

## **Report I – George Washington University**

### **Luis Quilico Exchange Spring 2014**

It's been a month since we got here, so I thought it might be a good idea to give you an update of what is going on. It's been a very cold month thus far. Some say it has been the coldest winter in decades. Coming from Taiwan and its warm tropical climate this has required major adjustments on my behalf. I've lived in cold places before, but this is not like anything I have experienced before. Just for you to get a sense of it, it has been close to -20°. If any part of your body was exposed to the cold, it felt like thousands of needles were jabbed into your skin. Those were obvious days were you tried to stay indoors. On top of that, we have had a couple of snow days, where staying at home was almost a must.

Luckily it's not that cold every day. We have also had absolutely beautiful days. It's still chilly outside, but the sun is out and shines brightly warming you up. These are my favorite days for a stroll in the park because Washington is an absolutely gorgeous city. It is very well kept, has lots of green open space and there is no building higher than the Capital which give it this small, intimate feel. The first couple of days of our stay here we got to visit several different places. By far my favorite thus far has been the Capitol. On top of being very stunning, you can see how it is at the center of democracy in the US.

The school has been pretty good as well. The quality of the professors is really excellent and I am learning heaps. I am taking three courses and I audit one (because it was full). The professors are really professional and you can tell that they bring a wealth of experience to the table. The courses that I am taking are Advertising, Project Management and a Strategic Consulting Practicum. I audit Conflict Management and Negotiations. Having said that, I was a little bummed by the fact that the courses are in the evenings (I was trying to get away from that) and that the course offering was not as broad as I expected.

The last thing I wanted to highlight in this first report is the career center. They have team of fully dedicated people that regularly conduct workshops on resume building, cover letter writing, networking, etc. Additionally they give one on one professional consulting which is very valuable. My intention is to transition back into America and this has proved to be very helpful. Wish me luck in my job hunt.

Until next time. Over and out.-

## **Report II – George Washington University**

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Washington is the capital of the United States of America, one of the most powerful countries in the world and there is always something big going on. The George Washington University is located in downtown DC very close to the White House, the IMF and the World Bank and sometimes some of these institution's activities are hosted on campus. For instance, the some of the conferences of the IMF's biannual meetings were hosted on Foggy Bottom Campus. I got the chance to be in a session with Christine Lagarde, the Managing Director of the IMF in April.

The conversation with her revolved around the World economy and some of the challenges that it is facing. In general, her view was very optimistic about the future and said that we are slowly but surely growing out of the recession. One of the things that she pointed out to support this claim is that Greece had recently issued bonds in the public markets at a reasonable interest rate meaning that the confidence of investors in the country has been restored to a certain extent. This is the first step for the country to stand on its own two feet. Other economies in trouble are following as well.

At the end of the session, there was a question and answer session from people in the audience and from people in questions received through Twitter. She handled them very well charmingly as usual. She addressed some of the harder ones such as when they asked her about the role of the IMF and the crisis in the Ukraine where she extended the IMF's full support.

Finally I just wanted to mention that it was also an excellent networking opportunity to meet with likeminded individuals. For instance, there was a lady that sat to my left that worked for the World Bank for many year. At the time I was interviewing with the IFC, the private financial arm of the World Bank and she gave me a lot of insight.

## **Report III – George Washington University**

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MBA's are normally pretty intensive programs. Despite that there are many clubs at The George Washington University where you can learn more about certain topics and mingle with people that have the same interests. The clubs vary in terms of interests and formats. For instance there are sports clubs, debate clubs, cooking club, hobby clubs, etc. With so many options and with very little time you have to choose wisely.

One of the Clubs I joined was the consulting club. I have always had a special interest in this industry and was particularly attracted by their activities. Some sessions revolved around case interviews. Here we would have a peer that has worked in the industry walk us through a case. He would point out what things to do, what things to avoid, how go faster. Also reference materials was offered and one on one sessions with someone else that was interested were facilitated. The first case was about a manufacturing company and how it had to decide whether or not to manufacture a project given certain constraints. The second session I went to was a Federal consulting case from a classmate that worked for Deloitte's federal consulting practice in Washington DC. We had a prof. who was a principal from McKinsey walk us through another one and so on.

Another interesting thing that we had was a speaker series of professionals that would come to talk about their industries. So, for example, we had a group of consultants that specialize on healthcare share with us their experiences, tips and challenges.

Finally, there were a couple of company visits. There was one alumni that was a managing director at Accenture who graciously invited us over to his office where a group of consultants imparted some workshops and shared things about the company and the work that they do.

Clubs are a very interesting, extracurricular way of expanding your knowledge and your contact list. NCCU could benefit from this.

## **Report IV – George Washington University**

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In my final report I wanted to talk about the importance of networking. According to the Career center, around 70% of all jobs are filled through networking. Technical skills and abilities is a necessary condition for success, but it is not a sufficient one. In business it really depends on who you know and how you can leverage that. At GWU this is fostered in different ways. It organizes regular luncheons and on site networking sessions, but it also takes advantage of the new technological tools that we have at our disposal.

The George Washington University cares a lot about its alumni network and has a team of people who are dedicated full time to this endeavor. One of the things that they do is organize meetings online using a web platform. At first I was a little skeptical about the ideas, but I tried it out and really liked it.

The way it works is similar to speed dating. You log in and provide some information: what is your experience, what you are interested in, and upload your resume. The program matches you with someone else that would make a good fit based on the information provided for 4 minutes. There you have to strike a conversation with the other person, let them know how you can help them and get their help. It is an interesting way of getting to know a lot of people in a short period of time. In my case, I was contacted by a headhunter who that works in the finance industry which was a happy coincidence since I am looking for a job there.