



Dear Reader,

This, our sixth ***Living It*** book, celebrates the tenth birthday of Leadership Rice. From those small seeds first planted a decade ago, a healthy program, well rooted in the Rice culture, has grown up. At Leadership Rice, we teach that leadership is seldom the work of solo practitioners. Rather, it requires teamwork to move from ideas to action. We have benefited from a terrific team.

Every mentor adds to the strength of the program. Every funder expands our possibilities. Every student widens our reach. Community leaders who teach and work with us on program development and strategy broaden our resources. Colleagues in leadership development who have helped to establish the Collaboration for Intentional Leadership as a way of improving leadership development in the community broaden our impact. The cumulative effect has been exciting and substantive. As you will see in reading these pages, there is reason to hope that a new generation of potential leaders may move into the world with heightened capacities and deepened self-awareness.

When Leadership Rice began ten years ago, the question on the table was, “Can you teach leadership?” If we can teach scholarship and sportsmanship – both well accepted as part of university life – we can teach leadership. Of course, we cannot make leaders. Leadership happens when opportunity, skills and passion come together. It requires a context. Just as a scholar needs a discipline and an athlete needs a sport, a leader needs a focus. For most students, that focus is yet to emerge. But we can develop the capacities that contribute to leadership and provide ways to help young people move towards the areas that will captivate them.

The capacities for leadership are both extrinsic and intrinsic. Knowing how to run an effective meeting, for example, is something every Rice student can learn. Knowing how to feel comfortable and confident in the face of ambiguity or chaos is something we also believe they can learn. Read their stories and see what can happen when experienced mentors provide a context and structured reflection directs attention to principles explored earlier in the classroom.

To all of you who have helped to make Leadership Rice a success and who have invested time and energy in our students, thank you! We hope you will continue and lead us to others who will join our team and contribute to the development of leadership capacity.

Sincerely,

Susan A. Lieberman
Director

Natalia Ksiezyk
Assistant Director

Jennifer Murray
Assistant Director

THANK YOU!



Leadership Rice is helped in placing students in excellent mentorships by gifts from:

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We are grateful to Leadership Rice donors for their generosity and encouragement. Students benefit by access to exceptional placements; staff values the donors' trust and support; and, most importantly, communities benefit when our graduates take on leadership responsibilities in their chosen arenas.

*We owe many thanks to **Marcia Chamberlain**, our writing consultant and editor of this publication, whose generosity of spirit and consummate professionalism enrich our students and staff. We are also grateful to **Brian Howard**, who edited the students' essays and offered us his thoughtful feedback.*

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SUMMER MENTORSHIP QUESTIONS



Each week of the Summer Mentorship Experience, students respond to a prompt intended to make visible the connection between theory and practice and to deepen the learning begun in the classroom. Their responses are shared with a small peer group as well as Leadership Rice staff. This summer, SME participants considered the following topics:

Ambiguity. In your first week, many of you have faced ambiguity head on. What are you supposed to do, and how will you do it? Share with your group how you felt this week and what you did to make yourself comfortable. Also tell us about your organization, its mission, employers, etc.

Strengths and Weaknesses. In Orientation, we asked you to single out one thing you think you do well and would like to strengthen and one thing you don't feel you do so well and would like to work on. Share with your e-group what you will be working on and how you plan to progress in this journey. Tell us whether you talked with your mentor about these goals and, if you did, how the conversation went.

Listening. Good listening contributes significantly to leadership capacity, yet it's so hard to figure out how to make yourself a better listener. Comment on how you are doing and what you see in your organization regarding listening abilities. Perhaps you want to think about already-listening, effective requests, and interpretation.

Communication. When people in the workplace discuss an issue, how do they discuss it? Is the discussion conceptual or personal? Is there any effort to distinguish the values that inform opposing positions? See if you can tease out the values and assumptions that lead good people to oppositional points of view.

Effective Requests. George Martinez emphasized the importance of making effective requests. Observe the requests your work colleagues make. Are they specific? Do they allow the option to say "No"? How do *you* ask for advice, help, etc.?

Authority. Formal authority makes clear who is supposed to be in charge of what. But often, good work happens via informal authority. Reflect with your group on the formal and informal authority in your office. For example, have you discovered a certain individual who holds more power than many high up the organization chart? Are there people to whom others frequently turn for advice because they are wise and helpful even though they are not formally designated as advice givers?

Competence. Most people worry about appearing smart. Have you worried about this? Who are the people in your office you have come to admire and why? What has allowed you to demonstrate your own competence this summer? Was it simply knowing "the right answer"?

Mistakes. We said in Orientation that we hoped each of you would have a chance to make a mistake this summer and then figure out how to recoup. If you have had the good fortune to make your mistake, tell us about it and what it may have taught you. And/or tell us about “going to the balcony” and seeing the distinction between thinking personally and structurally.

Motivation. We know leadership involves motivating others. Reflect on which actions by others have motivated you and/or have squelched your motivation. What have you learned about how you might motivate people one day?

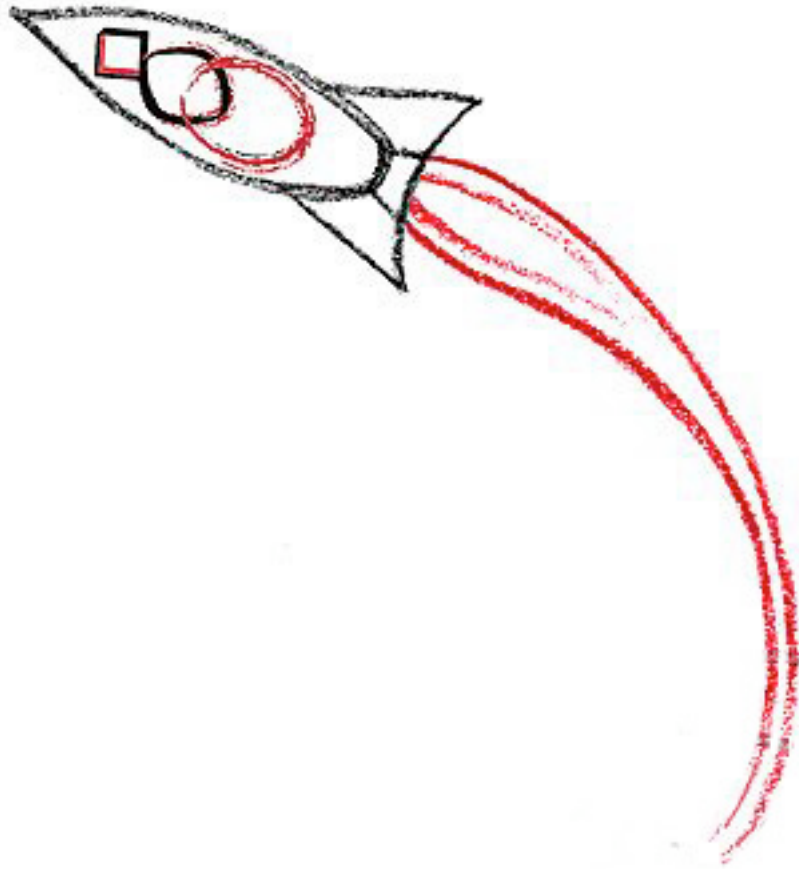
Type and Temperament. Tell us about the personal dynamics in your workplace. Can you pick out the extroverts and the introverts? How are these qualities reflected in their working styles? How about other qualities we discussed as part of the Myers-Briggs Temperament Inventory (MBTI) lecture? Tell us where you fit in.

Mission. After you have spent some time in your organization, can you see whether everyone is clear about the core mission of the organization? Can you figure out how what you are doing and what other people are doing relate to the core mission? If there is no clarity, how does that affect the work?

Wild Card. Something is really getting to you. You can’t figure out what’s going on or how to act. Write it out and ask your e-group for input.

Summary. Do you feel differently now than you did in Week 1? Is it hard to believe it’s over? Give us your summation of the summer. Which experience provided the lesson for you? What are you taking away as your rule of thumb about leadership?

THE GREAT UNKNOWN



“To be wise requires the development of a mode of mind which can accept the relative nature of knowledge without tipping into rampant subjectivity or solipsism. One must be able to live with Voltaire’s dictum: ‘doubt is an uncomfortable condition, but certainty is a ridiculous one’.”

- Guy Claxton, *Hare Brain, Tortoise Mind*

Aparna Shewakramani
Houston Endowment
Emily Todd, Grant Officer

A Heart



When I was 6, I decided that I wanted to be a lawyer. Years later, I walked into the Leadership Rice office for my summer mentorship interview, and I described my perfect summer with ease. I would be happy working in a law firm or in the legal field. I was an easy applicant. I knew exactly what I wanted. Or so I believed at the time. Two weeks later, I got an acceptance letter and the opportunity to work at the Houston Endowment.

A few things were obvious right off the bat. First, a nonprofit philanthropic agency would not provide any legal experience for me, and second, foundation work was something I knew very little about. By accepting this mentorship, I would be getting into something that wasn't part of my master plan. Nonetheless, I took a deep breath, trusted Leadership Rice, and signed up. Although the mentorship did not seem like an ideal fit, a part of me was curious to see this "other" side of the world.

Two months at the Houston Endowment went by in a blur of site visits to nonprofit agencies around the city. I got to see the Houston Endowment in action, providing monetary assistance to worthy agencies, accepting grant proposals for exciting new projects and programs, and connecting with commendable organizations all over town. I was floored by the commitment that these people—at the Endowment and in the community—had for their work. Truthfully, I never imagined that it was possible to achieve and sustain that kind of passion in the work force. For the first time ever, I saw that there might be more to the work world than what I had focused on for so many years. There might be something besides law out there, something bigger.

I see the person I am after my summer, and I compare it to who I was on the first day of my mentorship. I am different—not because I know more, but because I know less. The nonprofit world of philanthropy introduced me to brilliant, zealous people all over Houston. It was inspiring to observe so many dedicated individuals saying, and truly believing, that their cause is worthy of millions of dollars from the Endowment. I was awestruck by these accomplished people who fight for their traveling medical caravans, their public parks along the bayou, their underserved youth. These community leaders really believe in what they do and in those they help; they envision the world becoming a better place,

“Until my mentorship at the Houston Endowment, I had never seen so many people from so many walks of life whose vocations mattered so deeply...I’d never considered all the ways in which genuine work, as opposed to mere employment, can fulfill and challenge and inspire.”

and they sacrifice everything to make their dreams a reality. It made me think a lot about whether divorce law is all I should look forward to in the future.

Was a typical 9-to-5 job what I wanted? From the head of the CDC who moved to the “ ’hood” he believed in rebuilding to the head nurse at the AIDS hospice who served extra volunteer hours in the kitchen, I saw workers who redefined the image I had of work. Until my mentorship at the Houston Endowment, I had never seen so many people from so many walks of life whose vocations mattered so deeply. Their “jobs” were on what I call my Life List. This mental list is composed of elements that contribute to an authentic life, such as close family and friends. Before this summer, I’d never considered all the ways in which genuine work, as opposed to mere employment, can fulfill and challenge and inspire.

This summer surprised me. Rather than cementing my plans for the future, it’s caused me to entertain new ideas. Law is still an option. But if law doesn’t motivate and enthuse me, then maybe I’ll look elsewhere. That “maybe” makes me smile. It entered my life just when I needed it most. It came to me when I thought I knew the answers, when I thought my plans were secure. A handful of extraordinary individuals helped me to see that there are so many exciting ways to make a difference in this world. After this summer, I consider myself lucky. I got more than a helping hand. I got a heart.

Beth Fairchok
Cooper Cameron Valves
Jamie Kellerman, Manager of Business Development

Questions Make Perfect



My mentorship placement in March came with just two tidbits of information: The company I would be working for was Cooper Cameron Valves, and the name of my mentor was Jamie Kellerman. Initially I felt very uneasy, because I did not know a single detail about what I was going to do all summer long. The location of the office, the hours of the job, my responsibilities—nothing was spelled out for me. Furthermore, as a political science and economics major, I hardly knew what a valve was. I thought I might as well have been assigned to a car-repair shop or an emergency room, because I did not have even a vague idea what I could offer Cooper Cameron Valves.

How did I get placed in such a foreign field? I knew that I had asked the Leadership Rice team for an unconventional mentorship, one that a political science or economics major would not typically seek out. On the other hand, I never imagined that they would assign me to work in an industry that was dominated by engineers and totally outside my expertise. I began to hope that my placement was a mix-up or that I had accidentally picked up another student's placement. Neither was the case.

Once my surprise subsided, I set out to learn more about Cooper Cameron and my future mentor. My fears were eased slightly when I discovered that my mentor was involved in the business side of the company. My placement was beginning to make more sense. However, as I continued to peruse the company website, I felt a renewed sense of panic at all the ambiguity that seemed to be in store for me. How would I manage in an engineering-based field? I had no idea what to expect—from Cooper Cameron or myself.

Looking back on the mentorship experience, I realize that this sense of uncertainty pushed me to learn much more this summer than I would have in most jobs. Because I did not know anything about the oil industry or valve products, I had to constantly listen and ask questions. My mentor spent several days just explaining to me how the company functioned and what its products were. I learned some basics about the engineering side of Cooper Cameron during my first week, but there were many gaps in my knowledge. My subsequent projects ended up focusing more on numbers and reports than on valves, but here, too, I discovered the importance of continuously soliciting information.

As the summer progressed, I realized that being a novice is not automatically a disadvantage. In fact, because I knew so little about the industry, I always felt

“I realized that being a novice is not automatically a disadvantage. In fact, because I knew so little about the industry, I always felt encouraged to ask questions. Instead of feeling awkward I felt bold.”

encouraged to ask questions. Instead of feeling awkward I felt bold, and I seized the opportunity to learn as much as I could about the field and about business practices in general. Certainly the summer was full of challenging situations, but because I felt free to seek clarification and make requests, I finished most projects quickly and efficiently. Furthermore, I gained a lot of real-world information that no class at Rice would ever teach me. My time at Cooper Cameron was like an eight-week crash course in the rudiments of business procedures and the art of asking questions.

After two months of work in a completely unfamiliar field, I believe I have gained some of the tools I need to deal effectively with ambiguity in other areas of my life. I consider myself very lucky to have worked in an environment that could teach me so much when I knew so little. Working at Cooper Cameron taught me that not knowing all of the answers can be a valuable asset and that ambiguity is not something to be feared. I am already applying this powerful idea to activities outside of work. Who knew that such an unconventional mentorship would offer so much!

Guy Sirkes
Compass Bank
Todd Smurl, Executive Vice President

Fuzzy Math



As a mathematical economics major at Rice, I spend hours working on hypothetical math problems and tinkering with graphs. It might be reasonable to think that I could look at the world around me, build a model, and understand what all the variables are. Unfortunately, life is not a model, and things are not that simple.

Before I started my mentorship at Compass Bank, I thought I had a clear idea of what bankers did and how things in the banking world worked. I assumed that bankers were straightforward people who worked with clear-cut things like checking accounts. They were very direct, I thought, because they worked in black and white, never in shades of gray. In many ways, the banking world seemed to match up with the precise, predictable world of mathematical economics.

In reality, the banking world took me by surprise. It never occurred to me that bankers, who feed off numbers, could be entrenched so thoroughly in the world of ambiguity. My mentors tried to explain the complex nature of their work to me, but I was caught completely off guard. For a presentation for one of their larger clients, I was asked to list five bullet points about the economy. When I pushed my mentors for details, I was told that I could include whatever I thought was important. In school, when I am assigned a problem set, the answer I give is either right or wrong. Suddenly I discovered myself in a situation where there were many possible answers, and I got to choose. It was eye-opening to find out that even in the finance industry, benchmarked by indices, interest rates, and rates of return, there are shades of gray.

The murkiness intensified as the mentorship progressed. Among other tasks, I was asked to predict the earnings of companies given certain historical data. After putting the financial statements into Excel, I tinkered with various projections based on information that the companies had released, commodities prices, market dynamics, and other factors. There was no right answer. The earnings would become known in time, but until then, the Wall Street analysts would have to endure the same fog as I did. This was disconcerting. At the same time, it felt intoxicating and empowering to be operating so freely in the world of ambiguity.

After several weeks of plugging away in the banking business, I found out that my primary mentor had resigned. Suddenly I was faced with some basic questions. Whom do I report to? What will become of the work I have been doing? The vagueness I felt at the bank became denser. Fortunately, dealing with volatile markets and imprecise assumptions had taught me something. Rather than feeling defeated by the uncertainty of the situation, I was able to continue doing my job and focusing on what I knew I could do well. Eventually things sorted themselves out.

“Suddenly I discovered myself in a situation where there were many possible answers, and I got to choose.”

But my vision of conventional bankers doing simple, clear-cut work had dissipated forever. Even those old bastions of order and precision, banks, have to endure some ambiguity. In class, when professors ask what $(x + y)$ equals, they do not expect fuzzy math. But in life it's the norm, and my internship at Compass Bank helped me to understand the value of living and working in ambiguity.

Melissa Waitsman
Center for Houston's Future
Jessica Pugil, Senior Vice President, Strategic Planning & Administration

Reveling in Ambiguity



I frequently joke about the civil-engineering student who once told me that by the time he was 5, he knew he wanted to be at a medium-sized organization by his 30th birthday and in charge by his 40th. My reply was that at that particular age, I wanted to be a pony. I use this anecdote to laugh off the uncomfortable silence that follows my announcement that I am not entirely sure what I would like to do after college, but also to show that I believe I will find something that's right for me. My summer mentorship experience reinforced that belief. It strengthened my conviction that having a detailed plan for life is less important than passion for what you want to accomplish and willingness to work hard yet remain open to possibilities.

Since coming to Rice University, I've met many brilliant people with well-orchestrated plans similar to the civil engineer's. I've never had that kind of certainty, nor did I ever worry about it, until recently. With graduation nearing, more and more of my peers began to imply that my failure to map out a future was dangerous and irresponsible. So I came to Leadership Rice on a mission: I wanted to put to rest my increasing worries about a post-collegiate career and pinpoint what to do with my life.

When I was told that I would be spending my summer at the nonprofit Center for Houston's Future, I had my doubts. Despite the promising name, I did not feel confident that the Center for Houston's Future would assist me in plotting out my own future. I was unclear about the organization's mission and unsure about what I could gain from the experience. When I discussed my concerns with members of the Leadership Rice staff, they replied that I must practice being open to ambiguity. So I signed on, and the rest is history.

I arrived at the center in search of answers, but instead I immediately encountered uncertainty. The fact that the organization was facing major upheaval—the second CEO since the center's founding in the 1990s, the departure of other long-term fixtures in the organization, and changes within the parent organization—did not help clarify my role. How could I chart a clear path for myself in an environment that seemed so unstable?

