 28, 2023 by Peoples Company



Peoples Company internship program lays the career path for Lucas Riesenberg

As the son of an Iowa farmer, Lucas Riesenberg witnessed firsthand that if you want something to blossom and grow, you need to tend to it early and often.

Riesenberg has used that approach in starting his career in the appraisal business at Peoples Company. While still a junior at Iowa State University, Riesenberg was already working on the Peoples Company appraisal team as an intern. The growth he experienced in that role enabled him to move directly into a full-time position at Peoples Company following his graduation from ISU in December 2022 with a degree in Agricultural Studies.

“Lucas holds within him something special, and that’s the ability to work hard and be proactive,” Peoples Company Appraisal Coordinator Ashley Poduska says. “He was progressing toward his Associate General Appraiser license while still in college, which by itself says a lot about him. He has become a great appraiser at a young age and put himself in good position for success.”



Riesenberg credits Peoples Company's internship program with giving him the ability to accelerate his appraisal career. Because of his agricultural background growing up near Carroll, Iowa, Riesenberg says he has always been interested in land, but didn't want to become a farmer or real-estate agent.

"So I started doing some research, and realized that I liked the appraisal industry," Riesenberg says. "I took some online classes just to get some basic knowledge of the industry. Then I talked with a local appraiser, and he put me in touch with Peoples Company.

"The whole team at Peoples Company has just been friendly and welcoming, and they're all very knowledgeable about the business. They've given me a lot of the information that I need to know about working in the appraisal industry."

"Peoples Company's internship program is designed to set students up for success," says Peoples Company Vice President Molly Zaver. "We have a proven process of partnering our interns with experienced Peoples Company mentors to help them grow, learn, and develop within our platform." She says Riesenberg is an illustration of how the program can help transform a student's enthusiasm and initiative into a successful profession.

"Lucas is a great example, demonstrating how our internship program is intended to work. He knew he wanted to become an appraiser, and has an incredible drive to make it happen. Peoples Company gives him the tools and resources to flourish."

During his time as an intern, Riesenberg says he learned details about how appraisals are written, followed by several months of data-entry work tracking the sales and auctions of farmland in Iowa. He accomplished all that while simultaneously attending college classes as well as starting a family. Riesenberg is married to his high school girlfriend, and they have two daughters.



“To have this career drive at his age with a family, especially while he was still going to college, is impressive,” says Kristen Halbur, who is Riesenbergs’s supervisory appraiser at Peoples Company. “When he was an intern with us, he was almost putting in full-time hours while also being a full-time student. Not many people have that type of work ethic, and he’s continued it now that he’s with us.”

Riesenbergs currently is working toward obtaining his Certified General Appraisal license. Once he does, Riesenbergs says his goal is to “grow and network in the industry, and start working on bigger, more complex projects.”

And Riesenbergs will be doing so at Peoples Company, increasing the ranks of former interns who have remained with the business following graduation.

“Many of our current team members started their careers as interns with the company,” Zaver says. “The internship program benefits all parties involved. Veteran team members mentor their counterparts by demonstrating professionalism, sharing market knowledge, and teaching the ins-and-outs of their role to the new team members.

“In conjunction, new team members are high energy, eager to learn and technologically savvy. All of which generates opportunities for both members to increase their efficiencies, focus on their respective strengths, and perform at a higher level.”