

NYU Alumni Executive Mentor Program

2020-2021
MENTEE STORY BOOK

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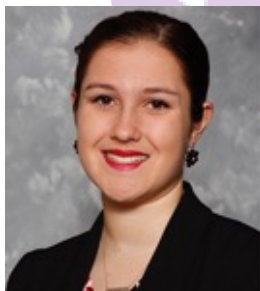
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Mentee:
Stephanie Anderson
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Stephanie Anderson is a sophomore and currently pursuing a double major in Social Science with a concentration in Political Science and Interactive Media Arts as well as a minor in Chinese. She is currently interested in pursuing a career with an NGO and is particularly interested in women's roles in the workplace at STEM companies which is why she was hoping to be placed with Wei.



Mentor:
Wei Gu
(GASA '02)

Wei, CFA, is a director of corporate communications at Apple, and a former journalist with 18-year writing and editing experience. Before returning to her hometown Shanghai in late 2016 to join the US tech giant, Wei has worked for top-tier global media in New York, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

I was so excited to meet Wei Gu after reading her bio. She had lived in so many different countries, and she used to work as a journalist for various global news agencies, which is something that I became interested in after taking a journalism class in my 2020 spring semester.

The first meeting with Wei was particularly important for me because I had been going through a massive dilemma about which major(s) to choose. Course selection was scheduled to take place the week after we first met, and I still was so undecided about which direction to take.

After basically telling her my life story, what my interests were, and where I currently was in my decision, she encouraged me to pursue both degrees (political science and IMA) since I was interested in both. She explained to me that each one was rather different from the other; each, thusly, had their pros and cons, but they complimented each other well.

Having someone so accomplished in her career and life, even though the idea was simple enough, hearing Wei's rationale for it made me much more confident in my decision. After that meeting, I confirmed the two majors that I wanted to pursue, which are still the two I am pursuing today!

Q: How did your mentor make a positive impact on your career development?

Even though I gained many valuable insights from Wei during our first meeting, our second meeting was filled with much more substance as the spring semester had already started. At that time, I had obtained an internship opportunity, was in the process of designing a social impact program, and was conducting research in an independent research project.

Wei was particularly helpful for me regarding the design of my social impact project. I had never designed one before and I had never conducted an independent activity by myself in Shanghai before so she was able to offer a lot of feedback to my project.

An aspect of Wei's mentorship that I really appreciated was her candidness. When I was explaining my project, she acknowledged the parts that she liked and offered suggestions for parts that needed further work. She even listed three different organizations around Shanghai that she thought I could collaborate with for my project.

Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?

As I was explaining all of the projects I had lined up for the spring, Wei warned me, "Beware the Jack-of-All-Trades but the Master-of-None." As someone who likes to stay busy all the time, this quote

really stuck out to me and made me reflect introspectively. While I had heard this principle before that "quality is better over quantity," again, hearing it from Wei made me think about it all the harder.

I took this advice to heart so much that I worked to apply this idea to my workload this summer. I was originally thinking about balancing two part-time internships, a research position, a personal project, and a few on-campus jobs. Because of Wei's advice, however, I have decided to focus on fewer things, and also set aside some quality time for myself this summer. She also reminded me of the importance of planning out "no plan" time in my schedule so that during those times I can truly relax.

I have thoroughly enjoyed learning from and speaking with Wei. I could not have asked for a more insightful nor decorated mentor. To Wei, thank you for everything. Thank you!

Mentee:
Bartosz Bienkowski
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Bartosz Bienkowski is a sophomore majoring in computer systems engineering with a true passion in aerospace engineering. He has several minors to show his qualifications in various fields related to machine engineering and the business. He is currently taking a Web Design Consultant internship.

Mentor:
Jack Huang
(STERN EMBA '12)

Jack Huang is a Managing Partner at M&S Systems Designers Inc. He is a strategic thinker skilled in the design and execution of corporate strategy, operational effectiveness, and generating value from information systems with more than 15 years of experience working in consulting firms and the IT services industry.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

I have always been fascinated by an in-depth study of technology which was the reason for me to pursue Computer Systems Engi-

neering as my major. During my time at NYU, however, I discovered that no engineering project can be successful without effective teamwork under the supervision of a good leader. That made me decide to pursue business as one of my minors. I feel grateful to my mentor Mr. Huang for sharing his thoughts and experience and for all the invaluable inspiration and advice he gave me.

I understood that there is always a way to enter the field one wants to develop in, and the obstacles around us can, with the right mindset, be turned into advantages. My truly passionate industry which I want to tie into my professional career is the aerospace sector. From the discussions with Mr. Huang I realized that no matter what field I want to enter, everything has a business side to it and that by learning to see a bigger picture of the entire industry in addition to the details of aircraft design and operations, I can make an even greater contribution to aviation and spaceflight. When it comes to future careers, everyone will find their own path, and in today's world, all professions are so interconnected that being good at many things is at least as viable as in-depth but sometimes narrow specialization. I also understood that professional development does not have to be about one-time choices and returning to learning is always something worth doing as it allows us to make the most out of our current situation. In our future work, we will inevita-

bly encounter some opportunities just out of our reach because we lack one or two specific qualifications, but nothing can stop us from reaching out for them once we invest in our self-development.

Thanks to Mr.Huang, I am now confident that if I do what I'm passionate about, stay open-minded and try to get the most out of every project I work on, over the years I will be able to build a unique array of skills that will become my own, one-of-a-kind brand on the market.

Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?

I would recommend the Mentor Program to every student who wants to develop a clearer picture on how their choices can influence their future career. Speaking to someone accomplished in their many fields about their professional path gives you invaluable inspiration on how you can shape your own development, and – as in my case – encourages you to think of your professional life not as a detailed plan but as a process of unexpected changes and opportunities that can bring you to places you've never thought of before.

Mentee:
Daiana Chen
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Daiana Chen is a sophomore at NYU Shanghai majoring in Business and Finance with a focus in accounting. She joined the program to gain more insights about the finance industry and to gain advice and suggestions about a future career path in finance from a professional industry expert.



Mentor:
Andy Xia
(STERN '12)

Andy Xia is the Director at Nexus Point Capital, a private equity fund dedicated to Asian control deals with a focus on mid-sized companies in Greater China. He possesses nearly 10 years of private equity and investment banking experience in Greater China, having previously worked at Citi and L Catterton Asia.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

I was really impressed by how much my mentor, Andy, has accomplished at such an early stage in his career. He initially started his career in the investment banking industry, but later switched to the private equity industry. Although there are some areas of overlap between both industries, they are still somewhat different from one another. Thus, I really admire his adaptability skills and ability to learn so quickly. My mentor is also quite knowledgeable in the investment banking and private equity fields. During our first meeting, he patiently provided me with an in-depth explanation about both fields and used examples and analogies to help me better understand what he was saying. Overall, Andy is extremely friendly, easy to approach, and passionate about his career.

Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

Throughout the course of the program, I have learned many valuable pieces of advice from Andy, which I believe are extremely helpful towards my undergraduate studies and future career preparation. One of the advice that he gave was to pay great attention to the foundational finance courses since those classes are the building blocks to what we will see in the real business world. Understanding the

language and concepts of these courses are essential for a future career in finance and it will greatly prepare you for technical interviews.

Another suggestion that Andy gave is that during college, spending time building long-lasting relationships, meeting new people, and exploring different career paths to see what is right for you. Try to step out of your comfort zone and try to not only network with industry professionals, but also with upperclassmen. Upperclassmen can give valuable insights based on their previous internship experiences and current recruiting trends. As for career exploration, keep in mind what you want to do, what you are good at, or what you truly enjoy doing. College is also about having fun with people you enjoy being with and four years can fly by very quickly, so cherishing these moments is also important.

As college students, we are also often inundated with schoolwork, internships, and extracurriculars. Oftentimes, we have a hard time struggling to balance all these commitments. One advice that Andy gave was to prioritize your tasks and assess what you think is the most important to you. This advice was extremely helpful for me to reflect on what I thought were my biggest priorities at the time and what I should focus on instead of trying to do everything all at once. Moreover, when it comes to recruiting season or finding in-

ternships, it may be discouraging for some of us if we get many rejection letters. However, as said by my mentor, rejection is part of the process and we just need to keep trying and trying. Persistence is the key.

Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

This program not only helps us to connect and network with our own mentors, but it also gives us many opportunities to get to know the other mentors too, such as through the NYU Distinguished Alumni Speaker Series Talk. Through these talks, I was able to meet many other mentors with different career paths and learn more about their professional experiences. There was also an event where all the mentees shared with one another some of the advice that they received from their mentors and I found it extremely helpful. It was great to hear about various types of advice from mentors with different career directions. With all the advice and suggestions I have received from this program, I will make sure to take them into account when making decisions about my future career.

Mentee:
Zineb Dardafaa
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Zineb Dardafaa is a sophomore student majoring in business and finance. She holds a great interest in consulting, management, and investment banking.

Mentor:
Crystal Gao
(STERN '00)

Crystal Gao is a senior Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) member, recently joined Lightspeed China, as CFO. Previously, she was the Finance Director of McKinsey's Greater China office (Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Chengdu, Hong Kong, and Taipei), overseeing the finance operation.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

Crystal Gao works diligently, and she holds a strong passion for what she is doing. She is serious at work while knowing how to enjoy life too. She keeps a tight schedule and still manages to fit a self well

deserved “me-time”. She is cultivated but still not unsatiated, and wants to gain more knowledge. In short, she balances her life and occupation extremely well, and I really look up to her when it comes to picturing my future self.

Q: How did your mentor make a positive impact in your career development?

Self-development:

One thing that we really stressed on together is time management, self-put pressure and how to talk to ourselves. We both share this quality that could easily turn into a flaw of being perfectionists. One takeaway that I still hold from her is “to take it one step at a time”. It is okay to have a lot of ambitions, to work on a tight schedule or to feel the need to do it all, but the key is to progress slowly and efficiently. Pressure is nothing but an emotional button we can decide to push whenever, either intensively until it harms us or gently and progressively to provide some booster adrenaline into our daily life.

On top of that, we both rely on morning and late-night runs as a form of escapism to this fast-paced world. Not only is Miss Gao inspiring me on a professional and personal level but she also succeeds at doing so on a sports level too [running almost every day +5 km besides the workload, the few hours of sleep or laziness to leave the comfy bed sheets]: this re-

quires discipline, another trait that I look forward to master.

Career sharing:

We talked a lot about the working environment. I explained to her that I am willing to step out of my comfort zone and that I'd ideally love working/interning in big renowned companies because I can quickly find online what I like or not about them. We talked about the importance of holding any company's values if we work there, feeling comfortable in its environment and with the coworkers. She told me that with her experience she also found that criteria the main one before choosing where to work.

Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?

1. Keep your ambitions high
2. Don't be too hard on yourself
3. Keep your life balanced and stay organized
4. Self-Discipline and planning are key to your future
5. Don't give up, and never lose faith, especially in yourself.

Mentee:
Engel Erendzhenova
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Engel Erendzhenova is a sophomore student majoring in Biology. She plans to pursue the Doctor of Medicine and work for either a research company or a pharmaceutical company, conducting research and developing progressive medicine.



Mentor:
Joshua Kurtzig
(STERN MBA '04)

Joshua Kurtzig is the Managing Director of Tangram Health. He was Vice President for Strategic Partnerships at United Family Healthcare and responsible for UFH's postpartum rehabilitation nationally. Before moving into healthcare, Mr. Kurtzig worked in investment management for 10 years. He had spent time at PricewaterhouseCoopers, Stonebridge International, and the International Monetary Fund.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

When I first met my mentor, Mr. Joshua Kurtzig, I was completely overwhelmed by how open-minded he was. Joshua worked in diverse places around the world: Russia, United States, and China. During his journey, he was not afraid to take risks exploring new things and look for his true calling. I was impressed by how Joshua was able to succeed in everything he was pursuing, even though he switched his career several times, not being scared of risks or country borders, which inspires me to face challenges, to push myself, and to grasp opportunities.

Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year? What changes did you make throughout the program?

Since the program started, thanks to my mentor, Joshua, and the Mentor Career Talks Career Development Center led, I have become more open-minded, applying to every program I can lay my hand on and grasping nearly every opportunity possible. It helped me to figure out what I enjoy most and finally choose my major. I have joined the PUMP program for undergraduate students and have started attending drawing classes. I have come to understand that failures are still parts of experience and they should not discourage you from moving forward. Instead, you should push your limits fur-

ther, learn about your weak points and work on them. No doubt it is frustrating when you do not get what you want, but that is totally okay! Whatever opportunity you had, it was not the last one to prove yourself, meaning you will still have plenty of possibilities ahead of you.

Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

Do not hesitate to experiment, because you will never know where your interest lies if you are not open to new things. But it does not mean you should stick to one career in your whole life: life is fluid as your desires and perspectives may change, so it is never too late to redirect your attention to something new if you are much more obsessed with it. Do not hesitate to ask questions or gain more knowledge in fields that are of interest to you since it will help you grow as well.

Mentee:
Bernice Feng
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Bernice Feng is a sophomore and has not undecided major yet. She used to take a wide variety of subjects. Now she is interested in Math and would like to take more fundamental Math courses.

Mentor:
Eddie Chen
(TANDON '95)

Mr. Chen is currently the Managing Director and Head of EURAZEO PE Fund for Greater China. EURAZEO is a leading French private equity company consisting of around 30 French and European companies. His career path has crossed numerous industrial sectors such as the IT executive, diplomat, senior government official, and private equity investor.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

What impressed me most about my mentor Eddie is his courage and determination of stepping out of his comfort zone. After graduating from NYU Tandon, Eddie's first job was as a computer program-

mer at the United Nations Development Programme in New York. From technical work to managing work, his duties gradually shifted from programming to administrating people, and became chief of the Information Technology group, overseeing all IT strategy and operations for the UN offices. During his work at UNDP, he got to know many government officials and celebrities. Then, Sweden's government invited him to an occupation responsible for communicating with the Chinese government to sign trading contracts with China. Years later, he joined Eurazeo, a French company in the equity industry, with the responsibility to establish the China Office and became the managing director of eurazeo, which is a French company in the equity industry. Throughout his career, Eddie worked in three industries, in three countries, three totally different working environments, and of course, three totally different kinds of work tasks. When each chance was provided, Eddie chose to step out of his comfort zone and embraced the opportunities to try out new things.

Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year? What changes did you make throughout the program?

When I first entered my sophomore year, I was very unsure about my major. I was interested in a wide variety of subjects, from maths to social science, from computer science to business and

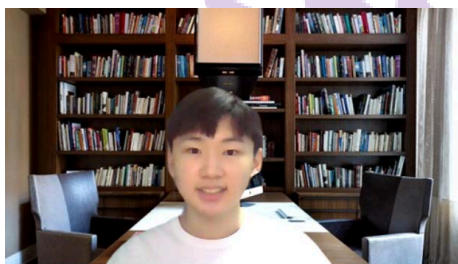
finance. During the first semester, I was taking courses such as Multi-variable Calculus, Perspectives on the humanities, Data Structures, and Foundations of Finance, and I found all of them intriguing. Instead of analyzing each of the disciplines, Eddie asked me about my daily life, my habits, and my hobbies. We analyzed my personality and preferred working environments. He then suggested that working industries don't necessarily have to be closely connected to university majors, just like him studying computer science, but working at an equity company. However, the skills developed in university years would be helpful for future work. Learning different subjects could benefit us in cultivating different skills. As for the specific skills only applicable to a certain work, it's very likely to forget them if I don't use them and enhance them in the work. As for fundamental skills like logical thinking and analytical writing, they can be applied to numerous situations. Therefore, no matter what major I choose, Eddie suggested that I focus on fundamental skills instead of solely focusing on knowledge and information. Following Eddie's suggestions, I took more fundamental Math courses, and always reminded myself of the importance of developing logical thinking throughout my studying process.

Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

I believe that not all students are lucky enough to identify their academic passions at an early age and commit themselves to the field without further hesitation. Many students, like me, enter university without a clear academic interest and potential career path. I used to be quite hesitant when making decisions because of my limited vision about future outcomes. Inspired by Eddie's rich life experience, now that I've realized that life is indeed filled with uncertainties and possibilities. Don't hesitate and worry about making decisions because each of the choices we made will lead to a wonderful journey of great treasure to the whole life. As Eddie suggested, we should step out of our comfort zone to embrace the uncertainties and grasp the opportunities as we make trade-offs in our life decisions. We could take time to figure out whether we like them or not - prices are not high and we can always try fresh new things!

Mentee:
Lucas Goh
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Lucas Goh is a sophomore majoring in Economics and Data Science. Throughout the mentorship program, he and Theodore had meaningful conversations on enterprising start-ups in China and what COVID-19 entails for China moving forward in 2021, which helped him develop a clearer goal for his own future journey.