The answer soon became clear. I could watch and listen and learn. As an outsider to the organization, I could observe the changes and transitions occurring at the center without my own emotions clouding my vision. I could study the diverse ways in which people deal with ambiguity and apply what I witnessed to my own future.

Eventually I noticed that the staff members who navigated organizational change most successfully were those who remained positive and open to possibilities.

“Having a detailed plan for life is less important than passion for what you want to accomplish and willingness to work hard yet remain open to possibilities.”

They were excited about the improvements that they hoped the newcomers would make in the organization, and they were open to exploring many paths to a brighter future. They did not cross their arms defiantly, close their office doors, or hide behind whispered phone calls. Instead they entered into an exchange. They were receptive to the ideas of the new leadership, who in turn respected their candor and flexibility during a time of crisis. In the end, those who didn't close themselves off to possibilities were happier with their jobs and better able to assist the organization in reaching its goals.

For me, the summer was a revelation. I did not exit my mentorship with a well-drawn map for my future, but I did leave with a renewed sense that ambiguity can be an incredibly positive thing and that closing off options can be devastating. I realize now that remaining open to change is what I am doing by getting a solid liberal-arts education. I've left room for my passion to meet my hard work and combine with a little serendipity to guide me to whatever lies ahead in the years after Rice.

Jonathan Polenz
ABC News 20/20
Kristina Kendall, Producer

My New World in New York



When Leadership Rice asked me to consider a mentorship in New York, I had plenty of doubts. I had planned on spending my summer at my family's Santa Fe home, where I knew I could take some relaxing time off. The thought of dealing with the intensity of New York's great unknowns wasn't appealing. But when Leadership Rice helped me get a mentorship working for John Stossel at ABC News 20/20, the great unknowns started to look more like great opportunities. So I took a chance and signed on for a whole new world of possibilities and experiences. Looking back, I made the right choice.

Arriving in New York was unlike arriving in any other place I've ever been. The city grabbed hold of me, made me face it on its own terms, and immediately gave me the sense that I was in the right place. The eighth floor of ABC's Building "147" became a home away from home, not only because I was working long hours but also because it didn't take long for me to feel truly comfortable there. I had my own cubicle with my own extension with voice-mail and computer with e-mail. These small, ordinary necessities somehow made me feel professional. I don't think I took off my ABC ID badge during my whole first week, even though nobody else in the office really wore badges. More importantly, my cubicle was next to Stossel's producers, which meant that I was right in the middle of the action. I had access to everything. But I really knew I was in the right place when my bosses, the Stossel Unit producers and assistant producers, turned out to be people whom I respected and who respected me. Their openness and willingness to include and depend on me made my work meaningful and my summer unforgettable.

During my time at ABC News, I helped put together weekly segments for John Stossel and an hour-long special on education for 20/20. Some days I researched. Some days I participated in office-wide brainstorming sessions. And some days I assisted producers out in the field on camera shoots. Every day, as I worked on segments, stories, and special assignments, I became more energized. I kept wanting to dig deeper, to learn more, to find out if I could be a TV journalist. And by the end of my internship, I felt like a significant, contributing member of the Stossel Unit. In other words, I felt like a journalist. I felt that I belonged in the Stossel Unit, in the ABC News Department, and in the great city of New York. This sense of belonging, purpose, and energy gave me more than I could have ever asked for from a summer internship.

I loved every minute of my summer. I did good work; I made good connections; and I chased down great opportunities. You know you've had a valuable experience when you feel as though you've changed and yet somehow become more yourself.

“You know you’ve had a valuable experience when you feel as though you’ve changed and yet somehow become more yourself.”

Returning to Houston was difficult after my summer in New York. In retrospect, I have the feeling that during my ten-week internship, New York became much more a part of me than I became a part of it. But New York's not going anywhere. I'll be back.

Przemyslaw Milewicz
FINCA International, Kosovo
John Hatch, Founder

The Heart of Darkness Revisited



Was the assignment in Kosovo my personal heart of darkness?

On the one hand, conducting field research for FINCA International at times resembled a dark scene from Joseph Conrad's novel. On the other hand, working for the world's leading microcredit organization, renowned for its reliance on local staff and egalitarian self-help ideology, guaranteed that my job would not become a postmodern version of "the white man's burden."

My summer mentorship experience with FINCA took me on a surprising quest of self-discovery. On paper my job seemed straightforward, but in reality it opened up some troubling questions and made me dig deep to find the answers. My task was to assess the organization's impact on reducing poverty in the region. One hundred fifty interviews, 86 questions each, 30 days, one interpreter, one final report. This was my project.

At first I thought this kind of a survey would offer me the perfect opportunity to listen to hundreds of fascinating personal stories, witness eye to eye the good and the evil of this world, and finally, as Westerners enjoy saying, "make a difference." I soon realized I was wrong. Before long, the job felt rote. The illuminating accounts of the local people were reduced to mere numbers, and human experience was summarized as a statistic. I entered the data in my Palm Pilot.

Was I really hearing the important stories being told, or were efficiency and expediency taking over my mentorship? Was I truly able to relate to other human beings and their suffering, or was I just a recording machine? These questions began to haunt me.

I began to search for the answers. I listened with new intensity to interviewees who suspected me of being a Serbian spy, to profanities hurled at me when I walked down the street, to the dark noise of helicopters and armored vehicles patrolling the town with menacing regularity. I also opened myself up to expressions of warmth and hospitality, and I began to encounter a strong sense of community and solidarity. Gradually I began to experience some light in the midst of darkness.

The Kosovars call themselves the most optimistic people in the Balkans, but even they cannot explain to me why. It must be the children, I thought, universal symbols of hope. Kosovo, the youngest nation in Europe, has myriads of them. From dawn to dark and long after that, they crowd the streets and the squares of the towns, enthusiastically devoting themselves to three activities: laughing, begging, and playing.

"Was I really hearing the important stories being told, or were efficiency and expediency taking over my mentorship? Was I truly able to relate to other human beings and their suffering, or was I just a recording machine?"

With my mission in Kosovo drawing to an end, I finally began to analyze all the data I had collected. Thousands of ciphers in various combinations suddenly began to make sense, to form a pattern, and to present themselves as one digestible, comprehensive, and meaningful whole. The project began to feel worthwhile.

On my flight back home, however, many unanswered questions remained. Would the information I had compiled actually assist FINCA in doing its work? Would the numbers I had gathered really enrich the lives of those who had shared their stories with me? Would the conversations and encounters I'd had in Kosovo stay with me once I returned home? For the sake of the many Kosovar children, I hope so.

Ginny Wills Stuckey
U.S. Senate Committee on Rules and Administration
Kennie L. Gill, Democratic Staff Director and Chief Counsel

The Truth Is in the Water Cooler



With a few cups of coffee, pearls, and sensible black pumps, I headed confidently to work in the U.S. Senate Committee on Rules and Administration. Last week's news cycle was fresh in my head. I was well-read on my committee's jurisdiction and current concerns. I was smart. I was caffeinated. I was well-groomed. As I walked up the white marble steps of the Russell Building, I thought I had all the tools and information I needed to jump right into this operation termed "The Senate."

No amount of nightly news or New York Times will allow a person to anticipate the reality of American politics. I quickly realized that C-SPAN and Brooks Brothers weren't going to deliver me. If I wanted to engage in intellectual discourse with anyone in the building, I would have to ask lots of questions. There was information to be gathered on the process, on the people, on the politics. So gather I did.

Leadership Rice teaches students to think structurally rather than personally, but I have found that personal agendas mark the course of the U.S. Senate and that the only way to operate successfully in such an organization is to acknowledge the personalities and idiosyncrasies of each office, senator, and aide. I was constantly surprised to learn the histories and motivations behind various pieces of legislation or floor debates. While many perceive there to be a team of skeet-shooting Red Elephants fighting a book club of Blue Asses, this kind of clear alignment no longer exists. Every member brings a different background and a different set of values, and every member is fighting for re-election with a different set of issues. They're *all* fighting for re-election.

With 100 senators to represent 281 million constituents, it is also important to note that staffers play a key role in policy development, and neither their expertise nor their dispositions should be overlooked. I came to appreciate the unique perspective and set of information that each of my co-workers generously shared. I listened more than I spoke. I listened beyond words, trying to hear intent.

I listened to maximize my experience and to maximize my contribution to the committee. The opportunity to do both arrived in my in-box. My mentor included me on an e-mail soliciting feedback on recommendations to be considered by our senator for a statement at an important hearing. I had been researching to prepare myself and my bosses for this hearing for weeks. Somewhere along the way, I had transitioned into a person who could not only ask questions but also occasionally answer them. This was

“If you want to operate effectively within a team, you must understand the terrain and appreciate the nuances of that team. Thinking structurally leads to efficiency, but you cannot find success while ignoring individuality and personality.”

the opportunity I had waited for all summer, but was I really ready to play with the big girls?

Had Leadership Rice not emphasized taking risks, I might never have responded to my mentor's e-mail. I wanted to respond—with every ounce of my being—but I was unsure how much my feedback was actually wanted, and I feared my suggestions would be perceived as the idealistic mumblings of an overeager intern lacking respect for authority and institutional knowledge. Mid-thought, I remembered that I had trained for two years with Leadership Rice in acting professionally and speaking structurally. I had well-developed and thoughtful recommendations to make based on extensive research, and I had learned and observed my environment so that I could deliver them effectively.

My e-mail received an immediate and positive response from my mentor. I was invited to discuss our office's final touches with the chief counsel, deputy counsel, and one other staffer. Some of my ideas were shot down in an instant, and sometimes I was told I lacked background for an issue. And then I heard: "That's a good point. Thanks for the suggestion."

My thoughts were considered and respected—adopted when good, discarded when off track. But I knew enough to say stuff worth hearing, and I had earned enough respect to get to say it. I made a contribution. I was part of the team.

If you want to operate effectively within a team, you must understand the terrain and appreciate the nuances of that team. Thinking structurally leads to efficiency, but you cannot find success while ignoring individuality and personality. You cannot learn these nuances from the employee manual, staff meetings, or the press. You have to listen—listen to the whispers, the stories, the mumblings, and the big loud bangs with a quiet rumble of genuine intent.

Isabella Pacheco
Wachovia Investment Services, Credit Risk Division
Gary Wilhite, Senior Vice President

And the Answer Is ...



Armed with a few years of economics and calculus as well as one summer as an intern in an investment management firm, I came to my new internship in the credit risk division of the Wachovia portfolio management group feeling prepared. I didn't know too much about risk analysis, but I had done some research and tried to become as knowledgeable on the subject as I could. On my first day, walking from cubicle to cubicle meeting my supervisors, I tried to ask a lot of questions about the bank, the people, and the projects in an eager effort to memorize as much as possible. All of the bankers I met were straightforward when talking about most subjects, but when I asked questions about risk analysis, their answers sounded like a jumbled mess of qualified statements and vague replies. Why all the uncertainty? I would soon find out that I wasn't asking the right questions.

My first question was about the work I would be doing for the summer. A fellow intern and I were assigned the task of building a model to forecast charge-offs at the enterprise-wide level for both the commercial and consumer portfolios. Our work ended up including some linear regression analysis, FDG broad-grade transition matrices to track how the portfolio moved through time, and a model tied to macroeconomic trends. I presented this to the chief risk officer on my second-to-last day on the job, and we received his feedback on how to improve the model, which is far from being finished. I originally wanted to know if the work we'd done was *right*, but Russ, the head of credit risk, told us that what makes the model interesting is not that it provides an answer but that it brings up the right questions.

Russ emphasized that ambiguity in the model did not make it weaker; instead, uncertainty made it realistic and therefore stronger. After all, models rarely provide concrete numerical answers, but instead are used as a tool to give leaders an understanding of what can happen. In my research this summer, I also looked at scenario planning for how we would implement the model, an analysis process that helps people deal with an unknown future. Scenario planning asks "what if" questions in order to prepare a firm for any situation. Shell Oil made it famous in the 1970s by being the only oil company to ask, "What if oil prices fall below \$13 a barrel?" When the oil crisis struck the country, the company had strategies in place to deal with the consequences.

Whether you're trying to forecast how many loans will default or balancing decisions, the key isn't necessarily knowing the answer—often, one concrete answer

“In a world where there are thousands of inputs and information is flying at us every day, it is important to be able to take the pieces and create a framework through which to understand the world; it is only then that we can begin to ask the right questions.”

does not even exist. In a world where there are thousands of inputs and information is flying at us every day, it is important to be able to take the pieces and create a framework through which to understand the world; it is only then that we can begin to ask the right questions. On a math exam, an ambiguous answer is a wrong answer, but in the real world, uncertainty rules. What matters is being able to step up to the challenges of the unknown with the desire to learn and grow and with the confidence to admit that there may not be a “right” answer.

Rachelle D. Sam
Unity Church of Christianity
Rima Bonario, Executive Director

Searching for Direction



For two months, I took the same route to Unity Church of Christianity: 610 N all the way to Chimney Rock, then through a few traffic lights, and finally into the parking garage. Who could complain about directions like those? I loved their simplicity and predictability. The unexpected never happened. My exit stayed the same, and the traffic lights never moved. Everything was constant. How easy life would be if I always knew which way to go! At a time when I had yet to decide whether to attend law school or divinity school, I desperately wanted life to come with directions that simple, and I naively thought that my internship at Unity Church of Christianity would help me decide.

In the beginning, nothing seemed to contradict my thinking. My mentor was making every effort to expose me to both the spiritual and administrative entities of the church. I set up appointments with each of the ministers to discuss what had led them to divinity school and when they had decided to go. I was often present for the spontaneous water-cooler discussions about the benefits of working at Unity Church rather than in a corporate setting. But after weeks on this path, I knew that my expectations would not come true. Unity Church of Christianity would not provide a definitive answer about attending law school or divinity school; it was not a crystal ball that would give me a glimpse into the future.

Instead, my mentorship at Unity Church of Christianity provided something infinitely more valuable. I learned that there may not be any red arrows that say “This way” concerning the path that my professional future will take. But there are unexpected advantages to being open to a variety of routes and a myriad of options. The best directions, I discovered, are not always the most explicit.

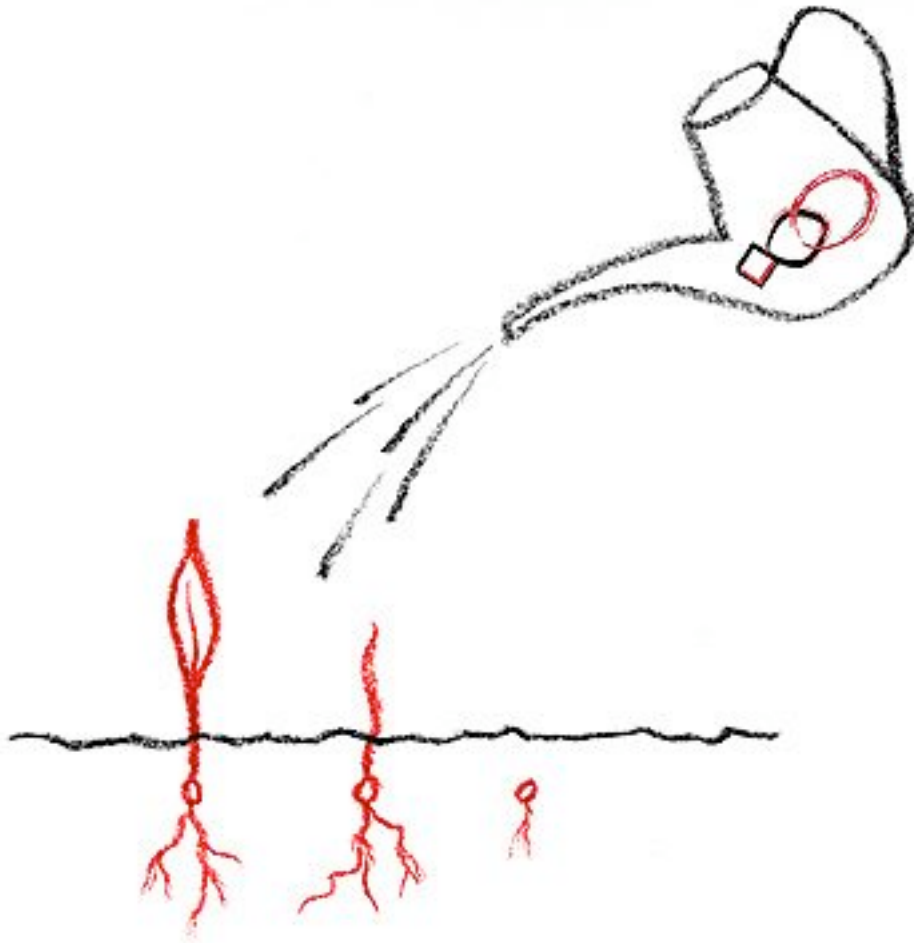
This lesson became apparent when my mentor assigned me the task of transforming unorganized and often incomplete documents into an official Operations Policies and Procedures Manual. I had never seen an Operations Policies and Procedures Manual or written an office policy. I did not even know the current policies of the office, let alone how to distinguish them from former policies. When I realized that this task did not come with clear directions, I panicked. I had no clue about what to do, where to begin, or whom to ask. The project felt vague, the future uncertain. I was void of answers and full of questions.

Slowly, I began to inch forward. Nothing was particularly easy, and there were many surprises and unforeseen challenges. Yet 55 days later, I submitted an Operations Policies and Procedures Manual to my mentor. As I hole-punched the 147-page document, I wondered how the project had become a reality. I wondered how I, a

“There are unexpected advantages to being open to a variety of routes and a myriad of options. The best directions, I discovered, are not always the most explicit.”

person who craves clear direction, could manage to work on the same project for eight weeks without knowing the final destination. How did the unknown become known enough for a completed project to emerge? I had learned to walk gracefully the line between the unknown and the known.

GROWING UP



“When the promise and vulnerability of the critical decade that we call young adulthood is either ignored or wrongly seen as only an amorphous, transitional time, the opportunity to cultivate, protect and later harvest its fruits for the renewal of the culture is lost.”

- Sharon Daloz Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*

Adriana G. Rodriguez
Harris County District Attorney's Office – Fraud Division
Maria McNulty, Assistant District Attorney

No Crybabies Allowed!



I spent the summer of 2004 in the clouds. Leadership Rice placed me on the 80-something floor of the Chase Tower, right smack in the middle of “Skyscraper Lane” in downtown Houston. Houston Endowment, the largest philanthropic organization in the area, embraced me from the start. Throughout that delightful summer, warm and accommodating people helped me learn about the nonprofit sector. After being guided through the world of philanthropy, I eagerly awaited my next mentorship experience.

