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EmpowHER Summer Internship 2020

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SEED SPOT SUMMER INTERNSHIP 2020

Michelle Flint – (Sponsor: Career Connections Center)



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Introduction

Soon after I began my internship search, I received a message on Handshake from the program coordinator at BA Women's Alliance telling me about what the organization does and encouraging me to apply. BA Women's Alliance launched their summer program called EmpowHER, a program for collegiate women that helps prepare them for landing and succeeding in summer internships, and launch careers that change the world. I also competed for and received their extremely selective full merit scholarship to access all the program's resources and e-learning courses. Through the summer, I was able to complete EmpowHER's spring e-learning curriculum on the core tenets of professionalism, including learning modules on communicating professionally in written, verbal, in-person, and online formats; interning best practices; and excelling in teleworking environments. The program officially began with a welcome call on April 16, 2020 and ended on July 29th. EmpowHER offered me to be a part of their program in early March, and at that time the program was supposed to be held in Washington DC. However, due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the organization decided to move all its internships and career development programming to a virtual format instead of entirely canceling the program.

Through the program, I was also able to prepare myself for and land an internship as an Outreach Intern at Seed Spot, an impact driven accelerator for startup businesses and small scale entrepreneurs. During my time at Seed Spot, I had the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of forces behind growing businesses. I worked on prospecting over 120 ecosystem partners for SEEDSPOT across the country, developing a database used by Fundraising & Development department as the primary reference point for outreach to potential partners.



GoodIvy

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I was also welcomed to some of SEED SPOT's programs, including their 2 Day Virtual Camp, where I interacted with several individuals and heard about ideas for their new startups. I gained invaluable skills in research, development, and ecosystem building. SEED SPOT made sure that I had exposure to all facets of the organization that interested me and facilitated meetings with leaders in finance (through the company's CFO, Erin) and marketing (through their marketing manager, Jordan).

For the most part, my internship went according to plan. However I had to make minor adjustments to my schedule. I wanted to accomplish more than I was doing, as COVID just made me feel like all my achievements were minor and the imposter syndrome was taking a toll on me psychologically. So I took on a second internship as well. I interned as a Summer Associate at a security consulting firm called GoodIvy Consulting. I utilized the ClarkCONNECT platform to reach out to Clark alum, Matt Colpitts, the CEO at GoodIvy. He offered me this incredible opportunity and I added more time to my original work hours. During my 12 weeks at GoodIvy, I learned a great deal about ways of establishing and developing a Client Relationship Management and put together a database of potential customers from various states around the country. The thorough research was time consuming, but it allowed for the company to have built a reliable list of contacts for future outreach. I also initiated outreach by drafting and sending marketing emails to over 60 educational institutes, introducing services GoodIvy provides to higher education institutes around the US.

Conclusion

Throughout the EmpowHER program, I made connections with about 35 amazing women that were part of my cohort and we formed a kind of sisterhood. Additionally, I got the chance to network with professionals from renowned financial services firms such as Charles Schwabe and Kilpatrick's Law firm. I was also able to participate in bi-weekly networking opportunities, connecting with and learning from the BA Women community of alumnae, staff, and advocates.

Moreover, at Seed Spot, I worked under the leadership of my two wonderful supervisors from Seed Spot's full time team, Katelyn, and Tina. They offered their valuable insights and guidance every step of the way. By the end of the internship, I was able to develop a very positive relationship with them. The icing on the cake was having the opportunity to support programs and work directly with early-stage entrepreneurs!