

Even prior to attending Career Quest, I've always had a soft-spot for San Francisco. Having visited three times throughout high school for a civic activism organization that I was involved with and having had family in San Jose; I was given a lot of background, and admiration for the Bay Area, at an early age. The weather, the start-up culture, the lifestyle, and the positive vibes that the Bay Area exudes, has always struck me as one of openness, vibrancy and innovation, and has attracted me with its unique allure. The same charm that I experienced throughout my previous visits to the Bay Area, was re-cultivated during my time there with Career Quest in early January.

During my time in San Francisco and the surrounding area, with GW Career Quest, I and the other program participants were given a first-hand opportunity to explore some of the largest global tech companies in Silicon Valley, and indeed the world. Through our visits to the Facebook Headquarters in Menlo Park, the Genentech Headquarters in South San Francisco and the Airbnb Headquarters, downtown; we were able to witness the grandeur and wonder of some of the largest and most successful Fortune 500 tech companies, that the world has ever known. Our interactions with the college recruiters, miscellaneous corporate professionals, and indeed many GW alumni at each of these companies and others, truly inspired me. Hearing the many stories from how GW alumni evolved from students on campus in Foggy Bottom to professionals at Fortune 500 companies in the Bay Area, helped to give my professional career ambitions greater guidance, direction and clarity.

GW's Career Quest trip to San Francisco, also reiterated the fact that behind every enormous Fortune 500 company, there is an army of data scientists, programmers, attorneys, paralegals and sales-oriented positions as well. What this means is that regardless of whether or

not you are specializing in computer programming, or data analytics, there is position that you can find at one of the premier tech companies in San Francisco and Silicon Valley.

Finally, just having had the opportunity to explore the city of San Francisco and the surrounding area in greater detail, helped reinforce the fact that someday soon I hope to relocate to the area to pursue my professional ambitions there. The work culture and environment are extremely different from traditional East Coast norms that are prevalent in Washington, D.C. and New York.

Having had the ability to contextualize this by immersing myself into the corporate culture of San Francisco and the surrounding Bay Area, gave me the ability to make the determination that somewhere down the line, I hope to combine my passion for law and tech, through the assistance of one of these corporations in the fields of federal compliance or litigation. I am sincerely grateful that I was selected to be a participant in GW's San Francisco Career Quest, and for giving me the exposure to the corporate culture and lifestyle of the Bay Area in greater depth.