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As the time of my graduation in the spring grows nearer, I have been increasingly unsure of which career path suits me best and which companies will help me to realize my full potential. Before Career Quest, my post-graduation aspirations were somewhat vague and lacked direction. Essentially, I was roaming aimlessly from one LinkedIn page to another looking for a few select keywords that would trigger me to want to apply. Most of this process was not fruitful and left me feeling more nervous than anything about my future. Conversely, the Career Quest program gave me the tools and knowledge that I needed in order to feel confident in the decisions I make post-graduation.

These tools were set forth during the multiple site visits that we attended as a group throughout the trek. One of the most impactful parts of these visits for me was our time at KWT Global. This agency was our first site visit and ended up being the only one where the organization's CEO took the time to talk to us directly for 2 whole hours. The visit itself was particularly flooring because of the passion and dedication that the CEO showed for the work he does which inherently lit a fire in me. This was the first time that I was actually able to see myself as a member of a team that is actually working to enact change in the realm of media and communications.

This realization was due in part to the proximity that we had to the organization's headquarters. We got a complete tour of the office, we walked around the building just as other employees do and we met in one of their regularly used conference rooms. In comparison with typical online job research in which there is usually just a website and some carefully chosen words to go off of, this was a refreshing experience. It provided an in-depth view of the organization, the services they provide and the values they stand for.

Values and ethics were another recurrent theme of my Career Quest experience. I did not realize how important these are. However, knowing an organization's values and ethics is crucial, especially in the Communications and Public Relations world because of the ability that professionals in the field have to inspire change and shape public opinion. Through my experience with Career Quest, I was able to ask those questions about each organization's values and ethical practices which in turn influenced the degree to which I could see myself working there. Ultimately, I learned that it is important to do a deep dive into any company you are considering working for, including not only the work that they do but who they do it for and why.

Finally, my biggest takeaway from the experience as a whole was the wide range of opportunities that are available to recent graduates who are willing to apply themselves. Most of the site visits left us with interview tips, networking skills and a general comprehension of employment opportunities. The skill set that I gained is indispensable and I am excited to take these next steps in my life, applying what I have learned from this experience as a whole. Thank you!