This summer I was placed at the Harris County District Attorney's Office. This placement would be a chance for me to take law for a test drive. On my first day, I hopped on the Metro rail and impatiently rode past Skyscraper Lane toward the very edge of downtown, to Preston Street. After one metal detector and a short elevator ride to the fifth floor, I made my debut well below the clouds at the Fraud Division of the Harris County District Attorney's Office. I realized early on that this mentorship would be different. People around the office were too busy to hold my hand and pull me along for the summer.

“I came to understand that my mentorship at the DA's office was both law and life on training wheels.”

In reality, there was no specific task or project ready for me to dive into. This meant that I would have to fish around the office for projects and go into court alone to watch trials. The success of this mentorship was entirely in my hands.


So here I was, in a real-life DA's office, faced with a decision. On the one hand, I could opt for a brain-dead summer deep in the slave cave I called my office, limiting my growth to the confines of a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The other choice led to uncharted territory. It was the choice of independence and initiative. The occasion called for big kids only; no crybabies allowed. Though I wasn't sure what to expect, it sounded far better than the grid of captivity that Microsoft Excel brought to mind. So I straightened my blouse, buttoned my coat, and I took it.

As the summer progressed, I realized that I had made the right decision. I learned more about those gun-totin', country-lovin', cowboy-boot-sportin' investigators with their delightful Southern drawls. It was Houston, after all. I befriended the sassy thirty-somethings and warmed up to the seasoned veterans of the office. I established pseudo-mentor relationships with people throughout the office. By the end of the summer, I'd worked with a number of people in very different capacities, even with some outside the Fraud Division. I found that although I didn't have the undivided coddling of one mentor, I could certainly learn a thing or two from people in the office. These men and women were competent, capable individuals who were more than qualified to fulfill their duties. There was something to admire in each of their styles and approaches and most certainly in their unyielding commitment to the mission of the District Attorney's Office, to seek the truth.

Although my mentorship did not meet my original expectations, I adjusted my approach and made it work. It's unlikely that in my adult years someone will take me by the hand and guide me through every job. After this summer, I know that I am perfectly capable of making the most of a difficult situation and finding the lesson to be learned. The Harris County District Attorney's Office required me to take some coddle-free initiative. At the end of the summer, I came to understand that my mentorship at the DA's office was both law and life on training wheels.

James Liu
Compass Bank, Wealth Management
Zack Parrish, Executive Vice President
Cindy Brown, Senior Vice President

More Than a Suit and Tie



My summer mentorship placed me in the Wealth Management division of Compass Bank. I'd wanted to pursue a career in the financial industry, and this was my golden chance for an inside tour.

In my first week, wearing a suit and tie and sitting in my own office, I certainly felt all grown up—I was an adult in a “real” job situation (a bank, no less) and looked forward to finally contributing meaningfully. But beneath the professional facade, I struggled to identify my role and value within the organization.

I didn't know how James Liu, the 20-year-old summer intern, fit within the company. I was reporting directly to senior bank officers with elaborate titles, such as executive vice president. It felt more than a little intimidating.

My apprehension increased as I began to request more help from co-workers and bosses. With everyone's schedules packed with meetings, events, and conference calls, it was evident that time was a precious commodity. My get-togethers with other bank officers seemed to be sandwiched between big-dollar deals and important meetings with bank big shots. I began to wonder whether a summer intern with a wide-open schedule and broad long-term assignments deserved the right to call on extremely busy executive mentors. Was my presence of any use to them at all?

Fortunately, my mentors helped me, over time, to answer this question in the affirmative. Even though I had confidence in the quality of my work and felt I was being treated as a valuable employee, I was slow to change my mind-set from “I'm an intern who is stealing the precious time of others” to “I have a contribution that's worthy of time and attention.” Luckily, my mentors were exceptional in making me feel increasingly integrated within the organization. The other interns and I were constantly invited to meetings and treated as far more indispensable than we were. In a national conference call, we were all introduced with short bios, much to our surprise.

For me, the key moment of the summer occurred when I informally met with a colleague to discuss the development of a business model. In the middle of our conversation, his phone rang. He ignored it and kept on talking to me about “expense drivers” and “value functions.” I overheard his assistant pick up the phone and tell the caller that his boss was “in his office with somebody.” Certainly this minor incident meant little to him, but to me it served as a form of validation. I was a “somebody,” and my time was not to be pre-empted by a phone call.

“In addition to my education in managed-account platforms and credit risk analysis, I gained confidence in myself and my capabilities in the workplace. And that made me feel far more grown up than a suit and tie.”

By the end of the summer, I felt I had found my place at Compass Bank. I became more comfortable with my mentors as well as the rest of my colleagues, and I felt justified when I needed to request their time and help. I was still a little in awe of those around me, but I had more faith in the value of my own time and ability to contribute.

I began my summer hoping to learn about the banking industry, experience the responsibilities of full-time employment, and contribute to the organization in some way. I did all those things, but more importantly, in addition to my education in managed-account platforms and credit risk analysis, I gained confidence in myself and my capabilities in the workplace. And that made me feel far more grown up than a suit and tie.

Jessica Faith Carter
Texas Children's Hospital
Bracken McGee, Senior Associate Director of Development, Special Events

All Grown Up



Before I started my mentorship in the development department of Texas Children's Hospital, I was used to leisurely summers with no responsibilities and little personal growth. During the past few years, I had spent my breaks like many teenagers: hanging out with friends, traveling, taking the occasional educational enrichment program. All of my past summer activities had been just that—activities, something to pass the time between grade levels.

This would be the summer of change for me. No longer was I sleeping until I naturally woke up or spending endless hours at the mall. Instead, I was learning new things and cultivating skills that I didn't even know I had, skills that will serve me for the rest of my life. It's hard to comprehend just how big a difference Leadership Rice has made in my life in such a brief time. I matured as a person and developed as a leader. This summer I grew up—in a children's hospital, of all places.

My mentorship was my first job ever, and it was the best possible way to enter the working world. I had always pictured my first job being at the mall or at a restaurant, and I had begun to prepare myself for a typical teenage job—one with no liabilities and no room for leadership. But my Leadership Rice mentorship was not an average summer job. It came with more responsibility than I could have imagined. I was placed in a situation where I was the only person who could determine the success of my project; everything was in my hands. I never had to run copies, stuff envelopes, or do busy work for someone else. I was on my own to make the most of the two short months I had at Texas Children's Hospital.

Having a real 9-to-5 job brought out the best in me. Not only did I learn a great deal about working and leadership, but I also changed the way I live. I began to eat better, sleep better, and manage my time in a different way. Before my mentorship, I was the type of person who would pull all-nighters working on things that I'd had weeks to do, then sleep through classes the next day. Through my mentorship, I learned the value of being proactive and of getting a good night's rest, especially when you have to be prepared for early-morning meetings. Procrastination was a habit that I had been trying to break since middle school; knowing that the quality of my work would affect so many people made me try harder to be more responsible and to exhibit the leadership qualities that I had spent a year of college learning about.

“I matured as a person and developed as a leader. This summer I grew up - in a children's hospital, of all places... Not only did I learn a great deal about working and leadership, but I also changed the way I live. I began to eat better, sleep better, and manage my time in a different way.”

My summer was a whirlwind of new people, new places, and new ideas. My mentor did an excellent job of making sure that I got to see the field that I was working in from every possible aspect. She arranged meetings with everyone from the vice president of development to the directors of the giving sectors of the hospital. I even got to have a brief conversation with the CEO of Texas Children's Hospital. Between all the meetings and forums and interviews, my networking skills improved. My innate wooing capabilities came in handy in the fund-raising industry, and I was instrumental in getting services donated to Texas Children's Hospital for the project that I worked on. It felt good to talk to a vendor on my own and come back to my team with results that were better than they had expected. I was not just the lowly intern running copies and getting coffee. Instead I was considered an asset to the department for skills and traits that I didn't even know how to utilize before my mentorship.

My mentor and development teammates were helpful and supportive during the entire experience. I could not have asked for a more perfect placement. It fit me from the beginning, and I did not have to do much adapting, just learning. Every experience I had at Texas Children's Hospital taught me something valuable about life, leadership, or just growing up.

Amanda Lopez
Red Cross International, Spain
Centro de Encuentro y Acogida
Rafael Aranda-Gimenez, Psychologist, CEA

Cognitive Puberty



My English and Spanish experiences of the world have been different from each other even though I have known both languages my whole life. My education and work lives are carried out almost exclusively in English, while Spanish serves me mainly in conversations with my father and traveling to visit my *abuelos* in Spain every few years. Most of the hats I wear in life involve relationships conducted in English. People never assume I speak Spanish, and in the past this has led me to speak less Spanish than some other bilinguals. As a result, my Spanish “self” felt less developed and less mature than my English “self.” This summer I got the opportunity to focus attention on my Spanish side, and in the process, I really grew up.

When I arrived in Almeria, Spain, I discovered that my Spanish language skills were deficient in an office environment. I showed up for my job in a substance-abuse clinic at the Red Cross and quickly realized that I had a lot of learning to do. As the summer progressed, I grew at a rate that most people never get to experience. In just a few weeks of work, my Spanish “self” underwent a fast-paced growth spurt; I experienced a cognitive puberty of sorts.

In addition to becoming more proficient in the Spanish language, I noticed another important benefit of working in Spain: I got to enrich the Spanish side of myself that goes beyond mere language. My English side, which I’ve sharpened and shaped over time, encourages me to be serious, independent, and rational. Doing work in Spanish helped me to be more playful, collaborative, and creative. I began to honor the qualities that I associate more with my Spanish side.

Allowing my Spanish self to grow and thrive and change was revolutionary for me. For the first time ever, I felt I had new eyes and ears and could reach conclusions not bound by the rules and assumptions that my English self had internalized. I could begin to integrate my two selves. The process was not easy. I discovered the hard way that I did not always know my own strengths and weaknesses. For example, when I ran into difficulties with my job, I immediately assumed that the problem was simple: I wasn’t yet proficient in the culture and language. In time, though, it became clear that something else was also at work. My Spanish side was less assertive and confident than my English side. I had to learn to value the useful qualities that my Spanish side offers and at the same time gain wisdom from the positive traits of my English side.

“For the first time ever, I felt I had new eyes and ears and could reach conclusions not bound by the rules and assumptions that my English self had internalized... Doing work in Spanish helped me to be more playful, collaborative, and creative.”

This duality within myself was brought to my attention in the novel environment of the Spanish Red Cross, but I believe it existed within me, unknown or unacknowledged, long before that time. My mentorship helped me realize that this division can be advantageous rather than confusing or problematic. I can work to develop the strengths of both selves. As I finish my last semester at a North American university, it's exciting to realize that my experience in Spain has prompted lasting changes in me. I now know about areas where I still have great room for development, such as international leadership capacities. I hope to develop these capacities with further work experience in Spanish, and I plan to continue sharing with others what I learn about my English and Spanish selves.

Justin Lane
Compass Bank
Rick Terry, Executive Vice President, Managing Director

More Than Brains



This summer I got a chance to examine some academic assumptions about the business world in light of how the business world really works. I was fortunate to be able to engage at different levels of the business world while working with the Wealth Management Group at Compass Bank. Through my experiences with the bank, I was able to hone my expectations and further my understanding of “the real world” and how I might fit into it.

Over the past few years, I’ve started to realize that my biggest limitation is lack of knowledge about what is out there in the world. After all, it’s difficult to make a decision about a career path when you’re not aware of nine-tenths of the careers that exist. And it’s hard to understand what a profession is really like without having some practical experience.

This summer helped fill in some of those gaps for me. I had my eyes opened to new career possibilities, and I learned the daily ins and outs of various banking jobs. More importantly, my summer experience solidified a crucial workplace lesson for me: Intelligence is marginal; the real differentiation among individuals comes from experience.

Throughout my life, there has always been a kind of awe and mystique around the business world, and really the adult world in general. I’ve always thought or felt as though “those people” must have such amazing intelligence and aptitude. When I entered college, I started getting the unnerving and yet reassuring feeling that my impressions were more intimidating than need be.

As I entered adulthood and came closer to “those people,” who had for so long seemed beyond my level, I began to realize that the differences between them and me were not so great. We had more similarities than differences. I’ve learned that all people, no matter how powerful, share the same fears and worries, and few leaders have an intelligence level vastly superior to that shared by many of my peers and me. The distinctions among us lie, instead, in wisdom gained from experience. My summer mentorship brought that lesson to life for me.

Why is experience so powerful? First, experience gives confidence. This is evident in the short term and the long term. During my mentorship, a mere month’s experience gave me the confidence to ask about and understand increasingly complicated material, such as equity derivatives and their unique tax implications. In the long term, experience provides the confidence to be proactive and take chances. For

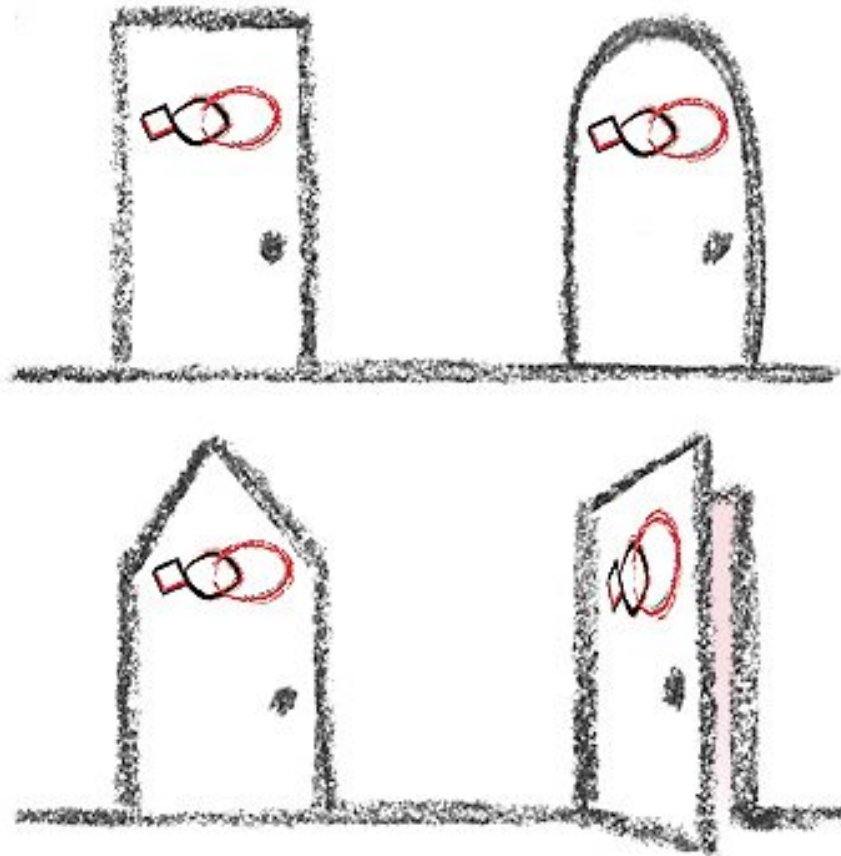
“I’ve learned that all people, no matter how powerful, share the same fears and worries, and few leaders have an intelligence level vastly superior to that shared by many of my peers and me. The distinctions among us lie, instead, in wisdom gained from experience.”

example, I have greater confidence now when walking into a corporate environment because I have a better understanding of what to expect.

Second, experience provides the breadth of understanding necessary to make informed decisions and become more valuable to others. This is what I really wanted to take away from my summer experience. Because I had no knowledge about investment or banking or industry, I wanted to gain experience so I would generally be able to make better decisions. I learned how interrelated everything and everyone is. I now understand, for example, the importance of knowing about investment strategies even if I end up selling carpets instead of stocks. I never know whom I'll meet or in which way I'll use information, but I am confident that even in small talk there will be occasions where I'll find use for the information I learn, no matter how obscure it is.

With this insight in mind, I think I will be better prepared as I move closer to "the real world." I have more experience, which will allow me to have greater confidence in a variety of situations and to make more informed decisions. My summer experience will continue to be important, I believe, because it was my first opportunity to observe up-close that it takes more than brains to be successful in the worlds of business and adults.

TAKING RISKS



***“Don’t call it uncertainty – call it wonder.
Don’t call it insecurity – call it freedom.”***

- Osho, *Courage: The Joy of Living Dangerously*

James Rapore
Pacific Partners Management Services
Larry Bonham, President/CEO

Out of the Comfort Zone, Into the Workplace



MSO, IPA DOFER, PAR, PNP, HCC, CMS, P4P, PPO. Sounded like gibberish. My first day as a Leadership Rice intern, and I didn't even understand the language. The next eight weeks were going to be interesting.

I had been placed with Pacific Partners Management Services (PPMSI), a Palo Alto company that provides management services for large physician groups in California and markets a software program called Access Express, designed to facilitate communication between doctors and health-care management organizations. In a span of only a couple of years, this company had become one of the largest health-care management systems in California.

Unfortunately, I had no experience in the health-care industry. Senior managers asked what they could do to make my experience a positive one—a polite way of saying, “What are you going to do around here for two months?” They also inquired about my technical background (inadequate at best). I had a few questions of my own: Did I have anything to offer this company? How could I fit in, let alone stand out?

In addition to the obvious challenges of the workplace, I had to face the prospect of spending the summer in a new city without friends or family. I felt alone and isolated. I was the only Leadership Rice candidate placed in the San Francisco area, so I didn't have any local LR allies to call upon. In addition, there was no one of my age in the workplace. Everyone was married with children, or old enough to be, and therefore not particularly interested in hanging out after hours. An uninteresting sequence of long, quiet weekends stretched before me.

It was up to me to try to turn things around. I met with Dr. Larry Bonham, CEO of Pacific Partners, and told him that I had requested an internship where I could observe a CEO and work on projects that influence the course of an organization. He took me at my word and referred me to the medical directors and the director of clinical services. They informed me that Pacific Partners was actually looking for someone who did not have industry experience to evaluate aspects of the company that needed improvement and write business proposals to improve them. They said I could use my speaking skills to make presentations at senior management meetings and steering committee seminars. I was also assigned research to develop ideas for improving the company's management software and design a plan to lower the medical costs of high-risk patients. In addition, I began organizing a series of seminars in Northern California to educate doctors about new Medicare coding guidelines in hopes

“I was forced to abandon the comfort zone. There were other jobs I could have applied for that probably would have demanded less of me. My Leadership Rice internship pushed me as far as I could go.”

of generating an additional million dollars in Medicare revenues for Pacific Partners. Finally, I developed a system for extending Medicare benefits to cover home medical visits for senior citizens. I had not expected to be entrusted with so much responsibility, and I felt exhilarated by the opportunity to work on meaningful projects that were of genuine benefit to others.

