

Smoggy in Seattle

Like most college graduates know all too well, senior year crept up on me unexpectedly, bringing many unanswered questions about what life will look like for the next few years. While it wasn't love at first sight, as a smoky haze hid most of the city until our final day in Seattle, the GW Seattle Career Trek was definitely an illuminating experience. Before the Career Trek, I had never traveled to Washington State, however I had heard the stereotypes about a small city full of plaid and granola.

Initially, on the 5-hour flight to Seattle from D.C., I had assumed that the trip would be limited to quick tours of each of the companies we visited, complete with a short script summarizing an employee's linear journey to their current role. Yet, the actual quest could not have been further from what I expected. Each site visit we went on we were eagerly welcomed, and encouraged to ask any and all questions we had, from the incredibly difficult to questions about the culture of the west coast. I was amazed at how many GW alumni lived and worked in Seattle (2,000+!) as I had assumed all of GW resides in NYC or D.C. after graduation.

Some of the employees we spoke to at The Gates Foundation and Milliman graduated from college around the time of the 2008 financial crisis, facing uncertain job prospects and tough decisions. Their stories of resilience were reassuring, as I know that the GW network is full of supportive individuals, rooting for each other to succeed.

While the city of Seattle is experiencing some growing pains, no one that we spoke to discouraged us from considering moving to Seattle during such a transformative time. I left the city of Seattle with a renewed outlook on the job search that I have been dreading. Additionally, I was able to meet amazing students at GW across a wide variety of majors that I would have never had the opportunity to connect with if not for this Career Trek. It was comforting to know that there are other students out there asking the same questions that I am right now.