

JABARI AND KASTLE SYSTEMS

Mentoring and Developing Young Talent
Through Apprenticeship



Impacting the Community

Kastle Systems is a security management company based in Washington, D.C. The company installs and manages security systems, and operates a 24/7 operation center. Since starting the CareerWise youth apprenticeship program, Kastle Systems is not only securing client facilities — but securing a bright and promising future for young people, too.

Aly Geary is a client services team lead with Kastle Systems, overseeing corporate accounts and serving as a mentor to one of the company’s youth apprentices. Aly notes that Kastle Systems became interested in apprenticeship as a way to meet several strategic business goals, including: creating a culture of mentorship, attracting new talent in a competitive job market, providing a pathway to professional experience and employment — and positively impacting the lives of young people in the area. “Being so close to D.C., the company was certainly looking for ways to be more involved in the D.C. community,” said Aly.

Opening New Doors

Aly was an ideal fit for serving as a mentor within the company, having already honed these skills in other environments. “The opportunity to serve as a mentor in the program, and to work with an apprentice, automatically appealed to me. I’ve volunteered as a high school youth leader in a church setting, so it was a good opportunity to continue to work with young people — this time in a corporate setting,” said Aly. “I also knew it was an important career skill set, to be able to effectively supervise, coach and mentor others,” she added.

For Jabari Feemster, Kastle Systems’ first youth apprentice, the experience has provided new insights and opened new doors, even in just the first year of the program. Jabari was initially approached by the Dean at his high school, Kipp College Preparatory, about the CareerWise program. “I was immediately interested, but I did evaluate whether I felt like I could do it, along with my high school classes,” said Jabari. “After a few months in the program, I’m very glad I said ‘yes’ to an apprenticeship.”

Virtual Experience Accelerates Skills

Jabari went through the recruiting process for apprenticeship in the fall of 2020, a time when many professional environments were still impacted by Covid and workplaces had shifted to work-from-home and virtual settings. Jabari joked that he was, “dressed in a suit up top, but I was still wearing shorts” during his Zoom interviews. “I think the interviews went well and people were impressed with my work ethic,” he added.

Jabari officially started his position with Kastle Systems in October, and quickly moved into holding regular meetings with Aly — though all of them have continued to be virtual. Reflecting on the experience of working virtually, Jabari highlights how it has allowed him to significantly improve his communications and presentation skills. “I had a lot of prior knowledge with technology and software, but my work at Kastle Systems, and during Covid, has made me really grow in how I manage professional interactions,” he said.

Aly has been impressed Jabari has accomplished so much, particularly in a virtual environment. “I look forward to everyone returning to the office and to actually meeting Jabari in person, but in the meantime, his ability to interact in the workplace, in a virtual setting, is just one more skill he has developed,” she said.

“His experience with the training has been built Jabari’s confidence and empowered him to be more vocal in other meetings as well.”

A Growth Mindset

His experience with the training sessions has built Jabari’s confidence and empowered him to be more vocal in other meetings as well. “Where he was quiet in initial team meetings, he now speaks up and contributes a lot more,” said Aly. “It’s great to see his confidence building.”

She added, “Jabari is very smart — and I love seeing him maturing in his role. He has excelled at taking feedback and using it as a way to continuously grow. He remembers even small comments or critiques and always uses it as a way to get better at his job. This consistent professional development is very rewarding to witness.”

Jabari notes that while he is “mature for his age,” this experience has helped his professionalism and has opened his eyes to the multitude of career opportunities available. “I would tell other apprentice candidates to keep an open mind about various career paths and allow yourself to explore the possibilities,” he said.

Aly is proud of the program and says she loves seeing him “become one of us.” Said Aly, “I love the fact that I am helping someone build their career. I have already seen Jabari significantly evolve in the initial few months of the program. I can’t wait to see how he continues to grow in the years ahead — and to guiding and shaping his experience at Kastle Systems and on his career path.”