With work going so well, I was able to focus on the challenges of everyday life. Dr. Lieberman told me I should try to “balance work and play,” a suggestion that turned into a tough assignment. Having fun was hard work. I made a commitment to spend every weekend exploring a different part of the Bay Area and, whenever possible, to make new friends. I had to learn how to initiate conversations in Starbucks and on trains, to make plans with someone I had just met. I joined a gym, spent time at Stanford, improved my culinary skills, toured Alcatraz on my own, explored San Francisco, looked up a debate buddy at Berkeley and invited out-of-town friends to visit. After a while, enjoying life became easy. I was learning an invaluable lesson: Having fun is important. I also felt myself becoming comfortable in situations that normally would have made me self-conscious. Here I was having a great time and in the process becoming more confident.

Just important as “work and play” were the people I came in contact with as a result of my internship. It seemed that everyone at Pacific Partners had something to teach me. Without the team support and advice from others in the office, I would never have become familiar with the industry in such a short time, and I would have been unable to refine my ideas and develop strategies. The dedication and commitment of the people at Pacific Partners was inspiring. Dr. Bonham had given up a promising medical career to risk everything and start this business. Dr. Larry William, one of the medical directors, was coordinating women’s clinics in North Africa. Angelica, the receptionist, was raising three children by herself. Derek managed the mailroom with the same concern for others that had made him a successful factory owner in China. He told me he had spent the first two hours of each business day walking through the factory, talking to his employees. This practice, he said, increased worker morale and therefore productivity. Sure enough, while delivering mail at the Pacific Partners office, Derek talked to every employee and manager. He knew everyone by name.

This summer, I was forced to abandon the comfort zone. There were other jobs I could have applied for that probably would have demanded less of me. My Leadership Rice internship pushed me as far as I could go. I said my goodbyes to Pacific Partners and San Francisco feeling as if I couldn’t have learned much more, absorbed much else, or made many other personal changes. It was a wonderful experience; I couldn’t have asked for more.

Meredith Gray
St. Luke's Episcopal Health Charities
Dr. Jane Peranteau, Community Outreach Manager

Learning to Love Non-Scientific Results

Before my mentorship with St. Luke's Episcopal Health Charities, I had no idea I would enjoy social work or public health work. The idea of an internship out of my comfort zone in the lab seemed a bit daunting. I had no experience with interviewing undocumented immigrants or researching immigration law, and I wasn't sure I could perform to the best of my abilities if I was worried about how my work might impact people's lives. I was uncertain about how this mentorship would turn out and whether I would enjoy it, but little by little I began to see the bigger picture, the real reason I should care about my work and take time to do my best.

The first eye-opener for me came when I joined my mentor on a trip to Austin to speak with Latino members of an Episcopal church who wanted to implement programs with health promoters to improve community health. I had wrongly assumed that the meeting would focus on immigrant physical health. During the course of the day's meeting, I realized how broad a topic immigrant health actually is. Before an outside agency can come in and institute programs to improve health, it is crucial to ascertain what the immigrants themselves want and need. The existence of outside studies showing that community members have rampant diabetes and hypertension does not mean that combating those issues is their main focus. They may be more concerned about the mental health of their children who have to adjust to a new environment. This type of research is called community-based participatory research, and I soon realized that this is the only type of investigation that is truly fair to the community.

During my mentorship, I journeyed to Austin again to visit refugee shelters, community clinics, and indigent-care providers. I tagged along with my mentor to meetings and interviews, and as I grew better-informed, I found the courage to ask questions of my own. I went to lectures on Hispanic and African-American health and compiled reports for my mentor, in addition to doing my main research on immigration law and the background of Hispanic immigration in Texas. When my mentor was out of town, I even got to try my hand at the grant application and approval process, seeing whether I could decide who most deserved funding. I enjoyed the diversity of assignments I was given. I never had time to get bored with a task and was encouraged to challenge myself by learning more, since there was always more background research to do on any given topic pertaining to immigrant health. Real, concrete results were rewarding and encouraged me to keep going even if it

“Instead of viewing responsibility as a burden, as I had at first, I began to see it as an unparalleled opportunity to help in a way I had never been able to before. I think the most important thing for me was knowing that the work I did would be useful for someone's future.”

meant giving up weekends to do so. Lab work had never inspired me, the way working with real people did, to continue onward when things got tough.

The amazing part about my mentorship was that the more work I did, the more interested I was and the easier the work became. Instead of viewing responsibility as a burden, as I had at first, I began to see it as an unparalleled opportunity to help in a way I had never been able to before. I think the most important thing for me was knowing that the work I did would be useful for someone's future. I was extremely encouraged by the openness and appreciation the immigrants showed me. I realized that it's important to me to be able to see the end result of my work, as opposed to writing a paper or doing lab research that rarely seems to produce a concrete result. My Leadership Rice experience has enabled me to use the full range of my talents in a way I might not have found on my own, at least until 20 years down the road. Helping undocumented immigrants with St. Luke's Episcopal Health Charities was extremely rewarding work with a real purpose, and I am now considering a career in public health or social service.

Aaron Avrakotos
Third Ward Redevelopment Council and Greater Southeast Management District
Damon Williams, Executive Director

Culture Shock



I never considered myself to be racist. So when I heard that I would be the only white guy at my office over the summer, I figured I would be fine. People are people, I thought to myself. What problems could I have?

My first day I came in all dressed up. I had heard that the office had casual attire, so I assumed that staff members didn't wear jackets and ties. Still, when I walked in, I immediately stood out. I was the kid in the green sweater on purple day. It suddenly dawned on me that I was in the minority—and not just racially. I was no longer Aaron Avrakotos, white guy from upstate New York. I was also Aaron Avrakotos, sore thumb! For the rest of the day, I walked around all dressed up while everyone else milled around in jeans and T-shirts. It was the first clash of two cultures, and a preview of the rest of the summer.

My first assignment involved driving around a poor black neighborhood. I was shocked at the feelings I had. At stoplights, I found myself checking and locking my car doors. And I constantly surveyed my surroundings to make sure that no one was going to rob or attack me. At times I would circle a place two or three times before I felt safe or comfortable enough to stop. I started to wonder, "Am I racist?"

As the mentorship progressed, other questions and divides began to surface. In addition to spending time with people who had a different skin color, I was interacting with people who were from a different economic class. It's hard to express the emotions I felt seeing people in my own country living in shacks. These weren't people in some Third World country like Bangladesh; these were people right in my own back yard. I found myself re-examining my own beliefs and the basic assumptions that held them together.

The summer caught me off guard. I fully expected to fit into my mentorship placement naturally and effortlessly, but instead I discovered how powerful differences can be. Fortunately, good things came out of the learning process. I was able to ask some important personal questions of myself and to think more deeply about societal issues that had once seemed unrelated and unconnected to me.

I also saw how imperative it is for diverse cultures to mix and mingle, even if it does lead to the occasional clash. After I was in a serious car accident, my co-workers consoled me by saying, "You go to Rice. Your parents will just buy you a new car." Although I laughed at the time, inside I was upset that I could be so easily stereotyped as "the rich kid." The incident made me realize that all of us have things to learn about each other.

"I know I will never view race or economic situations in the same light again. This summer will be a building block for the rest of my life."

Students who study abroad often speak about the value of living in different cultures. They say that “culture shock” transforms them for the better. This summer I was lucky enough to have a similar experience right in my own back yard. It has made me a more rounded person, and it has excited me about the prospect of living with an exchange student next year. I know I will never view race or economic situations in the same light again. This summer will be a building block for the rest of my life.

Tessa Barron
Houston Symphony
Bruce Robinson, Senior Director, Marketing and Communication

Seeing the Light



When I reflect upon my summer, Plato's Allegory of the Cave comes to mind. In this story, the great philosopher explains that only through pain and discomfort can a person really mature, gain insight, and become enlightened. The allegory seems to perfectly encapsulate my experience as I left the comforts of Rice for the new and daunting business world.

Thrown into the marketing department of the Houston Symphony, I was in a foreign place full of questions. Never having taken a marketing or communications class, I wasn't sure whether I had the skills needed for my position. Without any idea of what the job of marketing entails, I was scared, not because I didn't want a challenge but because I had no clue whether there would even be a challenge. Truly, I was in the dark. Usually I have company in the dark, but this was different. Alone, without anyone to give reassurance or empathy, I had to brave a new experience.

As my internship progressed, I slowly began to realize that this new and unfamiliar place would give me a chance to grow. After two weeks of completing tasks that were within my comfort zone, such as typing copy and designing marketing materials, I was given the charge of developing a marketing plan for a new subscription campaign. When my mentor, Bruce, explained the project that would consume the rest of my summer, the question that plagued my mind was "What is a marketing plan?" Just as I was beginning to understand what my duties were and how the Houston Symphony operated, the feeling of being lost in the dark returned. Bruce wanted me to design a marketing plan on my own. I had to decide to either give up or try to shed my own light on the situation by actively seeking a solution and leaving my "cave" behind. I am happy and proud that I chose the latter.

I struggled day by day, aiming to please my mentor with a clear and concise marketing plan. At first I was disoriented and going in the wrong direction, trying to discern my task all on my own. Then I realized that instead of feeling isolated in my lack of knowledge, I could use Bruce and his assistant for help. With a guide, navigating through darkness is much easier. By having the assistant make daily suggestions and revisions, I slowly began to discover what a marketing plan was and how to write one. Though I did not always have a clear direction or know the answers, I was eventually able to develop a marketing plan that met Bruce's expectations.

Leadership Rice catapulted me out of my comfort zone, and I discovered a lot about myself and my value to the Houston Symphony and to any organization. It's

"I realized that instead of feeling isolated in my lack of knowledge, I could use Bruce and his assistant for help. With a guide, navigating through darkness is much easier."

somewhat ironic that what seemed like a fuzzy and indiscernible experience has given me clarity about the workplace and defined a role I can fulfill in the future.

Mark Thomas Wanek
FINCA International
John Hatch, Founder

Risks Worth Taking



“When I’m an old man, I’m going to take my grandchildren to the Poverty Museum. In the next two decades, we’re going to make poverty a thing of the past.” These were some of the first words spoken to me during my summer mentorship experience at FINCA International in Washington, D.C.

John Hatch, my mentor and the founder of the Foundation for International Community Assistance, transforms big dreams into big realities. In 1984, he outlined a financial model that enables the world’s poor to help themselves out of poverty. By confronting risk head-on, John proposed a system of lending to poor women, most with families and living on less than \$1 a day. Many women had held no previous employment, and most were unable to generate income to support their families. John believed the poor lacked neither ambition nor skill, but simply resources. Now FINCA lends such women approximately \$100 each, providing a mechanism for millions of them to bring themselves out of poverty. John’s Poverty Museum is ambitious, but he and FINCA have faced risk, overcome discouraging obstacles, and flourished.

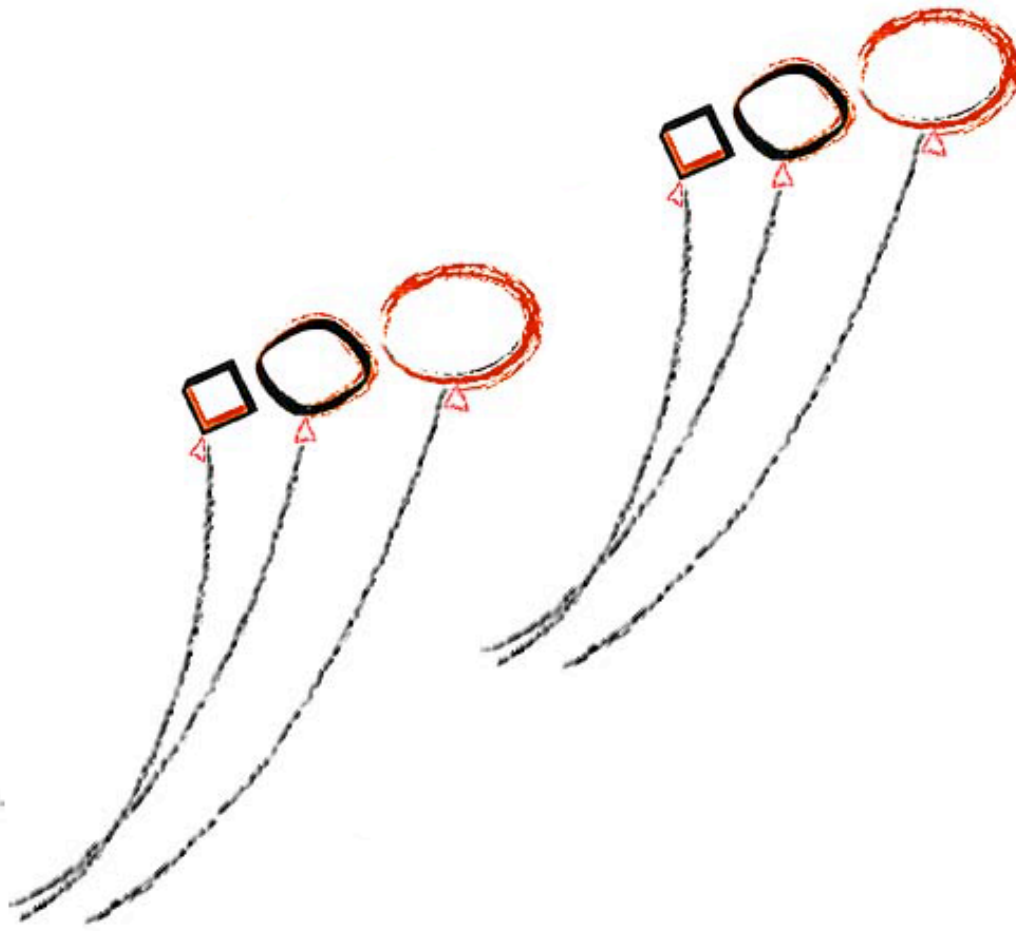
“My new motto is this: May my own visions be inspired by dreams, rich in ambition, and bounded by nothing.”

Before arriving at FINCA, I welcomed classroom lectures about vision, but I always bounded them with realism. Risk plagued me in making decisions, and the possibility of failure constantly made me hesitate. My ambitions often succumbed to imaginary obstacles that I constructed in my mind. I was enamored of big dreams, but my fears inhibited my ability to craft lofty goals and my willingness to pursue them. After my time with John, I am a changed man. I feel empowered to confront risk, create dynamic visions, and effectively lead others.

With lessons learned this summer in my mind, I have reviewed and revised important aspects of my “life vision.” My time with FINCA has encouraged me to pursue nonprofit career opportunities in microfinance that would allow me to continue some of the work I began this summer. While before I might have shied away from pursuing a career outside of a large commercial corporation, I can now see that nonprofit agencies yield equally satisfying rewards. The opportunity to end poverty entices me, despite the risks of change, methodological uncertainty, and even failure.

I know from personal experience that fear of failure impedes more visions than it should. John’s ability to transform ambitious dreams into plausible visions proves that risks can be confronted daringly to create brilliant possibilities for our future. My new motto is this: May my own visions be inspired by dreams, rich in ambition, and bounded by nothing.

LEARNING CURVE



“We need unconditional confidence, that is the confidence that comes from knowing we can learn our way through virtually any situation.”

- Robert E. Quinn, *Change the World*

Denise Bear
Procter & Gamble
Shannon Gladden, Account Executive

Learn to Think, Think to Learn



I used to wonder whether a liberal-arts education was really as valuable as it is represented to be in the world of academia. Would my years of taking a wide range of basic science and humanities courses culminating in a BA in psychology really be useful when I tried to obtain and succeed in a job in the “real world”? My internship experience with Procter & Gamble rid me of any doubts. I learned that a successful liberal-arts education teaches you how to think and how to learn, and prepares you to be successful.

My first day on the job, I was presented with a work plan that provided me with the challenge and opportunity to explore three different paths: a project covering sales of new items to a customer; a research project examining Hispanic consumers in order to develop a customer marketing strategy; and a data analysis of coupon redemption to establish the participation benefit of corporate events. I finished Day 1 of my internship feeling utterly overwhelmed. I had no sales experience, had never taken a marketing class, and didn’t know the least bit about computer data analysis program systems. Yet I was expected to complete my work plan and deliver notable results to grow the P&G business.

“My last two years at Rice will be different; I can approach my classes knowing that my education is valuable outside of academia, too.”

Despite my initial apprehensiveness, at the end of the summer I not only delivered my work plan but also met and surpassed each of my project objectives. How? Clearly not by using my previous business experience, but rather by using my liberal-arts education in how to think and learn.

My first two weeks were devoted to “training,” the corporate world’s term for learning. Each day I met with numerous people to train in topics geared to help me complete my summer projects. Though every session covered a topic that I was seeing for the first time, I was pleasantly surprised by how quickly I was able to assimilate novel information by relating it to previous knowledge. For example, one of my sessions was on “selling fundamentals,” the platform of P&G sales. While this was my first experience in sales training, I had been an avid consumer my whole life. I quickly connected my understanding of consumer behavior to the science of product sales and was able to use my personal experience as a consumer to help grasp the rudiments of the P&G sales philosophy. Subsequent training sessions followed a similar pattern. Through my ability to absorb and incorporate new material, I was able to digest the information I needed.

My P&G training gave me the tools necessary to approach my projects, but in order to deliver winning results, I needed to know how to utilize my newly acquired skills. I needed to think. Both my Hispanic marketing and data analysis projects

involved final presentations. The marketing presentation was to a customer; the data analysis presentation was to an internal company team. It would have been easy to develop passable presentations that met the expectations of my mentor. However, in my mind, an “average” presentation would not have been successful. Successful work makes a lasting impact. To create that kind of an impact, I had to go beyond the stated requirements. For me, that extra effort involved thinking of ways to fully engage my audience, such as leveraging relationships to involve the customer and team members in the data-collection process and personalizing presentation materials with customer-specific handouts. Rather than working within the confines of a planned checklist, I was able to think outside the box. The result? I surpassed expectations and developed a marketing strategy and data analysis that will be used to grow the P&G business.

It was rewarding to end my summer knowing that I delivered results that will help P&G continue to thrive, but it was even more rewarding to realize that while doing so, I grew as an individual. My last two years at Rice will be different; I can approach my classes knowing that my education is valuable outside of academia, too. I am grateful to Procter & Gamble for offering me the opportunity to put my education to the test. Corporations will always be on the lookout for people who are leaders, problem solvers, and innovators: people who can learn and people who can think. Thanks to my liberal-arts education, I am one of those people.

