

WHEN LOOKING FOR A SUMMER JOB, I FOUND A CAREER

The title of this month's newsletter serves as the backdrop and foundation for several of my fellow colleague's careers here at Sigma - including my own. What may appear coincidental is truly just a by-product of nurture, collaboration, and thoughtfulness.

For many, a summer internship is just an opportunity to gain exposure to your field of pursuit. I recall staring upward from the parking lot of the American Center in Southfield, Michigan not knowing what awaited me on the 11th floor. Candidly, I was nervous, but with the counsel of my support system, I knew I had to maintain confidence. I approached the Sigma doors, bright-eyed and full of wonderment (except for the incidental elevator confusion, which some of you might recall). Upon entry, I was greeted by no other than our Vice President, Chris Kress; an introduction that has transpired into a fruitful mentorship and on-going friendship.

By the end of that first summer, I felt that I must have done something right. In hindsight, the more likely scenario is that I was not yet polished enough to be released to the masses touting Sigma Investment Counselors on a resumé. Regardless, Mr. Bilkie had called me into his office to offer me a returning position for the following summer, for which I gratefully accepted. I knew that I had learned more than I could have ever imagined. I

headed back to school humbled and equipped with more motivation and determination than previous years.

The Financial Planning degree program at my alma mater, Central Michigan University, had embedded the CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ course work within the curriculum. The combination of a rigorous class schedule and an opportunity for real world exposure through the Sigma internship had provided me a strong upper hand amongst fellow classmates. Annually, all students with like majors competed before a panel of judges primed with industry experience. The goal was to develop and present a comprehensive financial plan for a mock household. That spring, my capstone team went on to win first place in our financial planning case-study competition.

The expectations set by Sigma's collaborative vision statement address that our client's best interests remain at the forefront of everything we do. Internally, it takes a well thought out approach to shaping a culture in which employees are happy with where they are and have the proper incentives in place to continue developing their skills so that they can better serve our clients.

Upon reaching my second full year with the firm, I was granted the opportunity to move down to our Orlando

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interactive creative local independent personal
knowledgeable thoughtful ethical experienced

office in July to participate in the tremendous growth that we have experienced over the last several years. Sigma, a well-oiled machine, is an ideal landing spot for someone with an entrepreneurial spirit and the determination to chase the best version of themselves. I do not consider this transition a leap of faith, rather, an opportunity to blaze my own trail and leave my mark with a company that has provided so much to me.

Daniel J. Robinson

Please remember to contact Sigma Investment Counselors if there are any changes in your financial situation or investment objectives