

INTERVIEW

FROM INTERN TO TEAM MEMBER: Meet Anthony Baguyo



Anthony Baguyo is a proud member of the San Manuel Fire Department. But before lacing up his work boots for his first day on the job, Baguyo was a young 20-something with a dream.

While dating his then-girlfriend and now wife Sierra, Baguyo would drive by the San Manuel Fire Station with a vision: I'm going to be part of this team.

"I thought (the station) was one of the nicest around," he said with a slight chuckle. "I was in the Marine Corps from 2010 until 2014, and I knew for sure I did not want to stay in the military. After the military, I went to school and took on little jobs here and there, but nothing that was as meaningful to what I knew I wanted to do. They just didn't fulfill my passion."

What did, however, was becoming a firefighter.

Baguyo joined the Crafton Hills College Fire Academy to obtain knowledge in the field. After graduating, he applied for and was accepted into the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Tribal Professional Development Program, a hands-on learning experience that introduces Tribal Citizens and Community members 18 and up to the enterprise. (Baguyo is a Community member.) In turn, internships provide an outlet to gain work experience in settings that encourage and inspire one another.

Baguyo's internship ran from January until April 2020, and served as a crash-course of sorts into the daily life of a San Manuel Firefighter, which means no day is ever the same, and one always has to expect the unexpected.

The now-28-year-old said it took about a month into the internship for it all to click, and it happened while responding to a man having severe chest pains within the department's service area.

"I started talking to his wife and she's like, 'I work for the Casino.' Wow, I thought, this is such an awesome opportunity because I get to serve people who live in the community and work in the Casino, which helps my family. It all seemed to come full circle," he explained.

Flash-forward to today and Baguyo is currently making a name for himself within the department as a full-time firefighter. He credits the internship program for providing him with an outlet to explore the job, meet with team members and get a behind-the-scenes look at its culture. Without the internship, Baguyo said he would not have received the necessary training needed to be successful in the industry.

"It allowed me to get hands-on and to see my own work ethic at work. It also allowed me to show (the department) my work ethic so they could get to know me on a personal level," he said. "The greatest thing that could have happened through this internship was to gain knowledge of the fire service and get a feel of how it really is."

"It was a great way to get my foot in the door," he added.

Baguyo is currently focused on his future. He plans on moving up within the department's ranks and also plans to encourage others, including his two young children – Sage, 1, and three-month-old Ira – to become part of the enterprise any way they choose. They could either follow in his footsteps as an intern, or just simply ask questions and be curious.

"I just want to promote growth for the future," Baguyo said. "I want to be part of helping the Tribe grow..., and help future generations enjoy what we have."

As for those looking to intern with the next few weeks, months or a year, Baguyo has some advice for you.

"Come with an open mind and be respectful. Come in like an open book and observe everything you can," he said. "Going through the Fire Academy helped, but it's nothing compared to what the Fire Department does. Being able to learn that through the internship helped me a lot. And always show respect, keep your head down and work hard."

To learn more about the program or to apply, send an email to Janny VanBui at Janny.VanBui@SanManuel-NSN.gov or visit the all-new Tribal Professional Development Program site at www.sanmanuel-nsn.gov/internship