Blanding Students Spend a Week in the AT Lab

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Shundin Atene works with Cameron Cressall on a project at the AT lab.

Two students from Utah State University’s Blanding campus spent a week working in the Assistive Technology lab, a program of the Center for Persons with Disabilities at the Logan campus.

Martha Taboa and Shundin Atene, both members of the American Indian Science & Engineering Society at USU-Blanding, participated in a four-week Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) internship sponsored by AISES.

The students spent their first week at the Space Dynamics Lab, where they learned how to use a software program called Solid Edge, among other things.

“It was really fun,” Atene said. “We learned how to engineer our own parts, then printed them on a 3D printer. The students who were building the project used our part in the satellite they were assembling and testing.”

They spent the second week of their internship at the AT lab.

“The AT lab gave us a different perspective,” Taboa said. “We saw how using the wheelchair helps a disabled person get around.”

“And how much work it takes just to get around,” Atene added. “It was pretty cool to find out how much you can make out of different stuff.”

The students helped rebuild a wheelchair for a consumer, and worked with AT technician Cameron Cressall to engineer a solution to a consumer’s mobility problem.

“They’ve been a big help,” Cressall said. “They also built an iPad holder for a child who is nonverbal to use during hippotherapy.”

The students also spent at day in Salt Lake City at Citizens Re-Utilizing Assistive Technology Equipment (CReATE), sorting parts and helping to refurbish mobility devices.

They weren’t sure of their next destination after leaving the AT lab.

“It’s kind of an adventure,” Atene said. “We take it day to day. It’s pretty fun.”

Tabao, 21, is from Bluff, UT and tentatively majoring in nursing. Atene, 21, is from Monument Valley, UT and is so far undecided about a major. But they both agreed that the experience at the Logan campus is one that shouldn’t be missed.

“The people here at USU are so welcoming and super helpful,” Atene said. “It’s been pretty amazing. We would definitely recommend to someone to come next year.”

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