

Paulina Smolinski
Fall 2019

As I look towards graduation in the coming months, I have slowly seen a path crystalize with an idea of what I want to do. How to get there has been more difficult to visualize. Career Quest helped me pave the path and open my eyes to options that I did not know were available.

I studied International Affairs in college and it was exactly what I wanted to study. I concentrated in Europe and Eurasia and conducted research on everything from nationalist movements to the power of cinema in European politics. However, in my career, I saw myself in media. Career Quest granted me the opportunity as an Elliott student to explore various media companies. From legacy companies like the Times, to companies built upon the social context of the modern age like Now This, it was a great experience.

As I walked from one West Elm office kitchen to another, I saw a pattern behind the type of company I could see myself in and by the same token, where I could not. There was equal value for me in realizing the types of work that I could see myself doing while simultaneously coming to terms with the kind of work I would not see myself doing in my career.

Career Quest opened the door for me to meet alumni living in New York working in the sphere of media. It was interesting to hear the stories of how life tossed and turned people from one career to another. More than any information session or office tour, it was hearing these individual stories of the lives in media that made me see the perils and triumphs of a life in the field that I wish to pursue. Amidst the conversations, I learned of ways that I can best start off my career and learned of how to stand out, yet keep my voice in my writing.

Personally, it was interesting to see the Elliott alumni that ended up in media. The international affairs lens and analysis approach applied directly in many cases to the work they were doing in their careers. I had this experience myself as I see more and more the lines of national news wither into the territory of international coverage. As the world becomes smaller, knowledge of it as a whole becomes more valuable. I began to view this knowledge as an asset in future places of employment.

So in a final note to Career Quest, I would like to thank the program for giving me the opportunity to learn more about media companies. I am appreciative for the inside perspective of certain companies and for allowing me to see my future more clearly as a result.