



Northeastern University's Cooperative Education Program

For more than 100 years, Northeastern University has been providing its students with innovative opportunities to gain real-world employment experience through its renowned Cooperative Education (Co-op) program. By providing students with invaluable employment experiences before they graduate, and employers a pipeline of skilled students that can be utilized to address short and long-term talent development needs, Northeastern has established itself as the global leader in experiential learning and a preeminent provider of workforce & talent development solutions.

Co-op allows Northeastern students to alternate between periods of academic study, when they're in the classroom for a semester, with periods of 6-month, full-time, paid work experiences in companies of all shapes and sizes—locally, nationally, and globally. Over 10,000 students a year participate in the co-op experience; approximately 95% of the university's undergraduate population complete at least 1 co-op and nearly two-thirds participate in 2-3 work experiences. In other words, upon graduation, the overwhelming majority of Northeastern graduates bring with them valuable workplace experiences well before many of their peers from other institutions, enabling them to hit the ground running in any workplace environment.

From Wall Street to State Street, to the halls of the State House and the White House, to startups in Cambridge and Silicon Valley, or to the manufacturing floors in China and Lynn, Northeastern has partnered with over 3,000 companies committed to filling their talent pools with NU student-employees. Many of these employer-partners are based in Massachusetts and extend across the region's leading industries. Organizations such as General Electric, Sanofi-Genzyme, Liberty Mutual, City Year, Dell EMC, Partners Healthcare, HubSpot, Fidelity, the City of Boston, Facebook—and many more—are contributing to the region's global economic growth by cultivating these highly skilled students to become the leaders of tomorrow's workforce.

While Northeastern can proudly point to dozens of strong co-op employer-partnerships, Dell EMC and General Electric stand out as stalwart relationships and have been for many years. Hopkington-based Dell EMC has deep ties to Northeastern—company co-founders Richard Egan and Roger Marino are both NU alums. And over the last decade, Dell EMC has hired well over 1,100 co-ops into a host of roles, from engineering to business to corporate communications. Today, hundreds of Northeastern graduates make up the Dell EMC workforce, largely due to their co-op experiences, and several serve in senior leadership positions within the organization.

And for well over 50 years, GE has played a significant role in the co-op program as well, hiring over 1,200 co-ops within the last few years alone. Many NU co-ops have gained valuable experiences at GE, most notably at their aviation plant in Lynn—their manufacturing facility which builds jet-engines—but other business units have leveraged the value of co-op too, including: GE Power & Water; GE Oil & Gas; NBC Universal Television; GE Lighting & Industrial; and GE Transportation. General Electric relies heavily on the NU Co-op program as a primary pipeline for their entry-level and LDP (Leadership Development Program) recruiting efforts. Their long-standing history with Northeastern is reflected today in the nearly 1,000 alums working in the organization, including Jeffrey Bornstein, GE's Chief Financial Officer. The fact that their corporate headquarters is now in Boston represents additional opportunities to further enhance an already strong relationship.

Finally, the General Electric and Dell EMC examples illustrate the power of a solid co-op partnership—both for the employer and the university. But whether it's these two iconic organizations or the hundreds of other employers involved, a strong co-op relationship can, and often does, result in an effective way to expand partnerships with the university beyond recruiting needs—to the benefit of both parties. Many organizations have used co-op as a stepping stone toward broader university engagements—from research opportunities, to academic partnerships, to athletics sponsorships, and other innovative mergers—ultimately providing value to the Northeastern community and the employers involved.

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