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Wow, what an amazing week! When I first received a schedule for my Career Quest trek in Atlanta, I was quite honestly overwhelmed. While I love meeting new people and traveling anywhere I can get a chance, I had never toured big-name companies or connected with recruiting managers before. Career Quest would allow me to visit two or three such organizations every day for a week. Furthermore, my passions remain in Marketing and Analytics and although I have many interests in those fields, I was not sure if I would find information that would benefit me on the trip.

LOCATION HIGHLIGHTS

As soon as we opened the door to our first location, Home Depot, I was sold. The office was unlike anything I ever expected. Sure, I had been in a Home Depot store before, but the amount of action that happens behind the scenes in their corporate building was incredible! Our hosts gave us a tour of the massive building which included Starbucks, cafeterias, CVS, a gym, dry cleaning facilities, hundreds of offices/ meeting spaces, and even their own mini walkthrough museum. One thing I really admired about Home Depot was their drive for giving back to their community. The company focuses most of their volunteer efforts on veteran support, education, and diversity initiatives, etc. Being in the Home Depot corporate office and hearing not only how hardworking and innovative they are, but also how dedicated they are to making the world a better place was awe-inspiring. It really realigned my values when considering different places to work in the future.

As the week went on, we continued to learn more about specific Fortune 500 and other local companies, resume building, entry-level positions, ways to progress/challenge ourselves in our careers, and even some new technical skills. What personally excited me, though, was our final trip to Delta. I have always been curious about the business side of transportation. After arriving in Delta's wonderful home city of Atlanta, I was fortunate enough to see the ins and outs of their company, including their Operations room. Here we got to see how their employees analyzed data in order to promote safety in every plane. The complex software could read off weather issues, potential turbulence, and many other technical problems that might arise so they can notify pilots and crew of delays or cancellations as early as possible. I am not exaggerating when I say it was incredible! I have considered professions heavily involving data analytics, and seeing it used in this kind of environment made me realize just how many options I have available to me if I choose to go down that path.

Though I only pinpointed two of our many locations along our trek, I was thoroughly impressed with all of the companies we visited. Whether we were at the Center of Disease Control learning about lab safety, or thinking about work-life balance at CNN, or discussing diversity initiatives at Google, I always felt engaged. I was thrilled to take in all of this knowledge and apply it to my own career path. Above all, this trip motivated me to work my hardest to achieve a career where I am elated every single day. Digital Marketing and Analytics are a huge passion of mine, but I realize that the field is growing rapidly as the technology develops. I want to enhance my analytical and marketing skills while paying attention to soft skills and detail. Moreover, since I will ideally be entering the job market in as sort as a year, I feel driven to be my best both in my academic and professional career. This Career Quest experience has given me the tools to do so.

ATLANTA

Experiencing Atlanta with my cohort was such a great travel opportunity. I had never been to Atlanta, let alone the southeast region before. Exploring with some locals and also some newbies made my first experience so much fun! Along the trip we hit a lot of exciting tourist destinations such as Ponce City Market, Centennial Olympic Park, The Carter Library, Buckhead, and my favorite, Little Five Points. Little Five Points is a commercial district that is known for their “hipster” culture. We were able to walk around the colorful area, look around one of their local thrift shops, and even eat at a local Mexican restaurant named El Bandido. I would highly recommend the lengua tacos at this restaurant if you are ever in the area!

THANK YOU

Thanks to everyone on the Career Quest team for making this trip possible! Without your dedication, communication, and organization, this trip would not have been as successful as it was. I am ever so grateful for you all, as well as my lovely cohort, and the remarkably welcoming companies we had the honor of visiting. Hopefully I will see you on the next adventure!