Neha Gupta
Cooper Cameron Valves
Mehdi Javidinejad, Director of Six Sigma

Forecasting the Future



I hate corporate America. I never imagined that one day I would join an office and become part of it. This summer, my worst nightmare became a beautiful dream at the headquarters of Cooper Cameron Valves. Here I discovered that I truly enjoy corporate America—everything from working in a luxurious cubicle to lunching with my co-workers.

At the start of my mentorship, I worried that I did not have the skills necessary to complete the forecasting project I was assigned. I had never taken a statistics course. I arrived like a sponge ready to soak up knowledge. I never expected how proactive a role I would have to play in acquiring and applying that knowledge. With a warm welcome, my mentor informed me that I would be responsible for solving the forecasting problem that Cooper Cameron had tried to fix for the past 10 years!

With this kind of faith placed in me, I felt motivated to stretch myself from the very beginning. I started my mornings bright and early, reading statistics books, doing research, and asking co-workers about the fundamentals of business forecasting. I compiled notebook after notebook of data and forecasting models. Soon I had become part of the community. I sipped my coffee, read the Oil Daily, and talked to co-workers about recent events in the oil industry. Rather than being the copy girl, I was part of the team. Because I was working on a difficult project, co-workers would peek into my office to catch a glimpse of “the forecasting girl”!

My mentor quickly helped me to realize that taking a hundred statistics courses would not have helped me. It was clear that my ability to think critically about a problem, find solutions, and offer suggestions was the only academic training I needed. I always believed that the material taught in college courses would translate directly into skills for a career. Rather than regurgitate information, however, my mentor expected me to think in an innovative manner, find new ways to solve problems, and include all possible variables that might affect the final outcome.


By the end of the summer, I realized what I have to offer to the business world as well as the many rewards that it has to offer me. Although I didn’t have any specific experience in oil valves or statistics, I was able to draw on the valuable skills that I do have, such as hard work and critical thinking, to make my mentorship a huge success. My ability to learn quickly and dive into quantitative problems without hesitation will go with me, regardless of the career I pursue. My mentor helped me to believe in the

“With a warm welcome, my mentor informed me that I would be responsible for solving the forecasting problem that Cooper Cameron had tried to fix for the past 10 years!”

skills I already have and use them in new ways to their fullest potential. The forecast for the future looks fine.

Laura Arjona
Baker Oil Tools
Rustom Mody, Director of Engineers

Intern 060605



I stared at the computer screen as it blinked, demanding that I identify myself. I typed “i-n-t-e-r-n 060605.” It was one of the few times at Baker Oil Tools when I would have such a ready, clear response. During the 10 weeks of my internship, I gained substantial experience in “living in questions.” My work, in an unfamiliar industry and a new environment, forced me to be patient when I did not have immediate answers and to rely on resources outside of myself. At Baker, I had to put aside my independent attitude and constantly ask questions of everyone, from guys in the manufacturing shop to office neighbors across the hall. In the process, I learned a novel way to navigate through ambiguity. It is a lesson that I am glad to have learned and that I will take with me into whatever the future holds.

When my boss first sat me down and tried to explain my project, I listened intently. Apparently the company had had difficulty in simulating a test that would model the radial expansion of a sand screen and effectively represent the pattern orientation of the holes. The goal was to compare strain distribution around the circumference of the holes, specifically at the perpendicular axis of the pipe, to find which method of preparing the holes would best delay crack formation. All I had to do, he said, was come up with a proposal for testing that would analyze the plastic region of deformation and find resources in the Houston area where we could achieve such testing. Uh-huh.

Those first few days with Baker were simply overwhelming. I moved from one task to the next by isolating the next piece of information that I needed and figuring out an efficient way to acquire it. I had no concept of the oil industry and consequently was not able to understand the functionality of the tool I was supposed to improve. Before I could gain some background on past testing procedures, I would have to understand the failure of the material, and that would require education on the utility of the sand screen.

In pursuit of comprehending the details of my project, I read company brochures and watched customer informational videos, from which I learned about the process of oil recovery and the company’s niche within the oil industry. By contacting other research laboratories, I gained a sense of available resources within the metallurgical community of Houston, and I witnessed the collaboration that occurs, surprisingly, between competing companies. Starting from one perspective, my attempt to answer a question would lead me to understand some other essential concept of my

“I had the ambition to do it all in one day, but I learned to deal with challenges one day at a time and to pace myself with the work. I found the experience difficult and extremely valuable.”

project by helping me to develop more questions, questions that demonstrated growing comprehension.

It was this thought process that enabled me to do my work this summer. I had to take things one step at a time and be patient with my learning, or else I would get frustrated. I had to put aside my Rice smart-kid pride and ask questions of everyone. The Ph.D. from the Southwest Research lab helped me to re-evaluate a test setup, and Pablo from the manufacturing shop explained to me that different drilling techniques made a difference in the surface finish of the metal. I learned from just about everyone I met, and it was gratifying.

I had the ambition to do it all in one day, but I learned to deal with challenges one day at a time and to pace myself with the work. I adapted to a new environment in which I came to appreciate the value of questions and had to learn to work through ambiguity. Even with the anticipation of this lesson through class work with Leadership Rice, I found the experience difficult and extremely valuable. I learned to exercise my resources and be productive even with limited initial knowledge. I know that I will benefit from the skills and experience I gained at Baker Oil Tools in my remaining courses at Rice and in my future engineering career.

Cara Virgili
BMC Software
Tony Gilbert, NYC Sales Manager

A Whirlwind Tour of the Business World



“BMC Software, party of 46!” the restaurant hostess called out. The date was April 16, and it marked the beginning of a whirlwind summer. That evening served as the perfect introduction to my boisterous colleagues and mentors, but it also foreshadowed my summer interning for a high-tech and fast-changing international software company. My objectives were to immerse myself in a large, vibrant city and to dive into the world of business and determine which aspect—sales or marketing—was my specialty and interest. Tall order? Definitely so, but nevertheless achievable.

BMC Software is a Houston-based software company celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. BMC has close to 100 offices around the world and is the eighth-largest software company in the world, the fourth-largest in the United States. BMC provides solutions in the identity, asset, change, configuration, and infrastructure management arenas, and its main U.S. competitors are HP and IBM.

Now where did I fit in this grand scheme, and how did this setup allow me to accomplish my goals? As part of my summer mentorship experience, I joined the 12-person BMC office in New York City, under the mentoring supervision of sales manager Tony Gilbert. The NYC office is constantly busy creating sales pitches, contacting client companies, being trained and retrained, visiting partners, attending presentations, leading interest meetings, and finally booking sales deals. Each sales representative has eight to 11 established client companies and an almost infinite number of potential NYC-based clients. Tony is there to guide them through the deal-making process and offer his business insights and experience. I was able to shadow these successful sales representatives, observing their personality traits, sales tricks, and daily schedules.

As part of this mega sales operation, I also had the opportunity to participate in various aspects of sales: I wrote introductory and interest letters to potential and current client companies; participated in frequent conference calls with partner companies and clients; traveled multiple times with sales representatives to client companies for solutions demonstrations, introductory sales pitches, and employee product trainings; and researched information about current needs and long-term goals of companies as stated in their press releases and annual reports. It was exciting to leap into this world and get my first real exposure to sales.

“I can still recite in my sleep which retail companies are headquartered where, which companies in the retail industry have BMC-IdM solutions, and Doug’s long-distance phone number. More importantly, I gained a sense of exactly where I fit into the business world: marketing.”

To achieve my goal of exploring multiple parts of the business world, I also signed on to work with the worldwide marketing and communications solution manager, Doug Hanson. BMC's identity management revolves around solutions for password management and single user sign-on, automatic access updates to programs and information, and compliance with federal regulations on employee and company security. Although Doug was based in Vancouver, he mentored me through my summer marketing project, otherwise known as the retail industry worldwide target market initiative.

My project involved categorizing the top 200 retail companies worldwide, based on types of products sold, number of employees, headquarter country, and current or previous use of BMC identity management (IdM) solutions. From among these 200 companies, I selected 14 "happy BMC-IdM clients." Then I contacted the sales reps and IdM specialists involved with these 14 companies and requested 20-minute phone conversations to determine which products the "happy BMC-IdM clients" were using, what they were using them for, and why they had bought them. I placed calls all over the world—from Argentina to Austin—trying to understand recent movements in the IdM retail industry market and what customers needed. Finally, all my research and conversations were consolidated into a few documents and a presentation. It felt exhilarating to complete my first marketing project.

I am happy to say that I left BMC Software this summer with profound respect for my mentors and a new understanding of the industry. A few months have passed, but I can still recite in my sleep which retail companies are headquartered where, which companies in the retail industry have BMC-IdM solutions, and Doug's long-distance phone number. More importantly, I gained a sense of exactly where I fit into the business world: marketing.

Lauren Wolf
Ashoka: Innovators for the Public
Alessandra Zielinski, Project Analyst

A Lesson in Learning



My readiness and desire to venture outside my comfort zone have always been characteristics of which I have been proud. After all, I decided against attending the University of Florida, where many of my friends were going, to enroll at a school and in a state where I knew no one. While I took a risk in coming to Rice, I knew that I was good at meeting people and making friends, so I would be all right in the end. Starting my mentorship at Ashoka in Washington, D.C., was a similar experience. I had never held a full-time job before, much less one that required so much of me. I was concerned because I had just finished my freshman year; I felt I did not know enough about business to work in one. My readiness and desire to venture out, however, impelled me to go. Just like Rice, my internship was more than I could have imagined; it forced me to explore and grow in a new area and gave me the opportunity to learn how to learn.

When I arrived at Ashoka, I was overwhelmed by how little I knew about the organization for which I would be working. As I delved into brochures, books, and any other information I could find on Ashoka and social entrepreneurship, I realized how little I knew about a lot of things. It has been my habit for a while to pretend that I understand the topic or issue at hand, but as I was writing a weekly e-mail reflection on competency for Leadership Rice, I realized that I would never learn much if I continued with that attitude. So I decided to drop it and ask all of the questions I could dream up. Luckily my desk was adjacent to that of another intern who is an MBA candidate and who was very open to discussing questions I had. My mentor, Alessandra, was similarly gracious. I made it my mission to explore endlessly so I could learn as much as possible about Ashoka, about the business and citizen sectors and economics, and about myriad social concerns, among a host of other topics.

My exploration not only renewed my interest in learning, but also prompted me to grow in my knowledge of many issues I had never before considered, such as human trafficking, recidivism among criminal offenders due to lack of economic hope, and children who continually get sick because of a lack of basic necessities. I began to realize the scope of the world's problems and the immense amount of time, energy, and resources needed to remedy them.

As I talked with some of the social entrepreneurs who visited the office, I came to understand that money is not the only thing needed to fix these problems; this world

“Social entrepreneurs are creatively adaptive, learn from their mistakes, and can find means to achieve their goals even when money is lacking. In the end, it is the person who trumps the problem. Through their examples, I learned that my reaction to circumstances is just as important as the circumstances.”

needs determined, passionate people with innovative solutions. These people are social entrepreneurs; they apply new ideas to fix persistent social problems. Social entrepreneurs do not give up when they face obstacles. Rather, they take a step back, observe what might be working for others, and try again. Social entrepreneurs are creatively adaptive, learn from their mistakes, and can find means to achieve their goals even when money is lacking. In the end, it is the person who trumps the problem. Through their examples, I learned that my reaction to circumstances is just as important as the circumstances.

With my new understandings and the inspiration given to me by people I met, I developed a greater appreciation for learning and discovering. I discovered that everyone has the capacity to be a social entrepreneur and that a person's projects do not have to be huge or all-encompassing. I also learned that I have the social-entrepreneurial itch, and I want to, and will, weave it into wherever life takes me. Learning can take place in a classroom, from a book, or from people and experiences. This summer, I learned about the importance of learning and how to do it.

A New Perspective



As a city-lover addicted to people-watching and constant activity, I struggled to adapt to village life in Corsica, a French island in the Mediterranean whose biggest city has a population the size of Arlington, Va. My friend Jonathan and I had chosen Corsica as our subject for a documentary that will be used as a teaching tool in French classes at Rice. Unfortunately, I had not fully prepared myself for the culture shock to come. The residents of my village numbered fewer than my fellow Sidizens*, and many were in retirement or under the age of 14. While potting honey in the *miellorie* I called home, I dreamed of the cafes, the drama, and the speed of everything I had left behind. At the end of my first week, I was lonely, anxious, and desperately craving 24-hour Mexican food.

Before long, however, I began to adapt, and by the end of the summer, I had discovered an insider's perspective on the real Corsica as well as an insider's view of myself. In addition to learning about the cultural and political landscape of Corsica, I discovered new information about myself—my capacity for empathy, a tolerance for ambiguity, a strong sense of confidence, an ability to communicate.

As I began to engage with my surroundings, I found that Corsica's natural wonders furnished me with the excitement and curiosity I thought only a city could inspire in me. I explored the village and discovered the pleasure of cool spring water at public fountains, the taste of a ripe tomato from a backyard garden, and the sweet delight of fig *fleurs* in summertime. Three- or four-course meals with Muscat and Camembert became daily enjoyments, and walking in the fresh air replaced my university exercise regimen of daily gym visits. I began to understand why so many Corsicans living on the continent returned each year for long, leisurely visits.

After four weeks, Jonathan arrived with his camera equipment, and we started the filming process. My month alone had taught me that it would be difficult to explain much of Corsica in an hour-long documentary. Unlike Paris or Madrid or London, it needed a thorough introduction, because very few Americans can even place Corsica on a map, much less know anything about its cultural past or present. Formerly Italian, the island has a primarily oral language that's very close to its Sardinian neighbors', and

“Grappling with Corsican politics greatly developed my tolerance for ambiguity and ambivalence, and speaking with natives about such difficult subjects sharpened my communication skills and enhanced my capacity for empathy.”

* Sidizens are student members of Sid Richardson College, one of the residential colleges at Rice University.

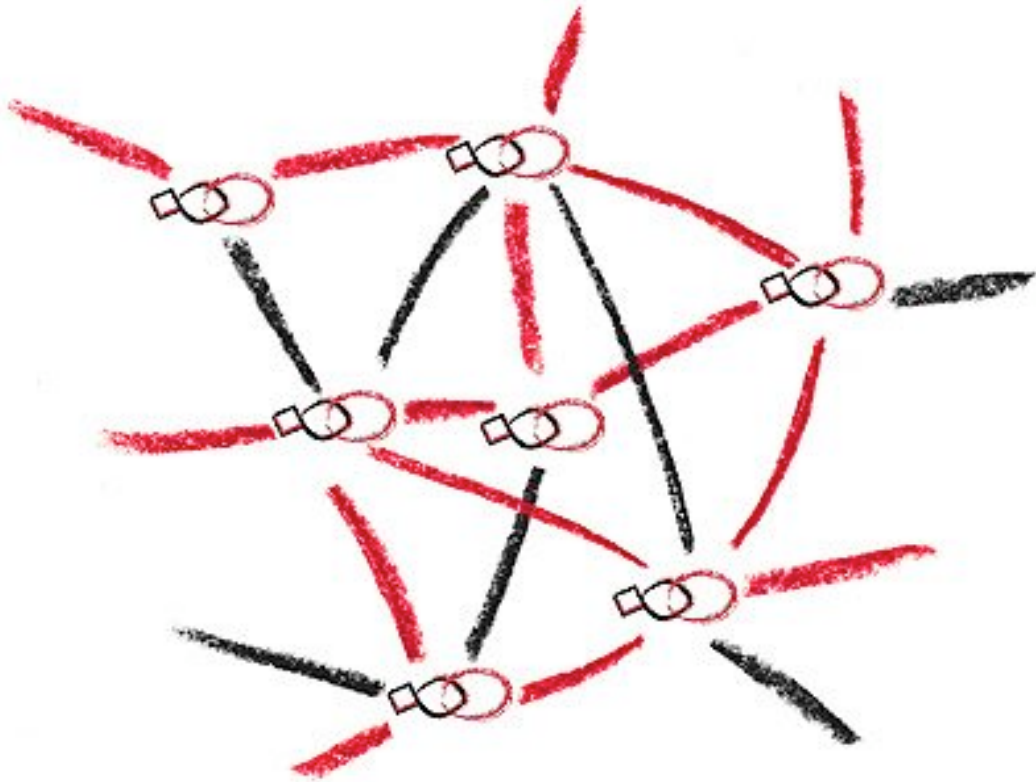
the islanders are very Mediterranean in their style of thinking, eating, and working. I talked to islanders about cultural particularities such as Corsican witch doctors, village fears of the sea, and the usage of the Corsican versus the French language. Jonathan and I decided that it was important to present the island as a unique culture influenced by other groups rather than as a French subculture.

Though people were quick to talk to us about Corsican culture, we found most islanders to be very closed-mouthed when it came to politics. Corsica's nationalist movement has a violent recent past that involves hooded men, bombs, factional infighting, and frequent assassinations. Corsica is such a small island that no one was able to escape the wreckage (or progress?) of the nationalist movement, so many simply closed their ears and mouths. I grew up in an environment that encourages political debate and preaches nonviolence. But despite embracing those values myself, I developed sympathy for the tight-lipped islanders who had too recently lost loved ones, and on the other hand I eventually understood those, like the mayor of the village, who argued that violence was necessary to prevent the island from becoming another Cote d'Azur. Jonathan and I quickly learned when to squelch the urge to dig deeper and instead became sensitive to cues that indicated we should move on to the next subject. At the annual nationalist convention, the flags bearing images of hooded men with guns frightened me, but the politicians were fascinating people who intelligently and passionately explained their cause and the political injustice their island has endured. Grappling with Corsican politics greatly developed my tolerance for ambiguity and ambivalence, and speaking with natives about such difficult subjects sharpened my communication skills and enhanced my capacity for empathy.

On the summer's lighter side, I boosted my confidence by interacting with the young people of the village. One night we met some students before going to the village ball. As I talked to them, I was shocked by how much more outgoing I was after weeks of interviewing strangers in a foreign language. I learned that they still thought of America as a dream, and I was surprised to hear them tell us how lucky we were (this from the mouths of the French!). I wanted to tell them that they were the lucky ones; their home had natural beauty, a rich history, and a language all their own. It made me reflect on how many advantages I had waiting at home, and it showed me how easily we take things for granted. When we finally made it to the ball, a sort of discotheque in a field, we interviewed the firemen who organized the ball to raise money. They spent the night dancing in their tight blue uniforms on the stage, a cross between *YMCA* and strip dancing. The next day, we found the 16- to 30-year-old men playing Petanque beside a pagoda filled with drinks. I was a bit intimidated to find them en masse, but I had to be the outgoing one since Jonathan did not speak enough French. I found that learning how to play Petanque and engaging them in serious interviews about their volunteer work (battling the forest fires, 90 percent set illegally, that threaten Corsica every summer) quickly decreased my self-consciousness and boosted my confidence.

