Shaping a career path in PwC US Tax

Professionals in PwC’s US Tax Services help businesses keep pace with tax legislation, regulatory developments and complex business challenges. As advisors adding value for their clients, Tax professionals at PwC can choose from many specialties, one of which is International Tax Services.

The US firm’s International Tax Services group has a wealth of experience helping companies address their cross-border needs. Teams advise clients on multiple aspects of international taxation and help multinational businesses achieve their goals in a tax-efficient manner, both locally and globally.

*On Campus* talked to Kirby Huelsebusch, a Senior Associate in the International Tax Services practice, and asked her to tell us about her experiences in the practice and how she is shaping her career path in this cutting-edge field.

***Kirby Huelsebusch***

**International Tax Services**

**Market: Cincinnati**

**Joined PwC: October 2009**

**College: University of Cincinnati**

***Enjoying a career that exceeds expectations***

As an undergraduate student at the University of Cincinnati, I participated in the school’s work/study co-op program, where I was given the opportunity to gain real world work experi­ence. I was able to test drive not only a position, but a company’s culture too. Having the oppor­tunity to take on various responsibilities throughout my internships gave me a perspec­tive on what I really wanted to do with my career. It was through my initial internship experiences that I turned to PwC for my final two rotations.

At PwC, my internships provided the opportu­nity for me to explore my interests among the vast scope of services and specialities the firm has to offer. Having had the opportunity to assist PwC teams with various projects, I real­ized I was interested in the type of work the International Tax Services teams were doing for their clients. By the end of my internships, I was confident that this was the right specialty for me.

What interested me the most about Internation­al Tax Services was the extensive high-level business issue research and the application of this research to each client’s unique circum­stances. Exploring how each situation would be treated, in terms of understanding existing tax law and making an appropriate recommenda­tion, was both dynamic and challenging. There are so many technical issues to delve into in International Tax. There is not always a clear-cut answer, but I really enjoyed the deep dive the teams took in developing solutions to some of these complex problems. I also knew from what I saw and heard in the industry that the international space was a really fast-growing area of tax, and I knew I wanted to be in an industry that was relevant to today’s global economy and that had a lot of growth potential. When I completed my internship, and was ex­tended an offer to work with PwC, I confidently said, “When I come back full-time, I’d be inter­ested in trying out a career in International Tax,” and it was my internship experience that pro­vided me this insight.

After I wrapped up my masters in accounting and received my CPA, I came to the firm as a full-time hire. In pursuing a career at PwC, I had expected that I would be surrounded by top tier talent, and consistently learning and moving forward with my career. The people in my home office are influential mentors and our client base is strong.

***Teaming for success***

Each day is fresh, things are always changing, and I don’t know exactly what will be in store. I spend a significant amount of time liaising with international offices and PwC network firms around the world. My primary goal is to analyze tax issues not only from a US-based per­spective, but also to consider them from global viewpoints. The relationships I have built with my clients and colleagues within the firm are critical to my role. The more I’ve interacted and collaborated, the stronger these relationships have become. I’ve found that my colleagues are more than willing to accept questions and offer guidance and mentorship. They spend time dis­cussing my projects and coaching me, and they have been very inclusive.

Through the trusted relationships I’ve built, I have been given responsibility and the opportu­nity to take ownership of projects, all while growing as a professional. As a result of my ex­periences, I’ve been given the trust to lead ini­tiatives and observed how the people here have tailored their careers—it seems like no one fol­lows precisely the same path and I am also carv­ing my own path. I found the key is making sure that I speak up and communicate what it is I am looking to do next.

***Growing as a well-rounded professional***

It’s not uncommon to be concerned that once you start working full-time, it can be tough to balance your personal life. By making a concert­ed effort to get involved in my community and stay active with friends, I’ve been able to fill my life with things I really enjoy. I’ve even played intramural softball with my home office. Inter­acting with and getting to know co-workers out­side of work has been a lot of fun. Beyond intramurals, I’ve participated in the firm’s campus recruiting leadership program, Elevate, serving as a team leader, and helped out at PwC recruiting events at my alma mater. It has been a rewarding opportunity to offer students first-hand knowledge about life at the firm. I am able to be candid with students and help them make career choices that fit their unique goals. Addi­tionally, the firm’s commitment to community service has allowed me the opportunity to spend a day building houses for Habitat for Humanity and to spend time making lunches to feed the home­less and disadvantaged people in my communi­ty, through Martha’s Table.

The encouragement extended by my team to support me in finding balance in work and life has reminded me to step back and say, “There’s more to life than just work. To be a successful, well-rounded professional, you need to think about all aspects of life.” I’ve learned the key to achieving this balance is good two-way communication and planning with my team to make sure client commitments are met and proj­ects completed. It’s been very clear to me from the time I started with the firm that the people here want you to succeed. They want you to be happy while you’re here so that you can see yourself having a long-term career with PwC.