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January-June 2023

Co-op Reflection

Beginning in January 2023, I began my role as a Paralegal Intern at Warburg Pincus LLC. This role was accurate to the NUworks description, revolving around the legal processes and documents that are embedded into M&A and Private Equity law. I was paid an hourly salary of \$25 an hour and was eligible for overtime at \$37.50, this was a large step up from my previous role in New York City, allowing me a bit more financial security in one of the most expensive cities in the world. Asking a college student to work for free while paying thousands of dollars in rent each month would not have worked in my case and I believe it often deters other students in similar financial situations to not be able to partake in unpaid or international work. I was extremely grateful for the financial situation this co-op provided and it encouraged me to work overtime for the team.

The majority of my time was spent monitoring the Paralegal Request Inbox, sorting out assignments amongst the four paralegals while taking requests that were in my wheelhouse. These types of assignments included issuing anti-money laundering informational letters to prospective clients, confirming NDA processes, and administrative housekeeping. The team was pretty hierarchical in terms of workload based on experience, with the majority of the “busy work” being given to the interns. I didn’t necessarily feel integral due to the nature of the work but I was given autonomy in terms of being able to ask for more. When I expressed interest in Corporate Litigation, I was connected with our litigation attorney and assigned multiple cases in which I could learn and observe, which I was very grateful for. Overall, I wish the work could be focused more in these areas like a Legal Intern rather than a Paralegal Intern, but I understand that the role was advertised as such.

Proceeding my time on the team, I prepared an updated resume as well as a list of talking points in which I believed I could be asked. These talking points focused on my desires to learn about private equity due to my exposure in my previous role at Goodwin Procter, what I hoped to gain from the experience, and what I could bring to the table as an intern. A large lesson I learned from this round of applying was to be over prepared. Employers and interviewers tend to prefer candidates who show a genuine interest with backup research in a role. As an example, when preparing for my interview at Warburg, I found both personal and professional attributes of the company that I found interesting and showed that I had put time and energy into the possibility of working there. Even if I didn’t care at all about a role, it was important to put my best foot forward. My largest priority going into this co-op was simply to garner legal experience in finance and private equity. I wanted to expand my professional network, work on projects I cared about, and learn from a set of lawyers.

In terms of work product, the most difficult and challenging activity I engaged in was a visualizations project for our corporate Mergers and Acquisitions attorney. I was tasked with taking an outdated survey of different benefits for portfolio company boards and officers and creating a visualizations deck for prospective clients. I worked with one paralegal, the M&A attorney, and a group of law firms to transform data using Excel and PowerBI (a tool I was unfamiliar with). This project was challenging due to the amount of data that needed visualization and our attempts to make the deck visually appealing. This project had started years prior to my time on the team and is still continuing following my work. But, I feel like the amount of progress we were able to achieve was insurmountable and my finished product and contributions were valued highly and I was able to learn a lot from the project. The most meaningful work I was tasked with was certainly my work with our corporate litigation attorney in which I was able to contribute to multiple ongoing litigations and see through different lenses what our attorneys were doing on a daily basis. From portfolio companies to banking institutions to the government, litigation came from all ends of the company and involved dozens of players for every single case. This opened my eyes to an area of law that I had previously expressed interest in. I felt extremely supported and was given enough to learn but not feel overwhelmed.

During a teach-in by three of our attorneys, I was able to learn about how globalization and politics affected our work. In private equity, we were handling the interests of investors from around the globe. This meant different laws and regulations for our legal work but also the addition of different moral and ethical standards from our investors. This was one of the most interesting aspects of the work as I learned how our contracts and company compensated for these competing interests, i.e., an investor from a particular country refused to have their money spent in American farming due to their religious and cultural beliefs surrounding the slaughter of cows. These global forces and global investments opened my eyes to international laws and compliance in private equity.

Unfortunately, my time on the team was not free of ethical and social dilemmas. One particular instance involved an executive assistant who was making extremely inappropriate comments in the workplace about racial minorities. These comments were never made out of malice but were reflections of her views and a reflection of the company culture. This individual made a lot of people uncomfortable but held a lot of social power in the office and thus presented the unique dilemma. In the end, I sat down with a member of Warburg's Human Capital team and expressed my concerns and the impact they had on me and others. I was able to have my voice heard and was given explicit ways in which the issues would be handled. I am obviously not present to see the outcomes of my conversation but am proud that I made myself heard and that hopefully a more positive experience will be had by future co-ops at the firm.

I am very grateful for my time at Warburg Pincus and intend to take what I learned there to aid in my plight to head to law school following graduation from Northeastern. I have my sights set on an Ivy League law school and will be applying to two specialized programs next year for juniors in college wanting time off in between but know law school is on their path. I am

very excited and hope to be a practicing lawyer in the future, equipped with knowledge from this co-op.