Mentor:
Theodore Low
(STERN '03)

Teddy is currently the Director at Nippon Paint China Holdings where he leads investments in the China chemicals space. He was previously in the Chairman's Office at CP Group, a Thailand-based conglomerate, focusing on APAC markets. Teddy has had experience in both advisory and principal investments capacity in NYC and Asia.



Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

"Enjoy your college life! Whether it is learning a new skill, building a new connection, shedding regretful (or cheerful) tears, or failing after giving in your very best; cherish each and every single one of these moments, because they will be the moments that are of most value to you after college." These words from my mentor have lingered in my mind until now. I used to put in a relentless amount of hours striving for good grades. However, after meeting Theodore, I have come to appreciate learning as a lifelong journey, and learn to pursue my own goals with inner motivation.

Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

Theodore is a quite busy mentor occupied with all kinds of work related to the corporate strategies of Nippon. He is mainly responsible for formulating strategy for our company. For the operation side, he monitors the different business units' performance and evaluates whether they are meeting the market trends and customer needs. In parallel, he is also responsible for overseeing investments. I am very impressed by how capable he is in his job. However, he still managed to maintain a comparatively well-balanced life. He always reserves some space and time for charity and his family.

These are the attributes that strike me the most about my mentor.

Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

This program has inspired me to actualize my journey and better identify the points that shaped me as an individual. The bond that I have built with Theodore has also been incredibly impactful on my adventure as a student. I believe these small ripples will propagate through my career journey as time makes its strides.



Mentee:
Yue Guan
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Yue Guan is a sophomore studying International Relations and Economics as her major. Her main campus is based in New York. She participated in the mentorship program during her two semesters in the Go Local program.



Mentor:
Yun Zhou
(LAW '01)

Yun Zhou is a partner at Zhong Lun Law Firm's Shanghai Office. He has received distinguished recommendations in the fields of Corporate and M&A from Chambers and Partners every year from 2008 to 2018. The International Bar Association (IBA) has appointed him to serve as an officer on the IBA Corporate and M&A Law Committee since 2015.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

Life is always full of multifarious possibilities, but it is also limited because every crossroad is a chance to explore only one possibility, and we often cannot go back. The long-sightedness of Mr. Zhou opens up all the possibilities to me at once by walking me through his experience of practicing law, his life choices at each decision-making point. Talking with him urges me to further enrich myself and widen my horizon. He inspires me to read extensively to learn more about law as a profession, the underlying principles and philosophies of law, and what it means to be a lawyer.

Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

While most people, even people within the profession of law, think of law as rigid rules that people need to abide by, and lawyers as the boring representations of that. It is necessary and essential for lawyers to familiarize themselves with all the articles of law while there is more to it than just upholding what is set in stone for lawyers. Mr. Zhou showed me that law can actively create values. Making mergers and acquisitions possible in the contract under the law is the prerequisite for more efficient and productive business. When a lawyer can use the law to invent values, he or she brings

the law to life. I believe Mr. Zhou is one of these precious lawyers in the profession dedicated to the betterment of the world. And I am grateful to have the opportunity to learn from him.



Mentee:
Zhiqing Guo
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Zhiqing Guo is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. Being through this program, she builds more courage to try different things and become more confident when exploring something new.

Mentor:
Felicia Li
(STERN '95)

Felicia joined Deloitte U.S. in 1998, and has worked in Deloitte offices in both the U.S. and China. She is a senior technical partner in Deloitte Shanghai Global Capital Market Group. In Deloitte, she served more than 20 companies in obtaining their initial public offering in the United States and served many multinational companies such as the Boeing Company and Procter & Gamble on their annual audits.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

Felicia is a very successful woman who is kind, caring, helpful, and has a strong personality. Before I met her, I had been wondering how

people could keep a work and life balance well, especially after having a family, and Felicia is the kind of person responsible for both her job and family. She is very good at communication and has the magic to make people around her feel comfortable and safe, whether the person is her family member, her colleague, or a junior mentee like me. What impressed me most is her positive attitude towards problems and her confidence in solving them. Her inner strength and the soft, caring side of her enable her to handle various things either in her work or life, and it helps keep her in a positive state of mind. I hope I could be a woman having such attitudes towards work and life like Felicia does in the future.

Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

I had been puzzled about what career path to take for a long time before I joined this program and met Felicia. As I told Felicia about my confusion and anxiety, her suggestions really calmed me down. I would like to share what I have learned from her.

She told me that if you have not figured out a career that you have passion for, exploring the things that you are good at can be a good start. In many cases, being good at something can also add to your interests in that specific field. Rather than only thinking about choosing which career can provide you with

an ideal lifestyle in the future, it is better to really start trying some opportunities and see if it is what you really like. As you further explore, you will find more opportunities opening to you. At the same time, you will realize that there is no perfect job, and actually what matters the most is your attitude and how you adapt to the dissatisfying side of work. For Felicia, as a partner of Deloitte Auditing, she would choose to work in different offices or doing business with different companies to make her work experience more colorful. Although the logic for auditing work is similar, she can get a feeling of freshness and joy by trying these new changes, and this is her way of adapting herself to her job. As students at the beginning stage of exploring our careers, we can be more open to various opportunities as we have nothing to lose.

For me personally, I have not figured out a clear direction for my future career yet, but I have become more confident and determined throughout the process of exploring. I would suggest those who are also bewildered about their future career take advantage of the time in college and try to explore early. Such an exploration experience will give you a bigger vision of what you can do in the future.

Mentee:
Dennis Hu
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Dennis Hu is a sophomore and intended to major in Data Science and double major in Economics. After the Mentor Program, Dennis learned much about academic and career life, which helps him apply a positive attitude towards his future path.



Mentor:
Derrick Miu
(STERN MBA '03)

Derrick is currently working at Merck & Co. Inc. and is based in the New York/New Jersey area of the United States. He specializes in Healthcare Digital Strategy, Customer Relationship Management, Closed Loop Marketing, Master Data Management, Big Data and Predictive Analytics.



Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

Derrick helped me see that the search for internships is not any task to land a certain position. Rather, it is all about learning and taking in quality “content”. The intuition is: think of yourself as a reporter. Whenever you talk to someone, instead of thinking about what this person can provide for you, think more about what you can learn from the specific individual. Networking is not a race to build the most complicated social net, but only a means of expanding experience and knowledge. With that as an objective, landing internships should not be the end goal in mind, and probing deeper into the industry that you are interested in becomes the target.

With this adjusted mindset, some attitudes that we take for granted become questionable under investigation. For instance, no one gets the desired internship without being rejected by a few others before that: but is a rejection really just a rejection? In fact, sometimes a “no” is not necessarily a “no”, but a “not yet”. In the case that you get rejected, your job then is to spin that “no” into something else. If the HR contacts you with a rejection, your journey at that company does not have to end there: you can ask, is it possible to take a tour around the office? Can you maybe interview someone from that company? Or does the person know someone

else you can talk to? With this mindset, regardless of the hiring outcome, you can still gain many insights to guide your professional planning.

Q:How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

On a grander scheme, before getting to know Derrick, I had always implicitly felt that college life became more and more like a program of checking boxes: all the possible achievements are laid out in an explicit manner, and going about every day is degraded to checklisting: Assignment? Done. Presentation? Working on it. Internship? Hopefully so.

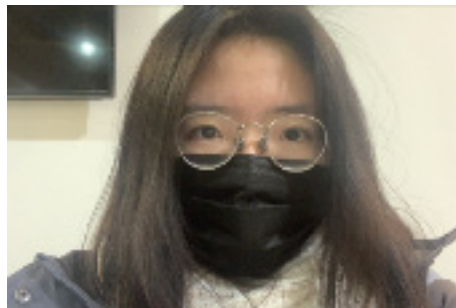
This kind of mindset stems from a misled drive, which is arguably the main cause of involution nowadays. When talking about my project on sports analytics, the first point Derrick brought up was: try to make it fun for yourself. Indeed, when I considered my project, all I really thought of was technical issues, and rarely “how do I make this fun for myself?”. I believe that if we apply this attitude to school and to our careers, we will be looking at a completely different picture laid out in front of us.

Q:What is one key takeaway that is easily actionable you learned from your mentor?

