**Where Do I Go From Yale**

**Pre-Conference Dinner and In-Person Sessions**

**Friday, April 12, 2024**

**6:30 – 8:30 pm**

**14th Floor of Kline Tower**

**Nourish & Network: Student & Alums Dinner**

**Saturday, April 13, 2024**

**8:30 am – 2:00 pm**

**Linsly Chittenden Hall on Old Campus**

**In-Person Sessions**

**Logistics:**

**Friday, April 12, 2024 @ 6:30 – 8:30 pm, 14th Floor of Kline Tower**

**Nourish & Network: Student & Alums Dinner**

Yale Graduate Students in any year and in any department or program are invited to a casual buffet dinner with Graduate School Alumni Association Board (GSAAB) members and Where Do I Go from Yale panelists spanning 6 decades of graduates and a diverse representation of professional expertise. This informal gathering promises an evening of engaging conversation and delectable cuisine. Discover the diverse, sometimes unexpected, journeys of our alums as they share their post-Yale experiences and the paths that led them to where they are today. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity for one-on-one discussions, table hopping, and mingling in intimate groups. Whether you can join us for a short time or stay for the entire two-hour event, your presence is valued.

**Saturday, April 13, 2024 @ 8:30 am – 2:00 pm, Linsly Chittenden Hall**

**WDIGFY In-Person Sessions**

The doors open at 8:30 am for breakfast and the Welcome Address begins at 9:00 am.

**WDIGFY In-Person Sessions**

**Entering the Corporate World: STEM @ 10:50 am – 11:50 am**

**[Concurrent Session with Humanities and Social Sciences]**

Agenda Description of the Panel: Join a discussion with industry professionals and alumni in the corporate world who have successfully leveraged their graduate school training to enter corporate life. Learn about effective networking and job search strategies, mastering interviews, and adapting to corporate culture. Also learn how to understand and present the value of the knowledge and skills you have acquired in your specific field of study to market yourself most effectively to corporate employers.

**Panelists:**

Emily Cohen (’14 PhD, Genetics

Marisa Dolled-Filhard (’05 PhD, Genetics)

Erling Donnelly (’05 PhD, Pharmacology)

Jun Wang (’07 PhD, Physics)

**Moderator:**

Sandy Kuzmich (’89 PhD, Pharmacology)

Regarding our panel, we are running in parallel with a panel discussing issues related to the humanities and social science.

For your consideration, below is a draft outline of questions/topics to generate not only information flow from the alumni panelists to the graduate student audience, but also to generate conversation among the panelists as well as between the panelists and the audience.

**Draft Outline:**

1. **Introductions (about 5 - 10 minutes)**
   1. Name, Yale department/year/degree, current job title and company, and a very brief overview of your journey between Yale and your current role
2. **Guided Panel Discussion (about 45 minutes)**
   1. Why did you decide to take a career path that led you into the corporate world?
      1. Consider including in your discussion: (i) when you made this decision; (ii) whether you even considered staying in academia; (iii) whether you even explored academic opportunities; and (iv) whether the decision was to intentionally leave academia, or rather to take a particular job/career opportunity that was in front of you that was very attractive.

I did not intentionally plan to work in the financial industry during my Ph.D. studies. That’s why I did not work a intern on wall street; I did not learn any knowledge in finance and did not build network to be honest. It was only until about a year before my graduation, when I started to look for a job. I was considering both industry and academia. One thing I did observe was that many of the Ph.D from my department (physics) in the past couple of years went to wall street. Then in the fall of 2005, I joined some job fairs, some of them from wall street firms. Then sent in my resume; got some interviews; and got some offers. I got the offer pretty early before I even started the academia job hunting. Then I thought, I should probably just take it. Then that’s it. I ended my career as a physicist and became a financier. So far, almost 20 years later, I don’t regret the decision.

In terms of skill sets, a Yale PhD, or master, we have strong analytical and problem-solving abilities. These skills are highly valued in finance, where complex data analysis and risk assessment are crucial. Wall Street seeks individuals with expertise in quantitative modeling, statistical analysis, and risk management.

