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I am a senior undergrad and Posse Leadership Scholar at George Washington University (GW), studying Biomedical Engineering and minoring in Electrical Engineering. For many students like myself, it seemed that this combination of BS pursuits was very specific, focused, and demonstrated that I knew my direct path following my post-academic career. This however was far from the truth. My degree was very broad and versatile, giving me experiences and exposure into several different STEM and even non-STEM disciplines. A curse and a blessing. In my senior year, I decided that I wanted to pursue innovation and critical solutions in the defense of our nation. I still had very little idea of how to get there as a soon-to-be graduate engineer. That is why I appreciated this program being offered and participating in it was the best choice I could have made!

I first heard of the career conquest through a local ad that appeared in my school email at the tail end of summer vacation. After doing the UN 360 program, I knew that a career exploration with Career Services would be another remarkable experience. The last time I had been to LA was when I was too young to remember, which sparked curiosity and further drove me to apply.

Upon arrival, the Los Angeles metropolitan had a memorable flare that gripped you and made you sorry it had to end in less than a week (despite the ungodly traffic and high prices). The companies reflected LA's heavy emphasis as an entertainment hub, which surprised me all the more of how interesting they were despite having little interest in working in the entertainment industry. This goes double for Disney Imagineering and Universal Studios, who showed advancements in technology that rivaled the government and its partners pursuing R&D in the nation's interest. The company staff that spoke with us encouraged us to follow intuition and explore whatever feels right, even if it may not align with our majors. I learned the majority of people chose to cross disciplines overtime and that hardly anyone actually stayed in their major field for their entire career.

The most rewarding part of the trip for me was the individuals that participated in the program with me. Somehow they made the long highway travels even become slightly fun and less miserable. From our amazing GW chaperones to the cohort of 11 students, the experience was unforgettable. We learned and bonded with each other through every step of the way.

With the program now concluded, I feel refreshed for the year that will conclude my undergraduate story. I am applying for internships at a few of the companies we visited, realizing now the value in getting work experience and professional skills that will make me all the more attractive to government work in the future. I will also look into graduate school options in Systems Engineering or possibly something different that will allow me to apply my technical knowledge to other areas. Thank you.