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Research Assistantship Report

This summer I had the opportunity to receive a research assistantship with Professor Serkan Karadas in the Economics Department at The University of the South. However; along with a passion for economics, he also has a great passion for the world of politics. Thus, he had decided to embark upon a research project that would blend the two fields of study. Professor Karadas has sought to unmask the role of campaign contributions on firm performance. He seeks to reveal whether or not companies that give campaign contributions perform better than those that do not give campaign contributions. It was with great honor that I was given the opportunity to help Professor Karadas determine the role of campaign contributions on firm performance. Throughout the research assistantship, I was given a couple of different tasks to perform throughout the eight-week period. I began the first week of my research assistantship undergoing a literature review over the role that politics plays in the success or failure of a business. I read over forty articles about the connections between politics and business. I also forwarded these articles and papers to Professor Karadas in the hopes that they might be insightful and helpful for him in his project. My conclusion from the literature review was that the two fields of business and politics are very much related and interconnected. After the literature review, I spent the next seven weeks using Microsoft Excel to organize and clean data. Professor Karadas provided me with the data, and then it was up to me to sort through it and find

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consistencies and patterns about the role of campaign contributions on firm performance. I hope that my help with the research project contributes to great insight into the worlds of politics and business.

This research assistantship greatly improved my literature review skills. I learned the importance of conducting a thorough review of previous and related projects. By reading over forty articles related to the role of campaign contributions on firm performance, I was better able to also understand the research project I was assisting with myself. However, after conducting my literature review, I was more than ready to begin working on my own project. I spent the rest of the time helping Professor Karadas organize data in Microsoft Excel. It seems as though every time I use Excel, my skills are greatly increased and enhanced. Excel is a vital tool in the world of business, so it was really great that I was able to enhance those skills. I believe that I made a huge difference in the research project. By organizing the data, which was very tedious and timely, I allowed Professor Karadas to have more time to analyze and make conclusions regarding the final results of the project itself. There is never enough time in the day to do everything, so I feel as though I really helped Professor Karadas to focus on the bigger picture, rather than get bogged down by all the data and numbers.

The research assistantship this summer truly opened my eyes to the importance of teamwork. When multiple people are able to put their heads together, the results can be astronomical. I really enjoyed being a part of the research project this summer, but most

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importantly I was ecstatic to be able to be a part of Professor Karadas' research team. By having multiple people by his side to help with the project, I feel as though our research went even better than expected. It seemed as though we accomplished a lot of things in just eight weeks. I do not think this would have been possible without the help of so many people. Thus, I learned the importance of a team effort. Not only is working as a team more fun, but it can also be more productive and effective in the long run.

By being a part of this research assistantship this summer, my passion for the world of business only grew stronger. The research project also greatly reinforced my dreams to work in this field of study. I have been confident about my decision to go into business for a long time now. However, being able to apply what I have learned in classrooms was so much more enriching than I ever thought it could be. I thought being exposed to the same project for eight weeks might become somewhat tiring and dull, but the research assistantship had quite the opposite effect. Instead, I grew more curious and excited as the project progressed. Something that was a mere thought and idea a few months ago had become a reality. I am just so honored that I had the opportunity to be a part of this project. I feel as though I learned a lot and had a lot of fun at the same time. Therefore, I am looking forward to participating in many more projects in the future. Thus, I am all the more confident in my decision to become an Economics major and Business minor. This research assistantship has helped reinforce my decision to further my education in the field of business and to seek my Masters in Business Administration. After

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graduating from a great university with a Masters in Business Administration, my career goal will be to become a part of a great business and to help make it even better. A business or corporation needs many people to run smoothly. I hope to be a part of one someday and to contribute to the world of business in some way, shape, or form. Once again, I am so honored to have been given this opportunity to have a glimpse into the world of business. I also feel as though I had a glimpse into my future. For this I am so grateful.