**Find Your Path with the Pathways Program**

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Field trip! I have to admit my excitement for these two words. As an adolescent, I felt the thrill of class trips. These expeditions into the unknown inspired my thoughts for adventure and curiosity. It was fun to leave the classroom and discover additional possibilities. My visits resulted in new experiences and insights.

As a Metropolitan State University student, you have a unique opportunity to gain ideas and inspiration for your future career – including field trips. Thanks to Travelers and other businesses in the insurance and financial services (IFS) community, you have access to the Pathways Program. Since 2008, students have used the Pathways Program to explore career and network options within the IFS industry. This exploration involved outings to local businesses, including Wells Fargo, Spire Credit Union and the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis (and there are more in the works for the near future). During the field trips, students toured the company and representatives talked about their career backgrounds and highlighted their organization’s internships and job opportunities. Students received advice to help them prepare and succeed in this field. The program also provides additional opportunities to network with employers through employer panels, classroom presentations, resume reviews and mock interviews.

The Pathways Program has a free, non-credit D2L course to help you obtain skills in career research, interviewing, resume writing, networking and professionalism. Jill Sondergaard is a Travelers EDGE/Pathways Program Career Specialist, inspired to help you create a career development plan. Students that complete the Pathways Program are impressed with what they have learned. “The students who have been involved express their gratitude all the time for the valuable feedback that they receive from completing the assignments in the D2L course, as well as the coaching support from me and what they gain from the field trips,” said Sondergaard.

Students in business, information and computer sciences, professional communication, applied mathematics, technical communication and individualized studies (with related focus areas) are eligible to participate. If you are interested, get involved soon, as participation will help you secure a spot in an upcoming field trip. You need to have at least one full semester remaining to be involved in the Pathways Program, and it is flexible enough to help you prioritize as you complete your degree.

For more information contact the Career Center at 651-793-1528. As an active participant, you will receive a professional portfolio folder to use for job fairs, interviews and networking meetings. Students who complete the program requirements will receive a $50 bookstore gift card and a certificate of completion. This certificate could be a competitive selling point to launch your career in the IFS industry. Organizations will value your preparation and initiative to work in their profession.

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