I would like to share one thing I feel is very beneficial while being easy to practice, which is called “scenario thinking”. Visionary ideas, just like good inventions, emerge out of masses of trial and error. Therefore it helps to visualize to yourself what broader goal you are aspiring to achieve, and how you will get there. Granted, most of the time the ideas that pop out are going to appear impractical or even ridiculous, but it is precisely this kind of “daydreaming” that pulls you out and forces you to look at the bigger picture. With all the different scenarios that you can immerse yourself in, implicitly you get more prepared as you navigate through previously uncharted water. Personally I find it a helpful way of self-suggestion and it frees me from getting tunnel vision.

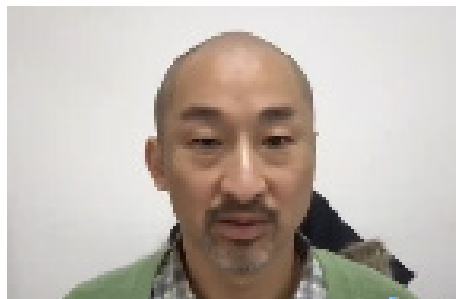
Mentee:
Tian Jin
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Tian Jin is a sophomore majoring in Data Science. With the encouragement and helpful suggestions from William, Tian Jin becomes less stressed about her future career path, and she has more confidence to take a step out and try different things.



Mentor:
William Hsieh
(STERN MBA '00)

Will has worked mostly in the Greater China wellness and entertainment fields for the past 20+ years. He's currently the Vice President of Content for FITURE—a smart wellness equipment startup. Previously, he has held management roles with Space Cycle, Electronic Arts, Sony Music, and EMI Music.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

Speaking of my mentor, William Hsieh, my very first impression was his diverse experience both in work and life when I browsed the mentor bio. As a person who has various interests yet great difficulties in making choices, I was pretty curious about how he manages and passes through life in a way like this. Honored to be his mentee, I gradually learned that life doesn't necessarily require detailed plans in advance – paths can always change, yet what matters more is always a long-term direction.

Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

For students who are similar to me finding it hard to make clear career plans, William's first encouragement is to just try it. Given that we are at such a young age available to ample resources, instead of imagining and trading off among different choices in our minds, the best solution is always to experience it. Only through hands-on experience can we have a genuine and comprehensive understanding of the job and the industry, and thus make a more deliberate decision – in order to better serve our ultimate goal.

Everyone has uncertainty for his/her own future, yet it's highly suggested to hold a general direction (goal) in mind, which is supposed

to become clearer gradually as experience accumulates. In this sense, each of our trials counts as one step towards our ultimate goal no matter whether or not it is straightforward, and all the efforts to explore those uncertainties, thus, contribute to our own “career paths”. Therefore, the second suggestion from William is to try to think of our own career directions.

And the goal might also change as time passes by. We cannot foresee the future, and since our minds are constantly changing, it happens all the time that our initial goal is no longer our ultimate goal. On these occasions, the change we make deserves far more deliberate considerations – yet we should be prepared and dare to make changes anyway.

Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?

Throughout this whole year, William constantly provides me with really encouraging and inspiring suggestions, from which I did gain abundant insights and references. On one hand, I was encouraged to overcome the resistance to interns, and am now looking forward to stepping into industries through internships during the summer. On the other hand, my obsession and stress on not figuring out my career path have been relieved more or less. I now understand that instead of planning the future in detail, leaving out some unknowns

for exploration also works, and it might even lead to unexpected outcomes; let alone a career isn't necessary to be consistent with my true passion. As suggested before, working with what I'm talented with or following with who I admire, and then pursuing my own passion are also reasonable choices.

Thanks to William sincerely for being my very first career mentor at such a turning point in my life, I'm able to form a direct knowledge of what career life looks like, and benefited quite a lot on how to think before making decisions. I'm more than expected to share my own career experiences with William one day in the future.

Mentee:
Hongyu Lu
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Hongyu Lu is a sophomore and decided to major in Business and Finance. Before meeting with Mr. Ji, he was confused about his career plan. But after gaining many fascinating insights, he becomes more dedicated to things worth insistence.



Mentor:
Zhen Ji
(CIMS '97)

Zhen Ji received a M.Sc. from New York University. Mr. Ji currently works as Managing Director of Kohlberg Kravis Roberts. Before joining Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, Zhen Ji was the Managing Director of CITIC Capital Partners and had been with the firm since 2009.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

Before the lunch meeting started, I was nervous about talking with Mr. Ji out of respect for his prestige and senior industry status. I was left with a tremendously immense unexpected insight after the meal, which dramatically changed my ideas about college life and job growth. As a computer science master graduate from NYU Courant, Mr. Ji first landed his career path at Microsoft as a software designer. After several years of exploring the tech industry in the western world, he foresaw the existing floor in career development as a Chinese and the lifestyle accompanying imbalance. He chose to restart his career orientation in the finance industry by pursuing an MBA degree from the Kellogg School of Management.

He kindly informed me that during the exploration path, everyone will be lost at first, but the route will be more apparent after several trials along the way. It's never too late to transform. Whatever any career background before, it could always be a new breakthrough for you to explore and to gain hands-on experience while the exploring process. Chase the opportunities, figure out what matters for you, and spare no effort to pursue them.

Also, What Mr. Zhen Ji taught me the most was how to help explore my traits and realize what I want to do. Then, overcome some of my initial shortcomings to reach my

meaning realization properly. Not putting limits on yourself, knowing who you want to be, and then working hard for a solid decision. While career growth is a long-term and life-long process, it is a much easier option if you can identify and pursue your true inner passion early on. His commitment to life, concern for the most fashionable stuff through centuries, and lifetime meditation are all aspects that inspire me and paint a picture of the person I want to be.

Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year? What changes did you make throughout the program?

Before entering the program, I was a second-year student with no definite career plan and no idea what I wanted. I become too involved in the process of finding interest and everything more after committing to spending time and money on hard work and training transferable skills such as how to network with others and utilize the opportunities available during internships. Reflect personal growth during past experiences and modestly learn from senior levels, think proactively about the cases spent time in and reflect the underlying reasons. The program significantly transformed my outlook from a muddled young man into a committed person pursuing the "core dimension" of my life.

Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

Now, not only do I have a great idea about what I want to do in the future, but I've also learned a lot about professionalism and how to improve. Three of the most important qualities, in my mind, are making the best decision, hard work during the accumulation of experiences, attentive observation, and learning to think. Mr. Ji is like a bright light that guides you where to go and what to do.

Furthermore, he made me realize that I should never be afraid to try new things and meet new people. I need to open up my mind first and broaden my horizons to embrace the fast-changing world. Don't be too nervous and shy to meet new people but show enough respect and equally communicate. Also, I learned to value the significance and profound impact of liberal art education, especially in the humanities and social sciences. As Liberal Arts college students, we should cherish this opportunity and enrich our literacy to be a better person and interests others because mindset matters more significantly in the growing stage.

In the future, I want to continue learning from all NYU alumni and expand both my horizons and career network. Hopefully, someday in the future, I will serve our society and contribute to our Violet Pride!

Mentee:
Shiyuan Liu
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Shiyuan Liu is a sophomore and decides to double major in both Business and Finance and Data Science. After meetings with Mr. Li, he is more interested in the fintech industry and now more confident with my choice and I am now more and more willing to connect with others and build my career network.



Mentor:
Alan Li
(STERN MBA '06)

Alan Li is currently the General Manager of Corporate Communications & Investor Relations, managing the relations with various financial stakeholders as well as the overall financial communications strategy.



Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

The most important thing I learned from my mentor is how to build a network through informational interviews. Networking is so important for one's career and you can get useful information and even internal recommendations from your connections. Informational interview is basically making an appointment with the professionals in your targeted industry or company. After having your target industries or even firms as your first step after graduation, you need to first try to connect one of the workers in that firm or industry through either LinkedIn or other ways such as NYU's alumni networking platform. And you may send messages to ask them whether they can meet with you and maybe answer some of your questions related to their jobs and firms when they are available. It would be so great for you that they accept your invitation, and you will lose nothing if they say no.

After talking with them, a really good strategy is that you should always ask them to introduce you to other contacts so that you can better promote your networking. After a few rounds of informational interviews with different people, you will definitely find that you have developed a keen career sense and you will know more about your target industry or jobs than before.

Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year? What changes did you make throughout the program?