* 1. What do you really do in your current role?
     1. This was a topic that some panelists last year thought was important to address in order to de-mystify what each of us does every day. This gives us the opportunity to get into the details/responsibilities of our positions, including who we interact with, both internally and externally. Consider including in your discussion corporate/reporting structures and opportunity for advancement/upward mobility.
     2. This may be a place to compare/contrast taking a position in start-ups versus established corporations (e.g., start-up biotech as compared to big pharma).

I run a team in structured trading on fixed-income Emerging markets. The corporate structure is pretty flat, there are some junior and senior traders in my team, and I report to the head of the division.

Each of us does a lot of work everyday. It’s a very dynamic environment. Speaking for myself, I need to monitor and manage the risk of my book, my team, discussing potential trades with sales person and clients; execute the client transaction and hedge the risks with other banks sometimes. There is a lot of collaborations internally, with sales, structuring, quants, technology, risk functions, legal team, and other control functions. We also need to interact with clients, Understanding their needs and finding tailored financial solutions for them. To be successful at a trading role at the sell side (usually we call ourselves working in a bank as sell side, compared to people working in hedge funds or asset managers as buy side), not only we need to be sharp at numbers, following the market, but be able to collaborate, both internally and externally is the key to success too.

* 1. What was the most challenging aspect, if there was one, of going from academia to the corporate environment? Alternatively, was there something you found particularly positive in the transition that you may not have anticipated/expected?
     1. One purpose of this question is to address the part of the description of our panel in the agenda that says we will discuss “adapting to corporate culture.” It could generate conversation around aspects of your corporate career that may have surprised you, in either a positive or negative way.

It’s hard to pick one. There are many challenges. If I have to pick one, I would say is to learn to communicate with different audience; you will need help from many different teams to get your job done; and they don’t have the same background and speaks different languages, I mean, for example, some are very good at math, like quants, some are lawyers, some are sales persons who adapt to client’s requirements etc. We have to learn how to communicate in the interests of the audience. I would say, in graduate school, for your project or thesis or paper, you will be more likely to communicating with people with similar backgrounds and who are already expert in your field. So there are some difference and it has be challenge.

But don’t worry much. Usually when people know you are from Yale, say PhD from yale, they will say, wow, there is a lot of brain power in this conversation, they will respect and have some patience to listen, at least in the first minute.

There are other challenges of course: as mentioned, I basically did not learn any finance before I starting working on wall street. Even though I would say learning finance is not as hard as learning physics, sorry not to offense anyone. Finance can be very hard too. Anyway, there is a steep learning curve at the beginning for sure.

* 1. Work-life balance is almost always a consideration when making a job/career choice. How would you describe the work-life balance in your particular job/career?
     1. Possible points for discussion around corporate culture include remote versus in-person requirements, maternity/paternity leave, flex hours, corporate values on issues such as the environment/climate change and DEI.
     2. Consider whether a discussion around compensation could be included here.

It’s very different from 20 years ago, 2008 Lehman Brother, 2016 Trump election.

The sun hasn’t even peeked over the skyline, but traders are already at their desks.

Lunch? It’s often a sandwich at the desk, eyes glued to Bloomberg screen.

But we are free in weekends, except scenarios like 2008 Lehman Brother, 2016 Trump election, etc. This is from the trading perspective of Wall Street. There is the other side of wall street job as at invest banking, then you probably need to work in weekends. But nowadays, most banks ban junior banking person from going to office on Saturday. Sunday is still allowed.

I would like to thank my wife.

* 1. In your field, what is the corporate world looking for in terms of background or experience from recent graduate students?
     1. This topic goes to the part of the description of our panel in the agenda that says we will discuss “how to understand and present the value of the knowledge and skills you have acquired in your specific field of study to market yourself most effectively to corporate employers.”

Quantitative skills, communication, team player. I would say the least they care is how much you already know about finance.

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