

FIRE Takes on the Nation's Capital

Monday, March 28, 2016

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Over my first spring break as a student at the University of New Hampshire I was lucky enough to be selected to travel to Washington, D.C. with the [FIRE Program](#) of the Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics. This was one of the most exciting, educational, and fulfilling experiences I have had in my time here at UNH. From meeting with a diverse set of alumni, to touring facilities like PwC, to bonding with a great group of fellow freshmen, this trip was enriching in every sense of the word.

We flew into D.C. on the first Sunday of spring break, and left for home late that following Wednesday; and in those few days we managed to meet a plethora of alumni, learn about what they do, and channel into the real world for a little while. I have to say that meeting with the alumni was most definitely the highlight of the trip for me. Each one had their own approach to their career, and all of them gave us great insight to what we would be stepping into three years from now. The opportunity to peek into some of their worlds for even a few hours was beyond generous; for example, being at the Ritz-Carlton headquarters and witnessing their daily morning reviews with the entire work team, and dining at The Walrus Oyster & Ale House, a newly opened restaurant at National Harbor, hosted by an alum who is a partial owner and runs a restaurant management group.



In addition to more established alums, we were also able to meet and connect with recent graduates over dinner on our first night in the city – a real treat! It was great to see what directions they took and what their careers looked like only a few years out of college. It made our futures seem a lot easier to grasp, and in ways, much less intimidating. From speaking with all of these interesting and unique alumni, I have taken away a much more open mindset. Each of them, in their own way, expressed how being open to change and new concepts, or even career paths is key; whether it be choosing to studying abroad when you're not 100% sold on the idea, or changing your entire career path midway through life, or just deciding to start your own business after years of working within a larger company. Change is good, and in today's day and age almost inevitable; our UNH alumni expressed that while outlining the great possibilities that come from new job offerings, different internships, and potential majors.



The last great aspect of the trip to Washington, D.C. that I will highlight was the people that surrounded me. I never would have thought that traveling with eleven other Paul College freshmen and our two advisors would have such an impact on me. With the guidance of our two advisors I believe each of us grew professionally; and from my peers I can say that they each had their own influence on me. Every one of us had something to bring to the table, and being surrounded by such like-minded individuals who were motivated and interested, made this trip a tremendous experience. Coming back to UNH, I now have a group of people whom I didn't know before, who all have a new outlook that we can take into Paul College together.



The FIRE trip to Washington, D.C. showed me that the University of New Hampshire has even more to offer than I had previously thought, and I intend to take full advantage of these resources and opportunities. I believe that this has not only benefited me personally, and my colleagues who attended, but all of Paul College. We were able to spread the word to our alumni about the FIRE Program and now we get to take all of the knowledge and experience we gained, and bring it back to UNH.

—Francesca Molinari '19

About Francesca Molinari '19:



Francesca Molinari is a motivated first-year student at the University of New Hampshire, majoring in business administration, Spanish, and international affairs. She graduated from Queensbury High School, in New York, where she was involved in various clubs including National Honors Society, Spanish Club, and the Madrigal Singers.

At UNH, Francesca is an igniter for the FIRE Program within the Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics, where she contributes to the betterment of the FIRE Program and helps with student involvement. She is also a member of the Campus Activities Board, which organizes free events for students, and she works in the Center for International Education and Global Engagement, as an administrative assistant.

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