Patty Mah

Did you have a clear goal or vision for your career path when you were in school or and starting out in your career, and how has that changed?

Jacqueline

Yep, so to start off from my end when I applied for the AFM program in the University of Waterloo, I actually did it know that the University of Waterloo or Waterloo, Kitchener in general had such a unique, eco system when it came to entrepreneurship and technology.

So unbeknownst to me, that actually became something that change the way I wanted to look at my career.

So, for instance, some of the things that I got involved with as student was Ace Consulting Group. So Annu and I ran it in our third year. I helped to find the student venture Fund back in 2017. I was also the Director of Finance for Hack the North, which is Canada's largest hackathon, so I didn't know going to Waterloo that I'd be involved with all those things, but it really shaped where I wanted to go in the future. So, all my Co-op terms were with Deloitte, but in the first few Co-op terms before I was exposed to that much entrepreneurship. I was working with a lot of random industries. I wouldn't say random but industries that didn't really appeal to me. After being involved in so many different extracurriculars, like Ace, Hack the North, I realized I really wanted to focus my career in accounting with technology and entrepreneurship, predominantly start-up company. So, when I return to full time., I actually leveraged my way by talking to many different people to be a part of this sort of niche group and Deloitte where we focused specifically on start-up companies, within the tax practice. So, I predominantly work with tech companies and even within Deloitte the partner I work with, she got me involved in Deloitte Fast 50, which is a very prestigious programs that many, actually Waterloo start-ups end up winning and they actually use that award to sort of leverage and raise funds for their start-up.

Myself and Annu are also involved with Deloitte Amplify, which is a young professionals group where an executive ring and been there before COVID-19, we planned a lot of events, focus on encouraging and educating people about entrepreneurship, technology and start-ups, and in addition to sending out newsletters and basically getting the word out there and educating people about this space. So certainly, entered University of Waterloo thinking I was going to be a plain vanilla accountant, but once I got out of it, I'm very happy that I found a passion within the industry I'm in and I'm able to apply my accounting profession to it.

Patty Mah

Excellent. Thanks Jacqueline. Annu?

Annu

That's tough to follow, but for me, I actually I grew up in Kitchener Waterloo, so I was already connected to the University of Waterloo from basically high school and I even had a chance to go and visit communitech and velocity back in the day.

So, it was it was very exciting for me coming into University, knowing that ecosystem it already existed, but I had absolutely no idea as well. I mean, when we were when we were in first year, I had absolutely no idea what any accounting field even means, whether it's audit tax, consulting, nothing associated with that I was completely clueless. But through my co-ops I think I made it a goal for myself to try and learn as much as I possibly can and try and grasp at anything I possibly can in those times. So for my first couple of co-ops, I had a chance to work in assurance, and I thought that was interesting because I was able to learn a lot from the people around me.

And, you know, learn about how financial processes work, how large companies operate, which was very interesting. But I always had this idea an interest in entrepreneurship and start-ups.

So, I decided with extracurriculars I was supplementing my Co-op learnings with.

Ace Consulting Group, as well as Jacqueline, the student venture fund.

myself and I thought that was incredibly valuable for myself, so those paths that kind of intersected, and I thought you know consulting is something that is interesting to me and I want to try it. So, for my third Co-op term, I actually went, and I worked at an executive compensation consulting group, a group in Toronto, and I thought this is really cool. I'm being able to go and see how different executives are actually getting compensated. Do a lot of analysis which are valuable, developing some very strong skill sets and I leverage that to actually fulfill one of my other dreams, which was having a co-op in the US for my very last Co-op term. So, for my 4th co-op I actually went and got shipped off to Manchester NH. It was it's a beautiful place. I do highly recommend it, beautiful hikes and stuff you can do there, but really what I was doing is it was a completely nontraditional path role. I was in a legal Department and essentially helping them with putting together stories based on the data that they had. So I was the numbers guy and I was developing stories and that was again lo and behold, very, very strong skill set to have coming into consulting and given the fact that I had an interest in pursuing my CPA and also had this interest in consulting, I was able to find a role that fit completely perfectly for me at Deloitte, which is a finance consulting role, and it's been, it's again been a very kind of twisty journey for me. I've been able to kind of navigate through the different Co-op terms and meeting people that I've had a pleasure being mentored by some very great people as well, from the University of Waterloo. But yeah, I'm here now.

Patty Mah

Excellent, great to hear your pathways and how both of you have been able to customize and been able to discover your passions and then align them with your Co-op work terms, your Co and extracurriculars, and eventually into the roles that you have now and into your new venture.