Lauren Sharkey

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Wall Street Trek Seminar

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Sharon Kim - Alumni Interview Write-Up

Sharon Kim is a senior accounting major who will be completing a masters program at Weatherhead in the spring of 2022. She entered Case Western as a Pre-Med student but started to take finance and accounting classes in her first year, and realized that this was the direction that she wanted to pursue. She specifically recalled that ACCT 101 and ACCT 102 were the two classes that most heavily impacted her decision to switch to become an accounting major. This past winter, Sharon worked with Ernst & Young, as part of a collaboration with Bank of America, as a consulting intern. She has accepted a position within consulting at Ernst & Young after she graduates in 2022.

Sharon decided to accept her role at EY because of the positive experiences that she had with her past roles. She really enjoyed the people that she was working with and felt that the company’s values aligned with her own. Throughout her virtual internship, she felt that she was given substantial tasks to complete and was able to learn a lot about consulting. She also received a job offer from Mackenzie Consulting, which was in her hometown of Chicago, but ended up going with EY because of her positive past experiences with the company. It was a hard decision to choose between location, prestige, values, and room for growth, but Sharon is happy with the decision that she made.

Although Sharon majored in accounting, she ended up pursuing a career in consulting. She likes consulting because she enjoys the connections that you make with other people and the types of skills that are required from the role. She also appreciated how consulting jobs do not have strong preferences about what your major is, as long as you have the skills required to excel in the position. She also had strong upperclassmen mentors when she was an underclassman who were able to introduce her to people that worked at different consulting firms, so that she was able to network and learn more about the industry. She explained to me that it is hard to network and put yourself out there, especially if that is not something that you are naturally good at, but that it is important. She recommended that I start with my existing network and see if anyone that I have connections with, can point me in the right direction of another professional in a more related role to the one I want to explore. She also recommended that I try to talk to more Case Western alumnus to hear about their career path. We are both very involved in different cultural clubs on campus, and she suggested that I use that organization to begin to network.

My biggest takeaway from meeting with Sharon is that it is best to start exploring career opportunities as early as possible, and to try and put myself out there. I learned that it is really important to not let fear of failure stop you from applying for more opportunities. Sharon wished that she broadened her job search and applied to jobs that may have seemed impossible to get. I think that was good advice because it can be overwhelming to look at a huge list of jobs, but the more jobs that you apply to, the more choices and flexibility you will have in the future, so it is ultimately worth it. She also showed me that although she did not go into Investment Banking, the Wall Street Trek aiding her in figuring out what she wanted to do, post-graduation. I am hoping that the Wall Street Trek can also help me to find clarity in the type of industry I would like to enter post-graduation.