Despite the rough adjustment, I was sad to leave Corsica and all that my summer adventure entailed. Fortunately, the experience gave me the confidence and communication skills that I will need during my year in Paris. I am prepared for and excited about the next stage of my French travels and my return to city life, but I am impatient to see the final film product, and I intend to revisit Corsica next summer.

RELATIONSHIPS



“Leadership is always dependent on the context, but the context is established by the relationships we value. We cannot hope to influence any situation without respect for the complex network of people who contribute to our organization.”

- Margaret Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*

Miriam Scatterday
Center for the Study of the Presidency
Rob Henderson, Dean of Fellows

On Relationships, Integrity, and Networking



It was the Monday after my summer mentorship ended. Two other interns were to stay another week. My cell phone rang three times between 12 and 12:10 p.m.: Ray, Caroline, and Brett, all people I had worked with at the Center for the Study of the Presidency in Washington, D.C. After catching up on all that I'd missed that morning, talking about last-minute touches they were adding to our summer-long project—an anthology on presidential leadership—and making plans to see each other again, I realized the summer had been a success. During two short months, I had forged countless relationships that will last long into the future. That is networking.

It is rewarding to build relationships through mutuality and respect. Integrity is key. When first making contact with a person, one's inner compass does not matter much. However, when working with the same people on a daily basis, one's integrity can determine how successful and lasting the relationships will be. Ray, Caroline, and I worked on selecting and editing essays for the anthology, a collection of pieces by students from top universities across the country. Dedication and integrity are things that inevitably show themselves. If you have them, people can tell. The more I worked with Ray and Caroline, the more I respected them. This was a tremendous lesson for me. In addition to sharing mutual respect, we got to know and care for each other. They are not political celebrities everyone enjoys hearing about, but they are now two of the best friends I have. The time we shared at lunches, visiting D.C. sights, and after work was among the best of the summer. Though Ray, Caroline, and I are as different as three people can be, we were able to expand each other. I learned to look at issues through new sets of eyes. We come from different coasts and backgrounds; sharing our experiences had a way of broadening our vision. Anytime I am in a situation where I work closely with someone, it is a unique networking opportunity, a chance to create a deep relationship founded on trust. I believe this lesson will serve me well in the future.

Of course, a D.C. summer would not be complete without the most celebrated kind of networking—meeting and talking to high-profile people. After working on the details of planning a garden party hosted by the president of the Center for the Study of the Presidency, David Abshire, in honor of Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns, it was my privilege to attend. I was star-struck as the many political celebrities walked through the 12-foot French doors. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison came with a small entourage but had a moment to talk about Rice and being a resident of Texas. NATO Ambassador Victoria Nuland asked about my internship and talked about adjustments

“The ability to engage in meaningful conversations comfortably and the realization that everyone has a unique voice are two invaluable things my experience in D.C. taught me.”

her kids would make to life in Brussels. Jamie Gorelick, head of the 9/11 Commission, asked about my favorite classes at Rice and what I'll be doing after I graduate. I was able to meet many ambassadors and their spouses and talk about the highlights of life in D.C. and differences in culture and climate. It was exhilarating to be in the presence of so many important people who have helped write the pages of history. I expected to simply bask in their glory, but even the most successful people treated me as if they could learn from me. It was a surprising and wonderful experience.

My mentorship experience showed me that every person has a story and a history. Most people are happy to share theirs and are eager to hear mine. The ability to engage in meaningful conversations comfortably and the realization that everyone has a unique voice are two invaluable things my experience in D.C. taught me. Working closely with extremely talented and successful people showed me that the more they have to give, the more they are willing to receive. Taking an interest in others is usually what allowed them to reach their positions.

Relationships, rather than specific lessons, defined my experience this summer. The lessons I learned from Ray and Caroline—about teamwork, respect, and valuing those without a title—have already begun to be of great use to me. Networking is not something we do just to get ahead or just to add to the list of people we have met. Our heart for others is expanded, our experience is enriched by theirs, and therein lies the true value of networking.

Jessie Gill
BRIDGES to Sustainability
Beth Beloff, President

From Competitors to Colleagues



The week was nothing out of the ordinary in the BRIDGES to Sustainability suite: I was doing research for the sustainability indicators database, collecting and compiling information for a sustainability project for the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, attending a diverse array of meetings, writing minutes, and preparing a presentation for our director to give to Golder Associates, the company that had recently acquired BRIDGES. For an intern, my plate was full.

We were all busy, but nothing seemed to be pressing. Then our director announced that the president of USA Golder, as well as other VIPs, would attend the meeting in Seattle, and we scrambled. The other intern and I experienced near cardiac arrest when we found out that our presentation needed to be completed in two days instead of a week.

I made a mental note to always clarify objectives and deadlines; I was not about to assume anything ever again. Then, paradoxically, I began to jump to hasty conclusions. I imagined that the other intern was much further along in preparing for the presentation than I was. I scolded myself for not having already summarized my findings and sources in a 12-page paper, as the other intern had done. I thought, “Wouldn’t my mentor be impressed if I were more like the other intern?”

Fearing that the other intern’s work was superior to mine, I worked quickly and efficiently to catch up. On the inside, though, I shuddered at the prospect of the looming all-nighter. How else could I possibly finish my section of the presentation, especially when my standards demanded that I produce better work than the other intern? Competition drove me to overachievement—I vowed to have the more cohesive presentation. The other intern would not beat me!

The next morning, we were back in a scramble: Neither of us had cohesive presentations. Nor did they flow together well. My motivation to outperform the other intern lost stamina, and panic set in. Our director needed information on the recent Sarbanes-Oxley legislation and how the new accountability requirements might add value to a company. Regardless of how each one of us had prepared, *both* of us were in over our heads, and neither of us understood entirely what our director needed.

Then a miracle happened. No, the presentation wasn’t canceled, and PowerPoint didn’t miraculously formulate a cohesive presentation for us. But the other intern and I began to work together.

Although I hadn’t realized it, I had been competing with the other intern for the past two weeks, long before the crunch of a specific deadline. All had been relaxed in

“The strongest motivator is a feeling of investment in the organization and the collective success of its individuals, regardless of who receives credit.”

the office, but the environment in our room had been tense. I'd resented being "excluded" from projects in which the other intern was involved. I realized that we'd hardly spoken, and we certainly hadn't shared anything.

That Friday morning, the other intern and I finally began working together, brainstorming, educating each other in our topic areas, compiling information for the newly added topics, e-mailing pertinent information, reviewing each other's drafts and offering suggestions. Rather than working alone and being motivated by competition, we engaged and challenged each other. We both took initiative, and what we compiled together for the presentation was far superior to what either of us could have offered on our own. And we didn't have to pull any all-nighters.

I left the office late Friday evening with a feeling of satisfaction: We had offered the best presentation and suggestions we could have put together, and we had *enjoyed* working together and learning from each other. A sense of camaraderie and equal partnership permeated the entire office that day.

It is this sense of camaraderie and equal partnership that continues to motivate me in all of my tasks and allows my *colleague* and me to continue to connect. We are all part of the success or failure of any project, regardless of what we have individually been assigned to contribute. At times my driving motivation may be self-imposed deadlines, panic, or competition, but the strongest motivator is a feeling of investment in the organization and the collective success of its individuals, regardless of who receives credit. I am fortunate to have discovered that two heads are better than one and that a team outperforms even the most capable individual. Amazing what a little teamwork accomplishes. ...

Daniela Burchhardt
Weill Cornell Medical College, Cornell University
Barbara Hempstead, Professor

Ups and Downs and All Around



There is a saying that if you wake up in the middle of the night thinking about your experiments, then you know you have the drive necessary for a career in scientific research. In research, the goal is to publish your findings: The scientist gets the deserved credit for his/her hard work, and the rest of the world can share and benefit from the newly discovered knowledge. While this is incredibly exciting, the road to a published paper is long and hard. It can be years before you see any conclusive results. In fact, it can easily happen that you were following the wrong lead or your experiment setup was flawed, and months of work can be lost. Besides, usually your published findings are not an immediate cure for a disease, and for the most part only other scientists in your particular field truly understand your research.

So what motivates scientists? As with most careers, it takes a certain personality—the kind that makes you wake up in the middle of the night, for example—and a love for research. I used to believe that good research scientists were loners, driven by a thirst for knowledge and marked by their intense focus and dedication. Going back to the lab at odd hours to stop a reaction, spending hours isolated in a small room to use a special machine or write a paper—these are behaviors that are only too familiar to scientists. However, during my mentorship at a lab at Weill Cornell Medical College, I observed the dynamics of the lab and found that while a certain amount of motivation from within is necessary, good leadership and a collaborative environment are crucial to a scientist's success. And a supportive atmosphere makes the scientist's workday so much more pleasant.

This summer, I spent 10 weeks doing mainly neuroscience research with mouse brains. I was highly motivated to learn fast and to work hard, and I was set on making the research my top priority. I entered the summer not knowing much about the brain, and I left with a breadth of knowledge about brain anatomy and nerve growth factors as well as other parts of the nervous system and basic mouse fetal development. The more I learned, the more I wanted to know. I now realize that my thirst for knowledge and my desire to fully grasp the research were in part due to the wonderful and incredibly knowledgeable post-doc with whom I worked. She seemed to never tire of answering my questions, and she challenged me by asking me to think and troubleshoot. My motivation to stay late and go the extra mile came from within as well as from my desire to prove myself a capable and competent intern who learns quickly and who benefits the lab.

Despite my relatively short time at Cornell, I also learned to value a wonderful group of co-workers and a great lab dynamic that served as a complement to my inner

“While a certain amount of motivation from within is necessary, good leadership and a collaborative environment are crucial to a scientist’s success.”

motivation. With their support and laughter, my post-doc and the other lab members made the summer an amazing, enjoyable, and memorable experience for me. For example, when I turned 21 during the second week of my internship—still trying to get the hang of life in New York City, still new to the research and the people—my co-workers surprised me with a birthday cake and dinner plans for the following night. I was delighted to be welcomed to the lab this way. My birthday was not the only occasion on which we got together outside of the lab. An evening with New York City's Opera in the Park, movie nights, and a retreat at our primary investigator's country house followed. These outings created a bond and a familiarity that transferred into the workplace. Everyone's positive attitude, genuine friendliness, and laughter created a supportive atmosphere that made a frustrating week filled with experiments gone wrong seem not so bad. To me, that was one of the best types of motivation and inspiration.

I was sad to leave the lab. I immensely enjoyed spending the summer in New York City and at Cornell, and I have many great stories to tell. I witnessed firsthand the importance of inner motivation to a scientist's work. At the same time, I learned to appreciate more than ever how a great group of co-workers can help you get through the rough times and share your excitement during the fun times.

John Hays
The Methodist Hospital—Pathology
Will Kyle, Administrator

It's All About the Relationships



New internship experiences are almost always intimidating. In my previous internship, I recall feeling extremely nervous to perform not just to the best of my abilities, but also to the expectations of my boss. This summer in The Methodist Hospital's Pathology Department, I learned that competency is much appreciated, but it is not nearly as important as relationships. As simple as this concept may sound, it took me some time to absorb it. Fortunately, I got to study at the feet of two remarkable mentors, Will Kyle and Dr. Michael Lieberman. With charisma and understanding, they showed how to achieve greatness in leadership not only through competency, but also through relationship building.

“I learned that competency is much appreciated, but it is not nearly as important as relationships.”

Methodist Pathology is on the cutting edge, and its driving forces are Mr. Kyle, my mentor, and Dr. Lieberman, chair of the department and CEO of the research institute. These two men have engineered a new beginning for the department. Methodist Pathology is about a year old, and it's thriving. Why? Because of relationships, vision, and leadership. I was afforded the opportunity to sit and listen to these two great minds discuss various ways to change the whole mind-set of a hospital and in the process build an educational research facility. I distinctly remember Dr. Lieberman telling me that the back-story behind every conversation and every scheduled dinner is about making connections with others. Both Mr. Kyle and Dr. Lieberman made it clear that gathering friends and allies is key to their mission. I saw again and again that when something new and innovative needed to get accomplished, it could be pushed through because of the many friendly relations that Mr. Kyle and Dr. Lieberman had established. Through the vision, leadership, and connections of Mr. Kyle and Dr. Lieberman, The Methodist Hospital has been transformed into a facility with links to Weill Cornell Medical College, Baylor College of Medicine, University of Houston, Texas A&M University, and the University of Texas Medical Branch.

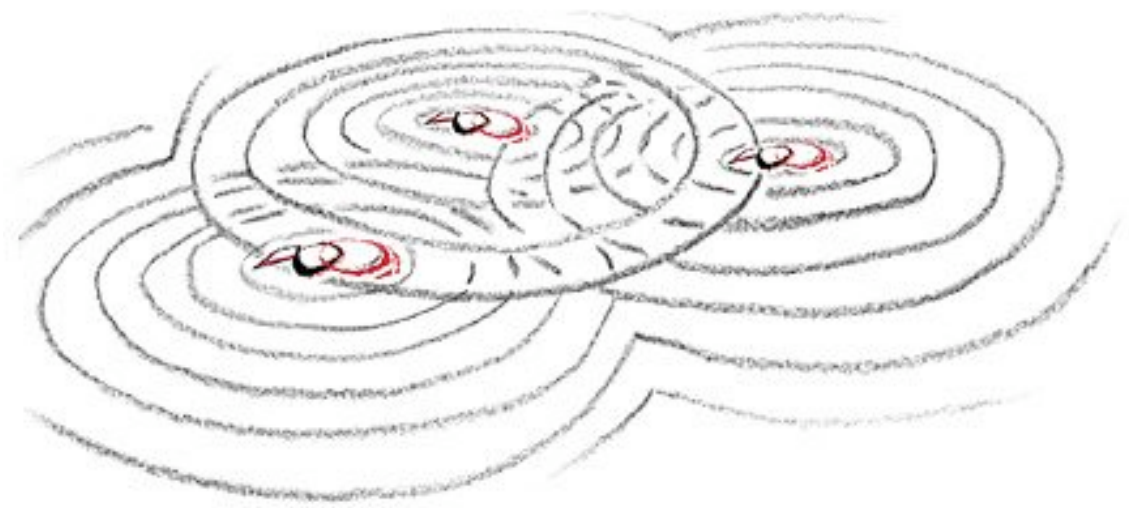
So how can I translate these skills into my own life, especially when I'm normally shy? One of the most poignant things that Dr. Lieberman made clear to me was that he was not born the way he is today. He described himself as a naturally reclusive person who has forced himself to put aside fear and to go out and find and befriend the people who can help him reach his goals. Dr. Lieberman understands that he must venture outside his comfort zone and explore the lives of others if he wants to succeed. This philosophy has transformed him from a shy genius into an amazing leader at one of the nation's top hospitals.

Unlike Dr. Lieberman, Mr. Kyle seems to be a natural people person. He makes it look so easy. I quickly came to understand why he has become so well-loved in The

Methodist Hospital system. He works hard to establish a good rapport with everyone, even if it costs the department real dollars and cents. I witnessed firsthand the extent of his integrity. When there were problems with insurance companies not covering patients appropriately, Mr. Kyle wrote off thousands of dollars so that The Methodist Hospital would be able to hold its head high. By being trustworthy and not putting money above people, Mr. Kyle is able to convert his good character into a kind of currency that can always buy allies.

This summer was a terrific case study in how to network. Dr. Lieberman and Mr. Kyle showed me how two men with entirely different personalities can join forces and create a huge network of partners to further their vision. Their example gave me the confidence to come out of my own shell and speak boldly and truthfully in a business setting. I know that I, too, am amassing a network of friends and fellow innovators who will help me accomplish my goals for the future, just as I am helping them accomplish theirs. As Dr. Lieberman likes to say, "It's all about the relationships."

GROWTH AND CHANGE



“The leader’s transformation must occur not at the level of skills but in the nature of the person.”

- Peter Koestenbaum, *Leadership: The Inner Side of Greatness*

Kayshin Chan
St. Luke's Episcopal Health Charities
Ilana Reisz, Community Program Manager

Bottled Water and Swivel Office Chairs



Community work is all about the two F's: furniture and food. This seemingly absurd statement was the greatest lesson that I took away from my summer at St. Luke's Episcopal Health Charities. Had someone told me this motto at the beginning of my mentorship, I would have thought that person was crazy. But by the end of July, I came to adopt that motto as my own.

Jet-lagged and sleep-deprived, I flew into Houston the day before my mentorship was supposed to start. I had just finished an eye-opening semester in South Africa, studying the Anglican Church and its fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic. At the church where I volunteered, I saw rail-thin HIV-positive patients struggling to keep themselves and their families alive on meager government-issued checks. After my intense hands-on experience in Africa, I felt more than ready to tackle any challenge that my summer mentorship would throw at me. I looked forward to working with the seasoned professionals at St. Luke's and unlocking their secrets of community work.

Instead of discovering sweeping truths about public health, however, one day I found myself in a grocery store, debating whether to buy Dasani purified water or Ozarka "all-natural" spring water for our upcoming meeting. Back at the office, I helped my mentor set up for a meeting by dragging chairs and pushing tables into some semblance of an arrangement suitable for 30 people in a room made for 15. Needless to say, I was somewhat let down by the mundane nature of my tasks. When was my public health experience in Africa supposed to come into play?

When I had finally hauled that 30th chair into place, my face must have had a disgruntled expression, because my mentor laughed and said, "Community work is all about moving furniture and buying food." I chuckled politely at her comment but immediately brushed it off as an inside joke among community workers.

In retrospect, this comment symbolizes the spirit of community leadership that is at the core of the Charities. Buying food is more than a nice gesture; since the Charities cannot monetarily reimburse community members for their time, providing quality snacks and water is a way to show that the organization is dedicated to the community. Dealing with practical aspects of a meeting, like seating, ensures that the focus of the meeting will be on the community's concerns. In a small way, the tasks I had to perform contributed to "management of attention," a definition of leadership that I had learned from Leadership Rice. My mentor made the community members

"I came away with the knowledge that all actions are important to the success of a program, from the lowly intern buying food and moving furniture to the most skilled doctor saving lives on a daily basis."

feel comfortable and relaxed so that attention was directed toward the important matters at hand.