After talking with my mentor, I am more certain about my choice to take Data Science as my double major. At the very first beginning, I was afraid that if I kept choosing to double major, I would lose the chance to take a more advanced exploration in the finance field, my primary major. However, after talking with my mentor, I am now getting more and more interested in the fintech industry and realize that Data Science can be a plus to make me more fit in the future career. Moreover, my mentor also told me that he might consider the DS major as a sign of a smart person, because it requires more logical thinking ability and mathematics knowledge, which will definitely increase my competitiveness in the future. In addition, I also learned so many things during our get-together meeting with all the mentees. In the group discussion, other mentees told what they learned from their mentors which could also benefit others. Their advice was useful and supportive. Finally, with all the information I got during this academic year, I am now more confident with my choice and I am now more and more willing to connect with others and build my career network.

Q: Any constructive feedback to improve this program in the future?

There are mainly two suggestions. The first one is to hold the mentees get-together meeting more often. I get a lot of useful information regarding different perspectives during the discussion with other mentees and I think it is a really good way to build connections with other mentees and learn from each other.

The second suggestion is that I think we can hold more events gathering with all the mentors and mentees. For now, there are limited chances for me to talk with other mentors (beginning and ending ceremony). I believe more chances to talk to other mentors can also bring more benefits to mentees, especially for the mentees who are still confused with their future industry choice because it will enable them to talk to experts in different industries which may bring positive effect on their final decisions.

Mentee:
Xinhao Liu
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Xinhao Liu is a sophomore double majoring in honors mathematics and data science. Throughout the program, Mark gave Xinhao a lot of helpful suggestions about career/academic path based on Mark's personal experiences, which helped Xinhao generate many new perspectives.



Mentor:
Mark Yang
(CIMS '99)

Mark is the managing director and board member of Yueyang Kaimeite Electronic and Specialty Rare Gases, which supplies high purity gases and gas mixers to high growth industries. Before that, Mark has built a \$30 million dollar premium specialty gases and chemical business in Shanghai from scratch.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

Before I had a chance to talk to Mr. Mark Yang, I was impressed by how his career path twisted. He graduated with a math and computer science background, worked in Wall Street for many years, and now he is an entrepreneur running his own specialty gas company and has been jumping into the field of investment recently! To me, it seems that his career covers technology, finance, and natural science, which are three totally different and unrelated industries. I can't imagine how a person could manage all these different kinds of knowledge and skills such well.

In our first meeting, I had the chance to know how Mr. Yang was able to make these transitions in industries. I think the key to his success is to never stop learning. Mr. Yang told me that there are more things to learn with the development of society. What you learned in university is far from enough of what you will need in the future. Mr. Yang didn't apply for a Ph.D. program after he graduated from NYU, but he has multiple Master degrees. He thinks master programs make it possible to learn specific things that he needs for his job. More than impressed by his experiences, I admire his courage, determination, and his attitudes towards life.

Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

When I asked Mr. Yang about how his company coped with the COVID-19, he emphasized the importance of adaptability. He described the COVID-19, by the black swan theory, as an incident that came as a surprise but had a significantly major effect. Speaking from a statistical view, if we can view the probability of incidents following a normal distribution, these incidents lay almost three sigma away from the mean. When we do statistical analysis, these incidents tend to be ignored by us because the probability for them to happen is too small. Yet, their impact doesn't follow the same distribution. It is true that we can never foresee the occurrence of these incidents, thus we can barely do anything to stop them from happening or make any plan B. The only preparation we can make is to make preparations. In other words, if we develop a certain level of adaptability, then we won't be afraid of black swan incidents. The adaptability comes from the ability to learn new things. If a person can learn new things very quickly, then it's very easy to get into a totally new and unfamiliar situation, and be able to manage everything very well.

Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

The program definitely gives me a lot of help. Mr. Yang's insights inspired me with many new perspectives of life. Moreover, Mr. Yang gives me many of his suggestions about my personal career/academic path including what industry to dive into and the decision between enrolling in a master or Phd program. I believe these valuable suggestions are what Mr. Yang concludes from his life experience and saves me lots of twists and turns in my own life and career path.

Mentee:
Declan Mazur
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Declan Mazur is a sophomore student and majors in Global China Studies. He explored with Mr. Huang to turn a humanity passion into a career path.



Mentor:
Leon Junliang Huang
(GSAS '11)

Leon Junliang Huang is a documentary filmmaker, entrepreneur, and marathon runner. Junliang worked as a documentary filmmaker for South-ern Weekly, dubbed “the most liberal newspaper in China,” by The New York Times. After he earned his MBA degree at CEIBS, he started working in the healthcare industry because he thinks the industry related to people's well-being.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

From the beginning, getting to know Leon was never simply about how to advance my career path or form a network within the pharmaceutical industry. Entering this program as a Global China Studies major had everyone -- including myself -- shake their heads in doubt and disbelief. Students of interdisciplinary study will forever begin their life's journey confused on the right path for them.

I will never forget how surprised I was when Leon first sat down with me and tried to understand my passions alongside me. Wrapping my head around the fact that a successful branding manager at Bayer worked with me to navigate turning my humanities passions into a career path was unfathomable. But it is precisely this that made our relationship so meaningful; fusing Leon's transitional background from journalism to pharmaceuticals with my passion for humanitarian aid research turned into the best possible match.

Leon's exceptional advice taught me how venturing outside of traditional outlets to seek advice on yourself will work wonders for both yourself as the mentee and the mentor. As hard as it was for me to understand where my future lied, Leon helped manifest my ideas into a goal-oriented reality.

Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?

After I would babble about my career aspirations, Leon would follow up and ask “so, what's your end goal?”. Regardless of the discipline(s) you study or the career path you see yourself on, you can always step back and reflect on what target you're aiming for. I knew I wanted to make a positive impact on other people by truly understanding their situations. This can be accomplished with most every industry; so, Leon taught me to ask how and why I want to accomplish my passions.

I also learned that where your passion lies comes with time. Whether it be throughout your college career, in your personal life, or time you spend post-graduate, passions take time to develop alongside your other aspirations. Leon's switch from journalism to pharmaceuticals came from a personal motivation external to the work he pursued both in China and in the United States. Not only do passions and motivations change, but it's okay and healthy to adapt to these changes. Talking to others not in your discipline of study or career-path of interest can be just as insightful if not more-so than those aligned with your studies. Coming from a journalism and pharmaceutical background, Leon's career focused on internship opportunities to gain experience within each industry; however, research fields can incorporate internships or further research ex-

perience. Each career path, along with the way you choose to move about it, has a unique path.

Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the academic year?

The program helped reinforce the fact that growing is forever a part of our career and personal lives, and in making connections with others on how to maneuver our lives will keep us on track.

I began to further take notice on the exact fields I want to research and the professors I should reach out to explore opportunities working alongside them. Having the program within our sophomore year allows us time to develop our future academic goals while still maintaining flexibility. Working with Leon reaffirmed my belief that mentorship goes both ways: the mentor and the mentee can each learn more about themselves through each other's experiences. I am forever blessed and grateful to have had the opportunity to hear Leon's stories about his academics, career, and personal motivations.

I further extend my gratitude to all members of the program for fostering relationships that can stay with us beyond each of our academic careers!

Mentee:
Yuqian Sun
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Yuqian Sun is a sophomore and major in Computer Science. She learned how to approach a career path from the initial stage from Jeff Wang.



Mentor:
Jeff Wang
(STERN MBA '02)

Jeff Wang is Chairman of NepVale International Holdings. Wang is also a board member at two NASDAQ-listed, internet-based companies, Secoo Holdings, and China Finance Online. He is also a co-founder and board member of Bestbond Apartment Communities, now serving 10,000 elite members in China.



Q:What impressed you the most about your mentor?

Jeff is very clear-minded. As I was at a loss, I asked for some general advice on how to get into my dream career. His response includes consideration of the current situation during this era and his own experience with his daughter since he thought his in-person experience may give a more constructive reference.

Jeff always seeks challenges throughout his career path. During the initial stage of job seeking, Jeff had the opportunity for landing a stable job, which many people may have dreamed of. But he gave up the opportunity since he is keenly aware that he won't enjoy that kind of life and wants more challenges. So he chose to start his own business that he truly loves.

Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

My mentor has always advised me to try bravely. Try your best to find what you enjoy most and feel it by your heart because it's really rare for a person to get into a perfect occupation upon their first attempt. It doesn't matter to try some sub-optimal occupations. My mentor told me that what matters is enthusiasm. He gave an example of the famous tennis player, Li Na, who just started to play tennis later in her life compared to other professional players. Where-

as, due to her interest and hard work, she stands out among all the tennis players.



