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2019 CSE Career Fair

Overall, I really enjoyed the CSE fair and all that it had to offer. There were many company representatives there that really showed interest in the students that attended, whether that be to give them a future interview or to simply give students any answers that they had. I prepared for the fair by forming 10 questions for each of the companies I intended on seeing, and all of them were very engaged in discussing the quarries that I had for them; most of them even gave out information about their company through fliers and pamphlets, as well as directing me to their websites for more information. The only company that I hoped attended was Facebook, but I was disappointed to hear that they only should up to the Fall CSE fair. Despite this, I was able to connect with every other company that was on my target list: Epic, Wells Fargo, Target, and Fairview. One thing to note however, was that I did not intend on getting interviewed for any positions for the summer due to my summer internship with Best Buy. Instead, I used the fair as an opportunity to talk with company representatives about their own experience working for their employers, as well as attaining more information that I would not be able to otherwise get from my own research.

The first company that I visited was Epic Systems, a healthcare software company. While there was no interview conducted at the fair, I did get the chance to hear about the benefits that are offered to interns. I learned that every summer, they hold their internships in Wisconsin, even offering housing options for students who would not be able to find their own. From my informational interview, I was able to gather that the company embraces a family culture with their interns as well as their employees. I also learned that they primarily program in C as well as Java, which gave me the opportunity to give them a copy of my resume showing them my knowledge of those languages. And although I wasn’t looking for an internship myself, I made sure that I was at least connected with the company and asked the representative that was there to put me on their email list for future career openings that are available.

The next company that I visited was Wells Fargo. While I enjoyed my time talking to the representative who was there who told me that the technologies internships that were offered included responsibilities such as writing scripts and testing code, there was a sense that much of the position, especially entry-level positions, simply included a ton of data entry. This made me skeptical about pursuing a future career since data entry is not something that I would want to do right out of the gate. I understand that entry level positions, for the most part, include a ton of menial tasks, but the company culture which I found to be very inflexible was enough for me to be disinterested in pursuing a career. Thus, I refrained from giving my resume to the representative.

After Wells Fargo, I went to the Target stand and was pleasantly surprised in the shift of energy. The representatives there were very excited to talk to me and answer my questions about the positions that they offer. They discussed a very team-oriented culture similar to what I know from Best Buy, which did not shock me considering both companies technologies divisions work on producing similar systems. They did also conduct a short interview where they asked me about the most exciting project that I worked on, in which I told them that I created a computer board game in Python for a class assignment where players can play against a low-level AI program. They then proceeded to tell me that most of their back-end systems are primarily built in JavaScript which I am unfortunately not very experienced in. Despite this, I ended up giving them my resume and signed up for their email list for future career options as I did with Epic.

The last company that I visited was Fairview Health Services, which in all honesty did not provide a very stellar presentation. While the representatives themselves were very nice, they did not seem very engaged in the discussion I had with them and did not provide a mini interview. I found out that the reason that this was because they did not work in the technologies division and weren’t very versed in what their positions offered. I was able to gather, however, that the internships they offered primarily focused on IT work rather than building and testing back-end systems such as other software engineering internships. They were helpful in informing me that the company culture is very friendly but can be demanding at times due to the importance of the work that they do in regard to working with patients as opposed to customers. I decided to not pursue this position not only because of the lack of information that was provided, but also because of the fact that the information they did present offered positions that were more ‘problem-fixing oriented’ rather than focusing on building and integrating new solutions.