As the summer continued, I realized that all of the Charities' actions could be traced back to this commitment to putting the community first. All community assessments published by the Charities have a section where community members express their concerns through creative means, such as PhotoVoice, a methodology that allows residents to take neighborhood photos that highlight the most pressing needs. The assessment has a distinctive feel because the people themselves contribute to the writing of the report. Attention is rightly focused on the community and not on the Charities, a practical example of how the organization lives out Leadership Rice's definition of leadership.

I came into this summer experience with the expectation that I would not only continue my direct involvement with community programs, but also learn about unique characteristics of working in a public health organization. Instead I came away with the knowledge that all actions are important to the success of a program, from the lowly intern buying food and moving furniture to the most skilled doctor saving lives on a daily basis. I will never see bottled water and office swivel chairs again in the same light.

Apoorva Shah
AMIGOS de las Américas
Anne Amis, Director of Latin American Programs

Delicious!



My mentorship had the potential to be like a delicious meal that I eat too fast and forget to enjoy. I worked for AMIGOS de las Américas, a nonprofit organization that sends students to Latin America to live and work in rural communities. The organization works to promote cultural exchange, further community development, and foster youth leadership here and abroad. This sounded like a dream job for me, an utterly enormous feast of opportunities.

I jumped into the AMIGOS world and learned everything I could about the organization. I trained to be a volunteer trainer, and I grabbed the opportunity to make guides for volunteers going to Oaxaca, Mexico. Everything I did, I did really fast. I wasn't taking time to reflect on my work; I was concentrating on being productive.

I remember one particular meeting during which I kept firing away at different topics because I thought it would be most industrious to solve all issues at once. But I was not being efficient at all. Instead I was creating havoc. My mentor reminded me of the Leadership Rice motto of "slowing down to speed up." I soon realized that on a team, one person rushing can actually slow the team down. Gobbling up multiple issues at once can create more problems than solutions.

I decided to try a more measured approach, to take on tasks one at a time. The change was immediate. Slowing down certainly made my life and my co-workers' lives much easier, and I began to enjoy my work even more. Unfortunately, the change was not permanent.

Soon afterward, I was asked to serve as a volunteer trainer for pre-departure sessions in Miami and Houston. During one of the activities I was facilitating, I began to notice some awkward silences after questions I had asked. Instead of waiting expectantly, I dashed forward and rushed participants to answer. When I met with my mentor afterward, she told me to slow down and let participants use the silence as a time to reflect. I had not thought deeply about how important it was to take time to digest a question before giving an answer. When I tried out this unhurried technique with the next group, I immediately saw the difference. We covered more ground, not less, because the volunteers' responses became more thoughtful.

My experiences during my first few weeks at AMIGOS helped me understand the importance of slowing down to get more work done. They also showed me how rewarding it is to pour time into relationships. The AMIGOS volunteers I met were wonderful, inspirational people, and I felt a reverence for their desire to spend a summer helping others in a foreign environment. Rather than speeding through

“Not being consumed by the frenzy around me is something I would never have been able to do if I had not learned how to slow down and be more present in less stressful situations.”

material and facts, I gradually learned how to listen and share and relate. In turn, I felt more a part of the AMIGOS team, and this gave me a sense of empowerment and energy.

At this point, the majority of my AMIGOS mentorship was complete. All that remained was a delectable 10-day field trip to Paraguay with a stop on the way home at Iguazu Falls in Brazil. This was certainly going to be a highlight of my summer, and I was excited about going to Latin America for the first time.

But those 10 days were not a typical field trip. As soon as our group arrived, we witnessed stressful situations that put almost everyone on edge. Suddenly the trip had the potential to be hurried and exhausting. Fortunately, I had learned how to observe hectic problems from a different perspective. I was able to notice opportunities for growth and leadership. Not being consumed by the frenzy around me is something I would never have been able to do if I had not learned how to slow down and be more present in less stressful situations.

The Paraguayan countryside turned out to be the perfect place to culminate my summer experience. The motto of Paraguay is *tranquilo*, or tranquility, and I soon learned why. To get to the rural community where I stayed for two nights, I had to ride on a bus for two hours, then hike up a hill for another hour. During the long hike, I took the time to take in all the sights, smells, and sounds of rural Paraguay.

When I arrived in the community of Costa Baez, I saw residents sitting around a fire, sipping *mate* with friends and family. As they talked, I realized that they deliberately lived life at a leisurely pace, choosing to be *tranquilo* in all their pursuits. This was a stark contrast to the fast-paced, hungry-for-production mind-set I had held before my AMIGOS experience, and I relished it.

During the final days of the trip, we visited the natural wonders of Iguazu Falls in Brazil. On my last day in Latin America, while breathing the crisp rainforest air, I thought with pleasure about how I hadn't simply rushed through the summer and then keeled over. I had *savored* my experiences. In the past, "savor" was a word I rarely used. I had not just learned and worked, I had grown. By slowing down, I was able to listen better to others and to myself. While I can't say for sure what the future will bring, I'm savoring every minute now. And that's a delicious thing.

Christine Faulstich
National Alliance to End Homelessness
Peggy Bailey, Health Policy Analyst

Audacious Hope



Most people looked at me as if I were an 8-year-old proposing to save the whales when I told them I would be working at the National Alliance to End Homelessness. I received indulgent smiles, sarcastic replies of “Good luck,” and several bemused queries asking, “How will you do that?”

It is not hard for me to understand these responses. In my experience volunteering at a free breakfast program, I had looked at the same faces week after week and wondered whether these men would ever have a permanent home. We provided everything we could think of, from a hot meal to a nurse practitioner, clothing vouchers, razors, and bus passes. Yet it always felt like a patchwork solution that never dealt with the underlying issue. Homelessness just seemed to be such an entrenched and complex problem that I, too, thought it was unsolvable.

With these thoughts in the back of my mind, I came to the Alliance energized to help however I could but still retaining reservations about the naivete of the organization's mission. I've always been a realist, and I was prepared for my co-workers to be either dreamers disconnected from reality or angry advocates harping on problems without providing solutions.

I was surprised to find that they were neither. The staff was hard-working, knowledgeable, and armed with real solutions to the problem of homelessness. As the summer went on, it was this emphasis on solutions that impressed me most about the Alliance and its staff. It also garnered the group a great deal of bipartisan support in Congress. In contrast, I witnessed many other advocacy groups engaging in partisan bickering and fear-mongering as they repeatedly predicted the doom that would result from the federal government's inaction on whatever issue they were concerned about. It was clear to me that this finger-pointing brought no real results.

Engaged in policy research, I found it easy to feel removed from the reality of homelessness while sitting in our offices on K Street. It was not until I attended our annual conference in mid-July that I began to gain some perspective on the work the Alliance was doing. During those three days, surrounded by homeless providers and homeless and formerly homeless people from across the country, I learned how widespread the Alliance's impact was. I also listened to senators, authors, and the director of Fannie Mae. I came to see the extent to which the Alliance had helped to transform the structures that provide homeless services in America and to change the attitudes and assumptions of people working in those areas.

“Leadership takes expertise that contributes not only to a broad understanding of the way things are, but also to a bold vision of what they could be.”

I felt privileged to work for an organization that Jeffrey M. Jones described in the Hoover Digest as having “not only influenced key legislation but changed the entire direction of homeless policy in the United States.” My experience this summer allowed me to see that the source of the Alliance's leadership was the organization's vision. After all, it is not the National Alliance to *Maintain* Homelessness, or the National Alliance to *Reduce* Homelessness, as a conference speaker noted. It took audacious hope to name the organization the National Alliance to *End* Homelessness. It was an intention that I had initially doubted. Yet after only a short time there, I had completely bought in. This summer taught me that really making a difference takes more than clear thinking and hard work. More than anything, leadership takes expertise that contributes not only to a broad understanding of the way things are, but also to a bold vision of what they could be.

Megan Gray
Baylor Teen Health Clinics
Peggy Smith, Director
Ruth Buzi, Assistant Director

One Event



I can pinpoint the culmination of my summer experience, the moment that brought all that I had learned at the Baylor Teen Health Clinics into context. It was the arrival of another human being in this world at Ben Taub General Hospital, and witnessing it was truly powerful. My mentorship with Peggy Smith and Ruth Buzi touched on many social, political, economic, and health issues, and they helped bring these issues to life by allowing me to participate in normally closed activities, such as a delivery. Exploring the clinical and policy components of providing reproductive health services to teens allowed me to see that birth within the framework of the larger social issues that accompany every baby born in Harris County.

A birth is a life-changing event that transcends differences of ethnicity and language. Scrubbing in and shadowing a midwife helped me focus on the similarities that unite people—the anxieties, the pains, and the hope for the next generation to succeed. It was clear that mothers need the same encouragement in any language and that the sheer joy of new birth is blind to ethnic boundaries. Medicine is shockingly, beautifully real, and the simple truths that guide its practice drive my desire to learn all the nuances of health-care delivery. Medicine allows physicians to connect with the human spirit through the common threads that unite us all. I learned so much this summer about myself and about my goals for the future, and I was able to get a great perspective on the intersection of medicine and public health and the varied roles of physicians, social workers, and public health officers. Working at Ben Taub gave me a new perspective on the diversity and varied socioeconomic circumstances of Houston's residents, and I realized how great the need for cultural sensitivity is.

Allowing me “backstage access” to witness that birth was one of the countless ways in which my mentors supported me. Peggy and Ruth also encouraged me to look into a dual MD/MPH degree and gave me a firsthand view of the powerful role of health-care advocacy in affecting the social disparities of health. My mentors also helped reinforce the information I had gleaned in my mentorship last summer with the Baylor Cancer Center, providing many candid insights about the complex relationships between physicians and health-care administration. Peggy, especially, taught me about the power of open dialogue to help

“It was clear that mothers need the same encouragement in any language and that the sheer joy of new birth is blind to ethnic boundaries... Working at Ben Taub gave me a new perspective on the diversity and varied socioeconomic circumstances of Houston's residents, and I realized how great the need for cultural sensitivity is.”

smooth political transitions and about the strength found in personal relationships in creating a career.

Still I come back to that birth, a profound experience with so many lessons packed into it. It helped put the entire summer's work in context. Anyone likely would have a profound reaction to such an intimate moment, but I doubt I would have had as deep an understanding of the whole picture had it not been for my mentors' amazing guidance and leadership. I now can speak with authority about the overhead policy and economic issues that affect physicians and their patients, the organization of their practicing hospitals, and their communities at large. Based on this experience, I, too, will strive to emphasize the potential to benefit, grow with, and learn from the community, joining the tangible practice of medicine with the abstract concepts of health policy. With this background on the inner workings of the health-care system, I feel I have a deeper appreciation of the divergent interests and needs of all people and a better understanding of physicians' roles today. I hope my future interactions will touch on all those roles, making improved sensitivity and fuller understanding more of a reality. I also wish that everyone would get the chance to witness the amazing birth of a child, which for me brought clarity to the endeavors of the Teen Health Clinics and the entire health-care system.

Clint Corcoran
Comfort Systems USA
Trent McKenna, General Counsel

A New Light on Interns



What can a summer intern do that will be productive for a \$900 million company? I didn't know the answer, and nor did the Leadership Rice staff or the company. But the answer became clear quite soon: A lot, apparently.

I expected to get much more out of my summer mentorship with Comfort Systems USA than the company would be getting out of me. Comfort Systems is one of the country's largest mechanical contractors, with about 50 operating companies nationwide, and I was its first-ever intern. As I walked into corporate headquarters in Houston, saw my name placard on the wall, sat down at my desk in front of my company laptop, and looked out my full-length window, I thought about what a remarkable summer this was going to be—and not just because of all the luxuries. I immediately understood that I was going to gain valuable workplace experience at this company. Over time, I realized something equally satisfying: The company would learn and benefit from my work as well.

I took on many projects and made numerous trips this summer: I researched various topics for the CEO; I worked on legal papers and compliance laws for the general counsel; I attended the company's Lessons in Leadership conference and then arranged for the speaker to present some of his material at a Leadership Rice meeting; I spent two weeks visiting an operating company in Pasadena, Texas; I took a business trip to Phoenix, Ariz., to sit in on company meetings; and I went to Nashville, Tenn., for the company's national safety conference. In my mind, these events primarily helped me—I gained both experience and understanding. As time passed, however, I realized that my projects actually benefited both of us: I learned fascinating things, and the company gained industry knowledge and information, one time leading to Comfort's decision to purchase equipment worth millions of dollars.

By far my greatest project in terms of learning—both for me and for the company—was my three-page research paper on ultraviolet light. Since Comfort's operating companies deal with heating, ventilation, and cooling (HVAC), the idea of using ultraviolet light to disinfect air-conditioning systems was an interesting prospect. As I learned in my research, the use of UV light to kill harmful bacteria in HVAC systems is not new. Hospitals used this infection-killing treatment in cooling systems in the 1950s to combat airborne pathogens. However, the widespread introduction of UV light in commercial, industrial, institutional, and residential applications has not yet taken off, so the CEO wanted me to gather some additional information about UV light so he could be informed of current research and uses. He told me that he hoped my

“Comfort Systems is one of the country's largest mechanical contractors, with about 50 operating companies nationwide, and I was its first-ever intern.”

research would help him understand whether the operating companies should get involved with ultraviolet light.

I used as many resources as I could find to learn about the science behind ultraviolet light, to research the technological innovations that use it, to perform a cost-benefit analysis of UV-light treatment, and to discover a host of related facts. With my completed report in hand, the CEO was so pleased that he jokingly said it was his. In the next breath, though, he asked the information technology people how to publish my report on the company's public website and give me proper credit for my work.

At that point, I was glad I had taken extra time to proofread my paper and make sure every detail was correct and properly cited. Originally intended as an information guide for the CEO, the report was soon available for the world to see. And was I ever honored to see my name and school boldly displayed at the top of my report on Comfort's website!

Recognition aside, this paper on UV light provided crucial information for Comfort Systems and for those who read it on the Internet. Most importantly, it made me realize how productive I could be for a company, and I hope it showed Comfort Systems how valuable an intern can be.

Monica Huang
International Services, The Methodist Hospital
Ruthy Khawaja, Vice President, International Services

Just Ask



When you apply to Leadership Rice, they ask you to describe your ideal internship, as if they had a magic wand that could make it happen. But in my interview, Dr. Lieberman told me flat out that she didn't have my dream internship. What I wanted was a job in science writing or journalism; what I got was a mentorship in The Methodist Hospital's International Services Division. From the start, I was stuck with the idea that I was settling for something less than my ideal, a mind-set I had to struggle to break out of.

The international office serves as a contact point for Methodist's international patients. The office manages appointments, sets up accommodations, interprets, and basically does everything it can to help its patients. I went in on my first day and immediately felt out of place. This mentorship didn't fit like a fairy tale. I kept asking myself, "What am I doing here?" And when people heard that I was studying biochemistry and English, they asked me the same thing. I couldn't give them an answer that didn't sound fake, so I just shrugged and said honestly, "I don't know." That first day, I followed people around and felt useless. All I could do was nod and smile at the Spanish and Arabic flying over my head. I went home thinking, "Is this it?"

After my first weekend, I realized there was a whole lot more. With my mentor out of the office all summer, I could have felt like a lost intern, but I discovered great foster-mentors who took care of me. During the office retreat in my first week, I saw how compassionate and committed to their patients my co-workers were, and how they got along despite the different countries and cultures they represented. After laughing and connecting with them, I felt much better about being in the office.

Still, when it came to actual work, I clung to my despair; I doubted that the office could ever hold anything that I really wanted to work on. My manager asked me which areas of their work interested me, and I told him I wanted to do something that involved writing and would utilize my science background. When he told me that nothing they did was really scientific, my pessimism was fueled, and I gave up on finding what I wanted. Instead I accepted some projects that were interesting but not really exciting to me.

It wasn't until Dr. Lieberman visited that I realized I could be doing so much more. She suggested that I look into the public relations department and talk to the people who did the writing I wanted to do. The idea had never occurred to me but was suddenly embarrassingly obvious. For four weeks, I had passed the racks of Leading

"As I wrote the story and researched an informational feature on asthma to go with it, I felt a twinkle of triumph. That was what I wanted to do, what I love to do."

Medicine and other hospital publications in the waiting room without realizing that someone had to write them. I failed to ask, “Why couldn’t I?” The international division even had its own versions of publications for an international audience, something I was keenly interested in. But instead of brainstorming with my mentors about departments that did the work I wanted to do, I had locked myself into settling for whatever work I could get. I had retreated to the safety of my self-imposed limitations and pessimistic, stick-in-the-mud attitude.

With Dr. Lieberman prodding me, I saw beyond those limits and mustered the courage to just ask. After that, everything was easy. I talked with my manager and my mentor again and got connected with the PR and marketing department. I ended up working on the Bulletin sent out to international patients, which was much more like what I had wanted to do in the first place.

Most of the project involved turning The Methodist Hospital press releases about treatments and hospital news into real stories that would interest international patients. One release on asthma research was loaded with biology terms and statistical figures. I wasn’t sure that an average American reader would understand what those meant, never mind translating them into another language. As I wrote the story and researched an informational feature on asthma to go with it, I felt a twinkle of triumph. That was what I wanted to do, what I love to do. I want to take all the jargon and intimidating data that scientists put out and make it understandable to anyone. And maybe when people understand, they’ll appreciate science just a little bit more.

My biggest challenge this summer wasn’t something I could see or touch. It was my own lack of confidence and reluctance to ask for what I wanted. That’s what I needed to break through to have an awesome mentorship. That’s where I really could have used the magic wand. But when you’re short on magic, determination works.

Hugham Chan
Alzheimer's Association
Griff Godwin, Chief Financial Officer

Don't Forget About Compassion



For the typical college student, the summer months are usually reserved for lucrative internships or jobs that lack any substance other than money. Fortunately, that was not the case for me. Choosing to work with the nonprofit Alzheimer's Association afforded me one of the most meaningful experiences of my life. As a student, I had spent an entire semester of UNIV 309: Creating and Managing Change investigating what leadership entails. However, I managed to underestimate the lesson of compassion until my Leadership Rice mentorship this summer.

When I reflect on my summer, one particular experience comes to mind. Toward the end of my mentorship, I had an opportunity to participate in a males-only caregiver support group. More than 50 support groups in Harris and outlying counties provide a forum for learning, socializing, and supporting one another on Alzheimer's-related issues. Although the turnout was small that night, the impact on me was huge.

I had planned to leave early from the group meeting and return to my "real" work-related responsibilities. My projects mostly involved educating others. The common thread was to inform and enlighten people who wanted to know more about Alzheimer's disease. I provided them with information about caregiving options, the warning signs of the disease, and how to interact and cope with an Alzheimer's patient.