Mentee:
Tamilyn Te
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Tamilyn Te is a sophomore student majoring in Business and Finance. She gained many invaluable life lessons and career advice from her mentor.



Mentor:
Alfred Wong
(STERN MBA '94)

Mr. Alfred Wong has over 20 years of experience in M&A and private equity. He is currently the president of Chaico Development (HK), a subsidiary of the Taiwan-based Chailease Group. He started his career in the medical device industry.



Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year? What changes did you make throughout the program?

As a Business and Finance major, I was overwhelmed about the number of possible career paths in the financial services industry and I was making very little progress career-wise. Having Alfred as my mentor, I was exposed to even more career paths in the financial services industry, but at the same time, Alfred was also giving me valuable and specific information on each.

Throughout the program, I decided to narrow down my information search, focus on one or two sectors in the financial services industry that really interested me, and network with more professionals within these industries. With Alfred's help, much of the anxiety I was experiencing with regards to my career was relieved and I was able to secure a summer internship at a top venture capital firm in Manila.

Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

Whenever Alfred and I had meetings, at the end he would always remind me of two things: to do my research and learn by doing. Alfred always stressed the importance of reading up on what a specific company does and talking

to people who are already in that company and in the financial services industry.

The second point that Alfred stressed is that, we will never know what it is like to work in a specific position unless we try it for ourselves. Hearing this, I became more motivated to seek more opportunities for myself. Alfred always reminded me to do my research on a company or position before applying for an internship to save my time and efforts, as well as to ensure that I maximize my time in that position and that I perform well.

The insights, life lessons, and career advice that I have gained from Alfred and the other mentors and mentees is truly invaluable. Apart from the finance industry, I have been exposed to a variety of industries and the intersections of them. When I enter the corporate world after graduation, the life-long lessons and skills that I have gained throughout the program will remind me to maintain a sensitive and open-minded disposition when I interact with different people in the corporate world.

From Alfred, I have gained a better understanding of the financial services industry. Not only have I gained a more comprehensive understanding of how each individual sector functions, but how they interact with one another as well.

I also learned from Alfred that what heavily matters when you

enter your first job or your first internship is your first supervisor and what you can learn from them. In the future, when applying to jobs, it's important to consider the value proposition of your first supervisor.

Mentee:
Yuechen Wang
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Yuechen Wang is a sophomore majoring in Marketing and minoring in Data Science. She joined the Mentor program seeking answers to her confusion over the future career path and advice on career planning.



Mentor:
Callum Li
(TANDON MA '12)

Callum Li currently works as the China Service Manager of Airbnb, responsible for business strategy and service design. Li completed his Master's degree at NYU in 2012, majoring in Management Science and concentrating in Project Management.



Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

During our first meeting, Callum shared stories about his career path starting from his first internship in Apple to today as he works as service manager for Airbnb. Before gaining a deeper insight into his thoughts throughout his career path, I have already been amazed by those great achievements at each timestamp on his profile.

However, after listening to his considerations and preparations behind every decision-making moment, I began to gradually understand why he can have such a successful career. The first thing we should do is getting to know ourselves better. It is not only about finding where our real passion lies, but also about identifying our strengths and weaknesses. Once we understand these two things, we will have a target industry/company where we aspire to take a job in the future.

Then, to enter this industry, what we have to do is get to know it better. For example, I am currently pursuing a track on business analytics, and data used differ from industry to industry, so it is very important for me to know which data/index is most crucial to the industry I plan to work for. Reflecting on ourselves and investigating the industry we are interested in can prepare us well before entry and also increase the possibility

for us to get an ideal occupation.

Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year? What changes did you make throughout the program?

Before joining this program, I did not have a clear vision of how a college student can transit to a career path and neither a plan for my future career. In the meantime, I was really troubled by peer pressure and anxiety induced by it which always made me unsure about what I should do to keep up with others.

After several meetings with Callum, I became aware of my next move, which is to discover myself first. Rather than blindly sending out resumes and feeling anxious about internships or jobs, I spent a lot of effort exploring my own capabilities, potentials, and limitations this year.

Also, through our talk, I found out that I was actually thinking inertia, namely, I did not take many efforts to improve my mind and proactively learn about the possible career choice but feeding myself with worries. Now, I am trying to improve myself step by step via reflections and active learning. This process makes me more confident about myself than before and more ready for my future career.

Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

The strategic thinking that I learned from Callum and many other alumni speakers is helpful to me not only in terms of my career development but also in other decision-making points in my life. Thinking thoroughly to form a concrete plan in a strategic way before taking action is important no matter which life stage we are at.

Even though I do not have much working experience now, I can still make preparations for it via lots of avenues in day-to-day life. Adequate preparations and efforts with a focus would increase the odds of success.

It is now clearer to me which steps I need to take for my own career plan. Maybe I will find a new passion in the future, and I may have to shift my career path accordingly, but the methodology I learned in this program, I believe, will still be very useful and applicable even when I decide to embark on a new path.

Mentee:
Yunyi Wang
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Yunyi Wang is a sophomore majoring in Interactive Media Art. During this program, Yunyi met Joshua five times and got to know her better during the process.

Mentor:
Joshua Fu
(STERN '03)

Joshua is an organic fusion of the East and the West, and brings a global perspective to everything he does. Meanwhile, his career includes the rare combination of an organic mixture of creativity and business. Joshua founded the HOIC Group over ten years ago, the company has been a leading international expert for nation-to-nation strategies, investments, and development.



Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

Do not limit yourself to one career track. Try new things, try hard; make mistakes, make many. My mentor, Joshua Fu, has various interests while growing up. He was pretty good at physics, art, literature, and was passionate about fashion and culture. So, what would he choose as a major at NYU? He eventually chose STERN because 'everything has a business structure.' But STERN cannot put suits on him everyday, and finance background did not chain him in investment bankings. Joshua was that utmost combination of professionalism and rebellion, dedication and innovation. He's done banking, urban planning, and owned companies of advertisement, IP, branding, and culture. His diverse experiences reshape, enrich, and ignite his unique life, making him the happiest man I've ever seen. 'Do everything for love and passion,' he says. Success only happens on things you love. So take time to really think about what you love and where your most passion lies.

'Teamwork'. Joshua takes teamwork seriously and encourages us to practise our ability to work as a team by doing school projects. He believes that, first, in real workplaces, we don't have to be good at everything and will usually work as a team. Second, as he believes that some NYU students

will eventually, like me, start their own businesses after graduation, it is never too early to start looking for partners. Especially now we have so many opportunities to see if we work well together with somebody from school.

Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year? What changes did you make throughout the program?

During this program, I have talked with my mentors five times. And everytime I became more confident about NOT deciding on one direction to go right away. I knew myself better, and am more than eager to see who else I can be in the near future. In academic planning, as an IMA major, I sharpened my business skills by participating in business competitions and taking advanced business classes. At the same time, I had new interests: urban planning, curating, and branding, and I interned in all of those industries. Joshua is not just my mentor, he is one of my best and most important friends who I can always believe in, talk to, and share happiness with.

Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

I will be more confident in wayfinding. And since I gained so much from building connections with our senior alumni, I will be more mindful of networking with alum-

ni. Whenever I have a new interest or feel the urge of talking to people, I will not hesitate to reach out to alumni with that expertise and ask for their support humbly. Also, I will take time to practise good presentation and communication skills. Last, my new gold standard: go with the idea that excites me the most! And keep asking for feedback.

Mentee:
Yichen Yu
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Yichen Yu is a sophomore student majoring in Honors Mathematics. He obtained many new perspectives from his mentor. He expanded his view on the finance industry and other career directions.

Mentor:
Ray Lu
(STERN '11)

Ray Lu joined Lenovo Capital as investment director in 2017. Prior to joining Lenovo Capital, he spent 2 years with IPV Capital and 2 years with LG Venture Capital, where he covered global high tech investment, such as cloud computing, robotics, IOT, and medical devices.



Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

Looking back at this program, I undoubtedly learned many new things, whether from communicating and negotiating with others or some introspections and reflections. Under the restrictions of the epidemic, it is not easy to meet my mentor offline. Because of his busy work, our meeting time is not very long, but we have a lot of gains every time. Before the meeting, I looked forward to his advice because we shared similar background experiences. But on the other hand, because it is the first time to participate in this kind of activity, I can't help but feel uneasy, worrying that I will not be able to handle multi-threaded work, and maybe too nervous when communicating with strangers. Fortunately, Ray is very kind and we had a quite relaxed conversation. He also shared many of his own life experiences with me without hesitation. Although I don't fully understand them, they are good for the future.

