

# Phillip O. Berry graduate already has robust resumé

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Khalia Braswell, a 2008 Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology graduate, won't have much time on her hands this summer.

In addition to taking a class at North Carolina State University, Braswell is working full time as a network performance engineer intern at Wachovia's Customer Information Center off WT Harris Boulevard.

"I look at (Wachovia's) network traffic," Braswell explained. "At times, I help with project plans with different people and make sure they are conducting their tasks. Recently, I completed a project where I tried to locate a bunch of servers that were outstanding in the company and tried to make sure they are running (properly)."

The opportunity didn't fall into Braswell's lap – she earned it. During the second semester of her junior year, she participated in Tech Connect, an after-school program that gives students job-related training, including interviewing tips and professional-development pointers. Students then interviewed for highly competitive, paid internships.

"Wachovia had a lot!" Braswell said, adding that in spring 2007 she interviewed for two internships at the company and was offered both, but decided to accept the

network performance internship.

During the rest of her junior year and that summer, Braswell worked diligently, assisting her manager with project updates, conducting weekly meetings to create and update her team's Web pages and linking the pages to the businesses Wachovia manages.

Then, when she was invited to return to Wachovia part-time in February 2008, Braswell jumped on board.

## Sacrificed freedom breeds experience

Braswell's schedule allowed her to leave school every day at noon since she was enrolled in a class at Central Piedmont Community College, but instead of enjoying carefree afternoons at home, she committed to the 1 to 5 p.m. Wachovia job, which became a full-time position this summer.

But that wasn't the only extracurricular activity sopping up Braswell's free time – this year the ambitious student was executive secretary of her school's National Honor Society and battalion commander of the ROTC program, the highest position for a student. Braswell also belonged to Future Business Leaders of America, the National Technical and Spanish honor societies, and SkillsUSA, which prepares students for professional life after high school.

Was Braswell overwhelmed during such

a frenzied senior year? Hardly. She said her numerous commitments only made her stronger.

"I just had to learn how to balance my time," she said, adding that once the school and work day ended, she often had to attend club meetings, finish her homework and complete scholarship applications. "I think the experience put me ahead of most incoming (college) freshmen, though. Most freshmen don't get internship experience until after their first year."

But beyond the experiences, accolades and scholarships – she received offers from North Carolina State University, the University of North Carolina's Charlotte and Chapel Hill campuses and Virginia Tech – Braswell said the highlight of her year was winning an all-expense paid trip to the New York City Foundation's awards gala after writing an essay about her Wachovia experiences.

## Newfound knowledge

"Out of this ... I learned that working with diverse people allows you to learn new things," she wrote in her award-winning essay. "I had the opportunity to work with males and females of different cultures and races from my own. Eating lunch and working with these people allowed me to look at the world differently."

"I found that everybody may not be interested in the same things I am and vice versa; this taught me that I had to be open and accept people for who they are. Diversity is another one of Wachovia's main values



Khalia Braswell, a 2008 Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology graduate, is well on her way making her mark in the field of technology. Braswell's diligent work ethic opened doors for her to continue working, learning and bulking up her resumé at Wachovia's Customer Information Center during her senior year and this summer.

and they have now instilled that in me."

One of four students nationwide to be invited to the gala, Braswell also was selected to present an award to Harold McGraw III, chairman and chief executive officer of textbook publisher The McGraw-Hill Companies, and had plenty of time to explore the Big Apple.

Although she enjoyed seeing the Rockettes perform at Radio City Music Hall riding the subway and meeting tennis legend Andre Agassi, she isn't sure New York City would be her first choice after she concludes her time at N.C. State. "I would like to visit again, but I don't know about living there," she said. "It's kind of hectic."

Good news for the Queen City – an Wachovia – if this ambitious academic student decides to return to her hometown. □