

Seattle, A Learning Experience

To be quite frank, I really did not know what to expect upon visiting the West Coast and specifically Seattle. I had in mind the many stereotypes that surfaced regarding the professional environment and atmosphere of the West Coast, but I still remained unsure of what my experience while visiting the companies was going to be like.

Similar to what they say about students when applying to college, you can be one thing on paper and another in person and my experience on the Career Quest trip attests to this saying. I had preconceived notions of many of the companies Career Quest was such an enlightening and amazing experience for me. Prior to attending Career Quest, I had a vague understanding of what I valued in a professional and career-driven space, but upon leaving the experience, I had adopted values that I never thought I actually had already imbedded in my personality. I would have never discovered these values had I not visited a variety of companies with different values and environments, so I truly am thankful for the unique opportunity that I had to be able to be a part of such a transformative experience.

As a political science major, I never actually thought that I could fit in at a major tech company like Microsoft or Facebook, but after visiting the company spaces and interacting with fellow employees, I began to see how someone like me could fit into the environment and the overall mission of the company. Understanding the various dimensions of companies helped me to become aware of the values and skills that employers seek when looking for employees to hire. I now have a better understanding of how I can use the skills that I curated as a political science major to aid the greater mission of a company. I urge other students who may not necessarily be majoring in tech-majors such as Engineering or Computer Science, to consider scouting out tech companies because it isn't necessarily about your major, it is really about the skills, experiences, and knowledge that you bring to the environment. Definitely don't be afraid to start looking beyond your major's field and look for professional experiences that match your skills interests, you will learn a lot more about yourself than you could have ever imagined.

Being able to interact with GW alumni who were employees at the companies that we visited was extremely helpful. I had the opportunity to share my concerns, ask questions, and to pick the brains of people who were once in my shoes. It was very refreshing to hear genuine advice about how to navigate the professional world after being a student. It was truly a blessing to have become so connected with GW alumni from a variety of academic, professional, and personal backgrounds, which helped the overall cause which was to have a better understanding of how unique one's professional path can be. I received a lot of insight on the importance of allowing myself to grow professionally, which included expanding beyond my usual interests to figure out different skills and facets of the professional sector that had never been on my radar before. As

of today, I now understand the importance of skill building and how great of a value it holds in the professional world today.

Not only did I learn about a variety of professional spheres and companies on this trip, but I learned more about myself and where I actually see myself going in the future. I no longer am looking to limit myself to a specific professional sphere and will now seek to see how I can bring my own skills into unknown professional spaces. Career Quest was a very transformative experience for me. I walked away knowing a lot more about what I want for my professional career.

Thank you to the Career Center, Ben, Steve, Staci, and Dr. Merrill for making this experience so fruitful and so beneficial!



