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Summer Internship Funding Final Report
Sewanee: The University of the South
Career & Leadership Development

During this past summer I was given the opportunity to intern with Blue Canyon Partners, a management-consulting firm in the greater Chicago area. Blue Canyon specializes in helping their Fortune 1000 business-to-business clients achieve their growth targets and building tailored growth strategies using a unique Blue Canyon project methodology. This company is a small to medium sized consulting firm, which allowed me to work closely with several senior level consultants in addition to numerous associates. Aside from learning how to complete work in this field, I was also given guidance on how to network, find jobs, and secure a career within this type of company.

Throughout my summer at Blue Canyon I worked on a handful of different projects varying in both level of difficulty as well as scope. The first project I worked on was for a senior level consultant who is the director of Blue Canyon's China office. He asked the other intern and I to research two countries that he deemed as potential emerging markets. The countries that I focused my research on were Argentina and Colombia. I did in-depth research about these countries' economies, political structures, and gave an overall rating of their foreign investment accessibility. The reason for this research was to help our supervisor create a white paper about emerging markets and how he could apply the lessons he learned in developing his business in China to these up and coming markets.

The second project I worked on involved doing some preliminary research for a Blue Canyon client. This client has a product that measures utility usage in large buildings and was looking to grow into a new market. This client's specialty, however, is

reliability, and it was decided that their product would be best suited for mission critical facilities, such as police stations, radio/telecom stations, and the like. My task was to do a rough estimate on the number of mission critical facilities that are currently in the United States, which would give the client a better feel for this new market's size and opportunity.

The most rewarding part of my internship was the third project I was given, which was by far the largest in scope and gave me the opportunity to see a Blue Canyon project from start to finish. All in all, I spent six weeks working on this project. The client for this project was a large scale, international electrical supply distributor, however we only focused in on their North American branch. The goal of this project was to help the client determine where they should consolidate distributors versus attain new distributor locations in the US based on sales performance and the location of individual electrical contractors. We worked with several large data sets and were able to translate those into a concise and visually appealing deliverable to share with the client during an off-site meeting in early August. My team and I mapped out a total of around 180 sales territories within the US, each of which was analyzed based on several factors. First, we were looking at the number of client distributors in a given territory in comparison to their largest competitor in order to give them a clear idea of their market share. Secondly, we looked at each of the individual distributors in a given territory and determined the number of electrical contractors that were within a reasonable driving

distance from the distributor. This gave the client an idea of whether or not that location was one they wanted to continue using or not. The final portion of this project was to give our client an idea of the performance for each of their current distributors. We did this by analyzing the number of served versus not served contractors within the drive time distance, which was similar to a performance review. Our client was given four distinct maps for each of the 180 territories. The end result of this project was a daunting 900 slide PowerPoint presentation, which was given to the client to use as they went forth and discussed strategies with their distributors.

The above-mentioned project gave me a clear sense of what it would be like to work within a business-to-business consulting firm. I was able to attend the kick-off meeting at the beginning of this project, each check-in meeting throughout, and additionally, the final client meeting. Although most of my work during this internship was project-based, I had the opportunity to attend eight training session meetings with the other interns and newly hired associates. These meetings were about the methodology that Blue Canyon uses when working through projects, tips on Microsoft Office products, as well as goal setting and interviewing. Not only did Blue Canyon help me develop project skills, group work skills, and overall consulting skills, but they also gave me insight as to what it would be like to work and live in a large city such as Chicago. All of the employees were welcoming and wanted to see me have a great learning experience during my internship. My advice to future interns would be that taking a chance and delving into a foreign city is worth it. I have to admit that I was slightly nervous to live in a large city, but Blue Canyon helped me every step of the way.

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After completing this summer internship with Blue Canyon Partners, I am certain that I want to pursue a career in management consulting. Additionally, Blue Canyon gave me the opportunity to begin their formal recruiting process for the fall of 2015. I completed a behavioral interview and a case interview at the end of my internship, and will be following up with that process within the next few months. I have had previous experience interning in this field and both of my internships to date have been positive experiences from which I will be able to draw knowledge and sentiment as I move forward into this field after graduation in this coming spring.