But as the afternoon progressed, I discovered that these men had something important to teach me. As they opened up, I became captivated by their stories. Having never had an actual encounter with an Alzheimer's patient, I got my first dose of real-life experience through these men's anecdotes. For the first time, I was really able to experience the pain and grief of these caregivers, as well as their courage and devotion. Listening to them share the hardships of around-the-clock caregiving for a person with Alzheimer's was something special. I ended up staying for the entire meeting and getting a true education in compassion.

In UNIV 309, I had been instructed more than once not to shy away from showing others the compassion of the human heart. These men certainly did not. Through simple stories, they taught me incredible lessons about selflessness and kindness. I was struck by how gracefully and quietly they sacrifice their time to ensure that their sick wives live peacefully and without worries. In a time when couples seem to give up on each other so easily, I was amazed by how steadfastly these men stand by their partners and face adversity for years on end.

“For the better part of the summer, I thought my mentorship would be merely theoretical. Participating in the support group radically changed that. Suddenly the theoretical become practical.”

For the better part of the summer, I thought my mentorship would be merely theoretical. Participating in the support group radically changed that. Suddenly the theoretical became practical. For one afternoon, I was able to catch a glimpse of the target audience for my projects. I realized that my most meaningful contribution this summer wouldn't be learning how to revise an entire Alzheimer's disease curriculum for presentations to large companies or how to develop a useful database of resources for caregivers. Instead it was the opportunity for a group of remarkable men to show me how to be a better person. Their words and stories will forever echo in my head. They taught me that while I may face hardship, I always have the choice to live with compassion.

Jacob Lopez
Mayan Resorts, Mexico
Juan Martell, Director of Human Resources

Living and Learning in Paradise



During the summer of 2004, I participated in the Mayan Resorts Internship Program in Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico. A year later, I was back in Mexico working at Mayan Resorts as on-site coordinator of its resort in Acapulco. This time I had the support and knowledge of the Leadership Rice staff, and I spent a life-changing two-and-a-half months living and learning in paradise.

As I walked through the giant arched entrance covered with authentic-looking Mayan ruins, tribal chants and drumbeats echoed through the lobby. My mentor, human resources director Juan Martell, greeted me, and at that moment, the job began. I was assigned the task of supervising nine interns for the resort. It felt overwhelming to realize that I was no longer an intern-in-training; I was the boss. This was the first time I had ever been in charge of anyone, and I wanted to make a good first impression. All the interns were my age or older, and most spoke better Spanish than I did, so I was faced with a daunting task. How could I earn both their respect and their friendship?

It was a tough question, and I quickly got off to the wrong start. Before the first organizational meeting, the interns asked me, “What should we wear? Do we need to bring anything?” I responded offhandedly, “Wear whatever you feel like, and bring anything you think you need. I trust you guys.” It was my attempt to appear casual and cool. Unfortunately, it backfired. When Mr. Martell and I showed up for the meeting, only half the interns were there; the other half arrived 10 minutes late. Many of them were dressed for the beach, not work. Mr. Martell took one look at the unprofessional crew, and shock spread across his face. From that moment on, I knew I was going to have to take charge if we wanted to have a successful summer.

After Mr. Martell left the dinner meeting, I held a private meeting of my own. I reintroduced myself to the group and talked about who I was. I admitted that I was about to turn 20 and was a college student, just like most of them. I shared my Mayan Resort internship experience from the previous summer and told them why I was back. Then I announced that I was the coordinator of this year’s internship program. After some initial laughs and gasps of shock, I got down to business. “I understand that you haven’t started working yet, but from now on, I want each of you to arrive 15 minutes early to all meetings and to look presentable.” I looked around for any sign of resistance, but all the interns nodded respectfully.

This conversation laid the groundwork for the days that followed. I hurried around the resort to spend time with each of the nine interns as they met their

“I was assigned the task of supervising nine interns for the resort. It felt overwhelming to realize that I was no longer an intern-in-training; I was the boss... How could I earn both their respect and their friendship?”

department managers, started their projects, and got in the groove of working in a Mexican business. During the daytime hours, I worked hard to build professional relationships. While supervising, I checked on the progress the interns were making, watched how they worked and interacted in their office or department, and talked to their managers to make sure they were in line with the vision of the internship program. As time went on, I solidified my position as boss. At the same time, I was pleased to see that during the evening hours, personal friendships with the interns began to grow. Rather than threatening or lessening my authority during the day, these personal relationships seemed to strengthen our ties and communication.

At the end of the summer, I knew that I had made great strides. Those 10 weeks taught me a lot about myself. I learned that I can be a friend as well as a leader, but not always both at the same time. My mentor's final remarks to all the resort managers and to my boss made it clear that he had noticed my progress as well: "The Jacob Lopez sitting in front of you today is a completely different person than the Jacob Lopez I met on the first day. He stepped up and took charge of this program. He led the interns with confidence, authority, maturity, and enthusiasm. He made these past 10 weeks phenomenal." Those words alone made the summer feel unforgettable.

Katy Wiesman
Dance Theater Workshop
Cary Baker, Director of Artist Services

In THIS New York Minute



New York runs at lightning speed, and so does everyone in it. Where are you going? What are you doing? What do you mean he got the promotion? When is the budget meeting? Who do you think you are? How many people are on the guest list? What do you mean we are not on the guest list? Она сделала? Amongst all the hustle and bustle and the questions on the street, I had many of my own, especially: What would be in my New York minute?

From the start, I was go, go, go. “I’m only in New York for two months, and I have so much to see and do,” I would remind myself when I was too exhausted to sightsee or go out. Within three days, I jumped into the social scene—cocktails with associates from Time Out New York and a U.S. premiere by the Australian company performing at my theater. Within a week, I had a posse of girls who lived in the same building. We went to the Village, downtown, uptown, the Hamptons. “First the Guggenheim, then lunch with a lawyer friend, but call me later.” Trying to stop me from enjoying every minute in New York was as futile as trying to stop the subway when you’re running late.

My mentorship experience, to my surprise, mimicked everything but the fast-paced New York I had experienced. Data entry and archiving were not what I had expected from the forerunners of contemporary dance. After I expressed these concerns to Dr. Lieberman, she suggested that I *do* something about them. Enter: the action-oriented leader. I proposed a *quid pro quo* to my mentor, exchanging data entry for sitting in on meetings with artists, trading archiving for studio visits. I even took it upon myself to meet with the executive director to ask her questions about her leadership experiences. My energy level shot to a new voltage, and the New York minutes flew by even faster.

Within this action-oriented sphere, I recognized that after all the talk and all the questions are answered, the leader’s job is to catalyze the *do*, and more importantly the daily *do*. It is what you do today, what you do now, what you do in the present that matters. All those day-after-day *do*’s culminate in great achievements. It is not what you *think* you might do in the future. Being in New York gave me this sense of urgency, the sense that I am only in New York for two months and have to do a little sightseeing and a little Broadway show going every day to get it all done. In the spirit of the daily *do*, I began to look for ways to incorporate or observe more of the leadership components I had learned in the UNIV 309 class. Doing this regularly made my experience at Dance Theater Workshop more substantial and fun.

“As I assume the role of director of my actions and myself, I know that no one else—not my professors, not my parents—will make “it” happen for me. “It” is my dreams, my contributions, my experiences.”

Although the act of *doing* may seem an intuitive quality for a leader, even dance has never taken action to stand on its own two feet, as one artist explained. During a meeting with Tere O’Conner, I was afforded the opportunity to understand how the dance world was taking some action of its own. Mr. O’Conner believes that dance has always been secondary to music and that dancers, as artists, have always been secondary to choreographers. He dreams of moving dance out of the shadows of music and tradition and presenting it as an art form that stands on its own two feet. He also allows his dancers to be more involved in their work. This insight into how dance is leaping forward revived my belief in Dance Theater Workshop. I realized that its daily *do* is to foster the future of dance now.

As I assume the role of director of my actions and myself, I know that no one else—not my professors, not my parents—will make “it” happen for me. “It” is my dreams, my contributions, my experiences. No one is going to tell me what to do, how to do it, and where to perform it. It is not a take-charge attitude but a take-action attitude, like Tere O’Conner’s approach to changing the world’s perception of dance, that must persist on a day-to-day level.

Some leaders emerge during crises, like soldiers or heroic firefighters. The experience of being on the forefront of modern dance in New York was the kick-start that I needed to give me the urgency to become a leader. With daily action, I look forward to incorporating my leadership skills into my life on campus in the same manner as I did with my mentorship, and I firmly believe that these skills are not transitory but lifelong.

Jo L. Kent
Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP, China
Henry Ding, Partner and Chief Representative

China Revisited



In 1978, China and Deng Xiaoping set out to open up and reform the country's economy. Since then, and especially in recent years, its rapid development has attracted worldwide attention. And it has captured mine. Four years ago, I began to read about this ambitious endeavor in countless history texts and tracked Deng's famous four reforms. I voraciously read articles on the "rising China" in the New York Times and Foreign Affairs. This major phenomenon was impressive to me. Last fall, I ventured to China to experience the country myself. While I certainly absorbed meaningful skills and culture during that semester, my return to China this summer with Leadership Rice was something more. I witnessed—and participated in—an ongoing march toward the future.

The original goals for my summer in Beijing were fairly simple. As an intern at Sidley Austin Brown & Wood, I would explore law and gauge my interest in a possible career. I also aimed to brush up on my Chinese language skills and expand my vocabulary in a setting where I would be challenged culturally and intellectually. What I did not realize at the time was that far more awaited me in Beijing. With the support of my mentor, I was able to organize my deep but scattered interests in a developing China and apply concepts of localized leadership in an international setting. Most importantly, I learned that no matter how local or global the community, leadership can take the world to places it has never been.

In just a few short weeks, with the guidance of my mentor, I got an in-depth behind-the-scenes look at the financial globalization of China. I learned how the 2002 Enron collapse in Houston affected the legal community in Beijing in 2005. I witnessed how international investments can be ideas on paper one week and successful realities the next. Before I could say "international business," I realized that cases and transactions at Sidley Austin Brown & Wood regularly create change that influences markets and millions of investors around the world.

After a few more weeks, it occurred to me that the professionals with whom I was working were among the vital forces behind China's economic rise. Their expert leadership was visible daily. They constantly worked through ambiguity. They relentlessly solved breakdowns through clear communication. They ascended "to the balcony" to understand confusing situations from new perspectives. Best of all, they seemed passionate about their work and enjoyed one another's company. Suddenly I realized that globalization is not just a giant machine; it is made up of leaders working together every step along the way.

"I learned that no matter how local or global the community, leadership can take the world to places it has never been."

China has come a long way since 1978. It has significantly improved the general well-being of its people and has defied expectations in growth and development. However, it still faces formidable challenges economically and socially. With thoughtful leadership of the kind I observed at Sidley Austin Brown & Wood this summer, its positive growth will continue. And as I continue to study and follow modern Chinese development, I will do my best to remember that no matter the size of the community, small steps in leadership lead to large leaps in progress.

Megan Wilmot
Healthy DC Foundation
Ann Hayward, Executive Director

Welcome to the Ghetto



It was my first day with Healthy DC Foundation, and I was going on a field trip! Well, not exactly. I was on my way to a nearby public housing community. “Welcome to the ghetto!” my co-worker exclaimed as I stepped out of the car. What he was calling “the ghetto” is one of the poorest communities in the United States. The mission of Healthy DC Foundation is to provide health care to needy residents in the District of Columbia. As an intern, I was to do everything in my power to support this mission. During my time there, I learned a number of significant lessons, but the most important one involved adaptability. Working in “the ghetto” provided me with a valuable opportunity to witness the importance of flexibility in a variety of contexts.

I saw how one nonprofit organization, Healthy DC Foundation, has to constantly change in order to stay afloat. Faced with decreased funding, the foundation recently had to adopt for-profit business concepts to help its nonprofit stay alive. Instead of relying totally on grants and individual donations, Healthy DC found creative ways to open up revenue streams. One of its most successful ideas was a consignment shop. This business arrangement allowed the foundation to stay true to its mission of serving D.C.'s neediest while also providing a much-needed revenue source. This is a prime example of an organization that is willing to make adjustments in order to continue serving its constituents.

Internally, the organization also had to adapt. I watched how the staff efficiently responded to constantly changing priorities and needs, and I learned some important lessons about adaptability. At one point, the administration announced that an action plan that was supposed to be a two-year endeavor would have to be implemented as a two-month plan. This required creativity in the execution of an AIDS-prevention project to reach a large audience in a short time. We needed to reach out to African-American women in at-risk housing communities through events and condom distribution. We decided to address a large audience through media such as audio recordings, posters, and various message-laden incentives. This endeavor required an extreme amount of flexibility of everyone involved.

Perhaps the most powerful example of adaptability came from “the ghetto” itself. I experienced the supportive environment that exists among members of the community. An outreach worker told me about her family members who had died of AIDS and about the strength she gathers from helping and talking to other community members affected by HIV/AIDS. A majority of residents in this community live below the poverty line. The area suffers from high rates of violent crime, prostitution,

“I saw my own capacity for flexibility stretched to new limits. I learned that I am capable of adapting to new environments and unfamiliar situations.”

substance abuse, and HIV/AIDS. In light of staggering statistics, the people welcome Healthy DC's prevention programs and are open to change in their community. They are willing to adapt to new information and prevention methods, including HIV prevention and alternatives to drugs.

Finally, I saw my own capacity for flexibility stretched to new limits. I learned that I am capable of adapting to new environments and unfamiliar situations. I successfully adapted to the organization's protocol and staff. I befriended residents in the public housing community who were helping make a positive difference. I networked with government officials at meetings and got their support for a grant I was writing. I grew intimately familiar with the capital, its low socioeconomic class, its social problems, and the groups of people creating social change.

After my experience this summer, I realize what an important leadership capacity adaptability can be. Aspects of the organization were changing every day, and this required flexibility from everyone involved. My first "field trip to the ghetto" was just the beginning of new experiences I would encounter during the summer, and I would not have survived it without this vital leadership skill.

Kimberly Swanson
DATA (debt, AIDS, trade, Africa)
Christopher Lagan, Press Secretary

Indispensable



The evening of the final Live 8 concert, “Edinburgh: The Final Push,” has arrived. I find myself in the midst of 50,000 Scots flooding into Murrayfield Stadium, site of the final installment in a series of concerts designed to raise awareness about poverty in Africa and give citizens around the globe a voice to help make poverty history. Clutching my plastic press pass tightly, I am out of breath, running to meet the CNN camera crew that has accompanied DATA (debt, AIDS, trade, Africa) and ONE, the campaign to make poverty history, to Scotland to cover the G8 summit. I am faced with the nearly impossible task of getting CNN extra credentials to get into the concert to film the crowd and then backstage to interview some musicians. Standing under a sky threatening to open up into a downpour, with only one battery bar remaining on my mobile phone, I’m trying to coordinate with my colleagues to ensure that CNN staffers have access to all the desired areas so they can get all the shots they need for the one-hour special they’re filming on Live 8, ONE, and the G8. I’m giving my best smile to a Scottish security guard, trying to convince him that CNN can enter the concert without the necessary credentials because it’s one of the largest news networks in the world, and I begin to wonder how I ever got into this situation.

Some may say the answer is simple: I accepted an internship working with the press secretary for DATA (debt, AIDS, trade, Africa), a lobbying and grassroots organization dedicated to raising awareness about and sparking responses to African crises. Looking back, however, I realize that the answer is not as simple as accepting an internship. Instead of merely showing up for work, I arrived excited to learn and hungry for challenging and demanding work. I stayed two hours late on my first day to edit a campaigner’s guide for ONE members. Every time I was given a task, I rushed to complete it. I did my best work from the start. And my mentor rewarded my successful work with more responsibility. And more responsibility, I realized, is the key to a successful internship and an interesting career.

After my first two weeks, I set a personal goal of working at Live 8 in Philadelphia and at the G8 summit in Scotland. I knew that my increasing levels of responsibility made me the point person for many projects. When it came to preparing Bono for his appearance on *Meet the Press*, I was the most informed member of the DATA team, because I had conducted all of the background research for the event. If

“Instead of merely showing up for work, I arrived excited to learn and hungry for challenging and demanding work. I did my best work from the start. And my mentor rewarded my successful work with more responsibility. And more responsibility, I realized, is the key to a successful internship and an interesting career.”

my mentor needed information about the media briefing books at Live 8 and the G8, he had to ask me. Why? Because I was in charge of the briefing-book operation. By working hard, accomplishing difficult tasks, and accepting increasing levels of responsibility, I made myself indispensable. This, in turn, landed me on a train to Philly and eventually on a plane to Scotland. I was taken on an all-expenses-paid business trip to another continent because my mentor and my organization needed me to accomplish important tasks that only I could accomplish.

Standing under threatening clouds in a crowded stadium, faced with finding press credentials for CNN, a dead cell-phone battery, and no way to contact my colleagues for help, I knew that CNN would get the camera shots it needed and interview its selected musicians. The skills that helped me demonstrate to my mentor that I was worth taking to Philly and to Scotland are the same skills that allow me to successfully navigate any challenging situation. And answering challenge with success, I learned, ensures that exciting activities such as trips to the G8 summit will continue to be a part of my career.

MENTORSHIPS 2005



Houston	Alzheimer's Association AMIGOS de las Americas Baker Oil Tools Baylor Teen Health Clinics BRIDGES to Sustainability Center for Houston's Future Comfort Systems Compass Bank Cooper Cameron Valves Harris County District Attorney's Office Houston Endowment Inc. Houston Symphony St. Luke's Episcopal Health Charities Texas Children's Hospital The Methodist Hospital Third Ward Redevelopment Council and Greater Southeast Management District Unity Church of Christianity
New York City	ABC News 20/20 BMC Software Dance Theater Workshop Weill Cornell Medical College, Cornell University
Washington, DC	Ashoka: Innovators for the Public Center for the Study of the Presidency DATA (debt, AIDS, trade, Africa) FINCA International Healthy DC Foundation National Alliance to End Homelessness National Building Museum U.S. Senate Committee on Rules and Administration
Other USA	Pacific Partners Management Services, Inc., San Francisco, CA Procter & Gamble Co., Charlotte, NC Wachovia Investment Services, Charlotte, NC
International	Center for the Study of Languages, Corsica* FINCA International, Kosovo Mayan Resorts, Mexico Red Cross International, Spain* Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP, China

* These mentorships were made possible by a partnership with Rice's Center for the Study of Languages.

To secure your Leadership Rice student for next summer we invite you to fill out the Mentor application online at www.rice.edu/leadership under the *Mentorships* link.