The opinions given by my mentor are very multidimensional. When I first met him, I was in a very puzzling stage. I didn't know whether my science background could get an excellent job in the future, and I was still not sure whether to change to another one. Professional to seek better development. Moreover, I don't know what the relevant financial industry does

and the difference between funds, bonds, risk control, etc. Seeing the students around me busy doing internships, I can't help but worry about my future. However, the senior told me through his examples that the background of science students can often provide a lot of help in the future financial industry and explain the differences in various economic sectors. In addition, the senior also taught me a lot of experience about networking, etc., and instructed me how to connect with past classmates and how to manage my networking circle.

Q: What do you like to share with other students about the Mentor Program?

The staff of the Shanghai CDC department also gave me a lot of help. On the one hand, they gave me some advice and help on employment and study offline before. In addition, at this event, they also did their best and invited me. Many alumni or prominent figures in related industries came to deliver speeches to us. After listening to these speeches, I learned more about the employment information of associated sectors. Of course, another essential part of this project is my classmates. Although they come from different majors and different campuses, they all provided a lot of help to each other. Especially in the context of the epidemic, even if everyone is in a different place, they can still gather together to discuss their feelings and experience gained in various ways. These are

very precious memories.

Mentee:
Qi Yin
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Qi Yin is a sophomore who is currently pursuing a major in Business and Finance. She is interested in the consulting industry and wants to be a consultant. While as a Finance major student, she also has a passion for the finance industry. She thus wants to learn from Daniel who is skilled in both industries and seeks for his advice.

Mentor:
Daniel Li
(STERN MBA '04)

Post-MBA from Stern, Daniel has spent over 15 years in the area of strategy and finance. He started off as a professional consultant in McKinsey, supporting clients on various strategic problems. Later he became China strategy head for PepsiCo, before he moved to Dubai to head PepsiCo's Asia Mid-East North-Africa strategy group.



Q:What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit the hearing as well?

One of the things that I learned is to plan your career path well while making the right decisions.

I remember that I was once confused by whether to have internships during the semesters. I wanted to accumulate more practical experience in consulting, but I was also worried about how to balance my study and work. I then consulted my mentor Daniel. He told me that, as a sophomore, I don't need to be too anxious about internships and can definitely have internships during winter breaks or summer holidays.

On the one hand, conducting internships is an opportunity for students to gain practical experience, but it can also be seen as a long-term interview. In other words, by taking the internship, the ideal result is to "secure your seat" in that specific firm for summer or even full time. From another perspective, it is a priority for students to study and learn, which is also fundamental for their professional skills.

Also, the consulting industry cares a lot about your learning ability, which is highly reflected on your academic performance during the college years. Hence, to "secure the seat" while having impressive grades, it would be better for me to wait till winter breaks or sum-

mer holidays to have internships as it would be hard for most students to really balance them well. After having the conversation, I was completely relieved and knew what I really needed to do.

I have always remembered Daniel's words and his way of thinking. Making right decisions continues to affect me on my way to become a better version of myself.

Q: How has the program benefited you throughout the whole academic year? What changes did you make throughout the program?

Many thanks to my dear mentor Daniel and NYU Shanghai CDC, I benefited a lot from this program, especially the opportunity to connect with NYU alumni and the personalized suggestions I got from my mentor.

Firstly, I had the opportunity to connect with NYU alumni, to have the opportunity to talk with those professionals in the consulting and finance industry. Both the opening ceremony where we had breakout rooms to communicate with other mentors and the 1 on 1 conversations I had with my own mentor offered me chances to dive deeper into the finance world as well as the consulting industry. Besides, this is also a great chance for me to learn how to communicate with senior people.

Secondly, whenever I get confused by new things, I know that I

can always reach out to my mentor to solve the puzzle and avoid detours. I feel lucky to be able to get personalized suggestions from someone who is very experienced and professional in the consulting industry.

Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

The experience that can help me now is that I encountered less detours and got plenty of precious advice from my mentor which further shaped my career path throughout my early career planning process. I was encouraged to explore more possibilities of my future career in both the finance and consulting industry, which indirectly led me to some great opportunities in the finance industry, so I'm glad that I became more open minded, not limited myself in just one industry.

In the future, I will follow my career plan as well as the way of thinking and the way of solving problems that I learned from my mentor. I really appreciate the opportunity to participate in this program.

Mentee:
Hanyu Zhao
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Hanyu Zhao is a sophomore and currently pursuing a degree in Business and Finance and minors in Data Science as well as Interactive Media Arts. She is interested in many tracks within Business, particularly business analytics and marketing. While she is still unsure whether to choose Finance or marketing as her major, and a bit overwhelmed about internships, college life and the future, she wants to learn from Lei, who is experienced in the business industry.

Mentor:
Lei Yao
(STERN '15)

Lei is a 17-year veteran in the Marketing Communication business, specialized in Digital Marketing, CRM, brand activations, and communication. In 2014, Lei transitioned from Auto industry to the Financial Industry, and now she is the head of Marketing and Communications for Asia-ex-Japan of Vanguard.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

My puzzles are solved by conversations with mentors and other talented mentees, listening to their experiences and lessons learned. I still remember one time when I went to my mentor saying that I'm so defeated by a failure, she shared from her experience that failure is nothing but a way-too-normal thing in life. The secret is to think through and move on.

It is also under her encouragement that I regained my love for books, the most wisdom whisper in the river of history and life. I have cultivated a habit now and I cannot thank her more for opening this door for me.

What's more, I've also learned from her about how to be a good person, how to treat others and other useful life experiences. It is such a great bliss that one can hear honest and truthful advice that other people won't otherwise tell. My mentor serves as a role model for me and encourages me to propel my ambitions and, someday, be a confident and successful young lady.

Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?

I still remember the excitement of hearing the news of this program. At that time, I'm entering a stage where I wonder how this knowledge I've learned in class can be

applied to the outer world. What are the real experiences out there and what are the lessons that we ought to hear? I'm eagerly searching for a way to stretch and absorb. Luckily, the mentor program held by CDC offers me the chance.

Looking back at the whole program, here I also want to express my gratitude for the well-rounded organization. The first mentor-mentee get-together is very interesting and meaningful. That event connects me to a broader range of clever minds from other fields like investment banking and the media field. And from the casual talks between the mentors, I feel that it is really important to maintain a good relationship with the alumni and friends at school. I'm deeply inspired by listening to their words about how they benefit from their mentors and would like to give back.

We also have four separate talks held by mentors and alumni afterward, covering most of my interested fields. No matter it is "How to Dive into Consumer Goods?", or "How to Dive into Private Equity" and the further "Prepare for your next step: Let's talk about Career Development", I've gradually built up my professional understanding about each field and know what's my next step towards building up my career path. I will continue looking forward to all the workshops held by CDC, regardless of being official members of the mentor program or not.

For me, the mentor program held by CDC is, by all means, a fruitful and enjoyable one. It is a window for us to glance at the outside and more professional world; it is a bridge for us to connect with the elites in the industry and get to know them closely; it's a stage where each mentee shows their talents and communicates their brilliant thoughts with each other.

Q: Any constructive feedback to improve this program in the future?

I'm grateful for a one-on-one talk with the CDC career coach where I can express my individual thoughts and concerns initiated by this program and hear their professional advice. I can also contribute to the mentor program by offering advice from my own experience and perspective. I hope mentees can have more chances and have more rounds of this.

After all, it's a truly meaningful experience. After what I've been through, I'm more mature as a sophomore and ready to take on new challenges afterward.

Mentee:
Jingyi Zhao
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Jingyi Zhao is a sophomore double majoring in Computer Science and Mathematics. With Michael as her mentor, Jingyi is inspired to take internships as great opportunities to learn about the industry and figure out her interests.

Mentor:
Michael Mi
(STERN MBA '00)

Michael is currently with Intel managing its global key account, Tencent. His diverse experiences in investment, BD, and sales in TMT verticals include investment manager at Global Ventures & Acquisitions for Cisco Systems; regional manager for Cisco China MSO & OTT sectors; head of sales and business development for Tata Consultancy Services China; and Associate VP with Ankar Capital Management.



Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

I think one lesson I learnt from my second meeting with my mentor is that I really need to do research broadly if I find myself interested in some fields. When my mentor and I were exploring what might be my interest, I mentioned that I thought I was interested in social services, public goods and NPOs and that I participated in a volunteer program and served as a volunteer teacher last summer. Michael then said that serving as a volunteer teacher is a very 'small' thing and that we may consider public good on a larger scale, for example, carbon neutrality. At that time I had no knowledge of carbon neutrality so Michael introduced me to this field and the trades related to carbon neutrality. He also said that he thought pursuing carbon neutrality was like we human beings doing public good to ourselves, which really drew my interest and inspired me a lot.

I also mentioned during our second meeting that I wanted to find an internship in ByteDance in the future since ByteDance has been such a trendy internet company in recent years and that I found many of my peers had internships there. Michael then suggested that if I did want to join ByteDance then I should first learn about Yiming Zhang, the founder of ByteDance. He told me that very often, learning about the founder of a compa-

ny as a person and his or her own life stories would equip me with a deeper understanding of the company and that only when I had a deeper understanding of a company and its company culture can I perceive whether or not I may like this career path, rather than pursuing an internship only because a company is trendy or because other people are doing so.

As a sophomore who plans to double major in Computer Science and Mathematics, my everyday college life is, to a very large degree, occupied by academics. To be honest, when I first entered the program and was about to contact my assigned mentor, I felt uncertain because I felt at a loss considering my career path and that I felt somewhat afraid of communicating with my mentor who was an expert in his field. At first I was unable to ask in-depth questions due to lack of industry knowledge, my mentor Michael then very kindly shared with me his own life experiences and understandings. Michael also provides me with valuable approaches to thinking about what may be my possible future career. He told me that it's common that undergraduate students might not know about what each industry or job position was about, but we should try to figure it out and that internships were great opportunities for us to learn about an industry. He encourages me to try to find internships in different fields to learn more about different industries and then try to figure out my own interests.

Although I think that there is still a long way to go before I'm able to come up with my career expectation or figure out where my interest lies, my mentor has helped me a lot on this long journey in the sense that he shared with me how I may explore possibilities and how important it is to figure out one's own interest.

Mentee:
Jiashi Zhao
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Jiashi Zhao is a sophomore and decides to major in Interactive Media Art. The talk with mentor Julliet really cleared out Jiashi's mind and made it into part of the reasons for him choosing to go to a film graduate school in the future.



Mentor:
Julliet Pan
(TSOA '05)

Julliet Pan has been honored as one of the top 100 influential women in China by Insider magazine, with a reputation in the creative industry as a distinguished director and experienced film and television producer, and as a leading media professional, philanthropist and entrepreneur.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

Julliet is a wonderful person with so many insights and life experience that I'm genuinely impressed. Her professionalism and passion in the industry inspired me more than I expected. However, what really impressed me the most is her attitude towards life. In our conversations, whenever there's a "should I..." question, her answer is always "do it". Sometimes it's really hard to stick to things surrounded by people chasing money, fame or status. Doing things that you're passionate about seems to be more or less an "impractical and stubborn" choice. Whether you want to believe it or not, we are influenced by people around you. You do get anxious when other people are talking about how much money finance kids will be making in the future, or hearing about how many internships they do in the summer. It makes your inner self and belief shaken by the fact that statistically speaking, there's really a few that really make it in the industry. Julliet made me stop thinking about things like that. "Prepare for the worst, and just go for it". In life, it's really hard to just get a second chance. Your expectations can be high, you can be ambitious. What you'll do about it is the thing that really matters. You may see people around you questioning your life decisions, and you may feel uneasy being asked by relatives at your family reunion dinner table. But who cares?

It really cleared my mind and made it into part of the reasons for me choosing to go to a film graduate school in the future. The passion of people in the industry really motivates me. And other than that, I made myself three career options, and there's nothing as a "back-up". I made it clear to myself that it's not about "if I can't do this, doing this is still fine", it's about "if I can do this, there's still two other options". Make plans parallel, and don't expect what your future is going to be (you can't even if you try). According to Julliet, we will never know, as a film major student, she then pursued her career path to producing. We are all finding, selecting, and deselecting things along the way.

Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

The whole experience is such a blessing, and Julliet made me so welcomed and embraced. We said that we'll keep in touch and whenever I have questions I can always reach out to her. I'll be forever grateful for this wholesome and long-lasting relationship with my mentor. In the second meeting, we talked a lot about the situation in the United States and also about its culture and the situation in both the industry and the society. I took a lot of suggestions. Especially, and sadly, now we're in a time of chaos and hatred, and it DOES affect your career options due to this factor. Taking all of these into

consideration is necessary. I've never been abroad before, and things are all going to be new to me, but I'm told that being calm and evaluating objectively is never a wrong thing to do. Now I'm making plans and options for myself for the future, and the future is always centered in the past, and it remains a straight line, as always.

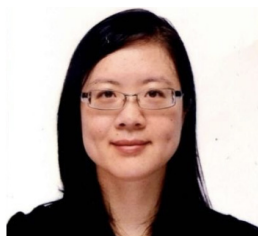
Mentee:
Yimeng Zhang
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Yimeng Zhang is a sophomore and decides to major in business. Yimeng Zhang, under the guidance of Ms. Song, acquired a more comprehensive understanding of business and its subdivided industries, which helped her choose her career of passion.



Mentor:
Gloria Song
(STERN MBA '07)

Gloria Song started her career in CICC, China's first joint venture investment bank of Morgan Stanley and China Construction Bank. She had worked for GIC (Government of Singapore Investment Corporation), Singapore's Sovereign Wealth Fund; KKR, A global private equity fund, and CPPIB (Canada Pension Plan Investment Board), Canada's largest pension fund.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

As a senior professional, Gloria is willing to share her rich experience in the financial industry as well as valuable insights towards personal development with me. She always answers my questions in such a logical and concise way that removes my long-standing confusion within only a few words, which impresses and enlightens me a lot. Her suggestions are neither too abstract nor too concrete to follow but exactly the ones that inspire and motivate me to find my approaches to achieve my goal. Apart from those sincere suggestions, what impresses me the most is that she is also willing to listen to my personal experience, recent stories, and growth as a young adult. From academics to a healthy lifestyle, she encourages, guides, and empowers me during each of our deep conversations and beyond. During the past year, I finally understand that the mentor is not a coach who corrects me all the time but someone who guides and motivates me to build up my mentality and capabilities along the way.

Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

A significant but less obvious fact that Gloria points out is that what makes a student or a person stand out among others is not necessarily how much knowledge you

have learned, rather, it is the capability and willingness to learn as well as the whole mindset of solving problems. Knowledge is static, but the way you process it and internalize it could be dynamic, which is different from person to person. Therefore, the ability of understanding, transforming, and utilizing the knowledge you have learned is more valuable than the knowledge itself.

Another important lesson I learned from Gloria is to expose oneself to different opportunities until one finally finds his true passion and dives into it. In this process, she says, "even though what you encounter may not be as perfect as you expected, but you can always reflect on this experience and learn from it, which is a process of growth". Trying more when you are young is not a waste of time, on the contrary, it will save a few years or more in the future. If you have tried something that you don't like, then at least you would be aware to avoid this in your future career. Therefore, for a young and vital student, you should always be open-minded and willing to grow.

Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

Previously, I was an extremely risk-averse person, protecting myself by avoiding challenges that seemed to be uncertain and "unsuitable", which locks out var-

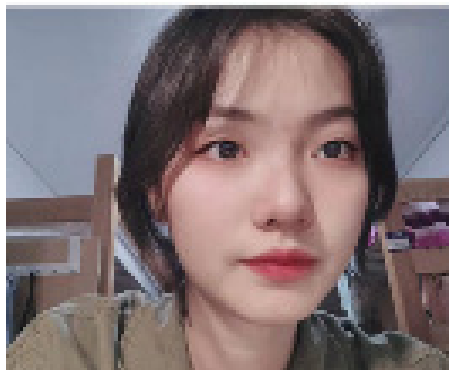
ious opportunities and facets of life. However, what I learned from Gloria is that the experience that you expose yourself to, no matter good or bad from other people's point of view, would be valuable for your growth. Real growth does not necessarily come from a successful result, rather, it comes from your thoughts and reflection towards its process.

During the past year, I stretched myself to some opportunities that I was afraid to do before, and constantly reflect on how I could improve the status quo of what I am doing. This mindset of exploration in learning and living would benefit me not only for academic studies and job hunting but also in every aspect of my life. Additionally, through the great and unforgettable experience of conversations with Gloria, I become more confident when talking to senior professionals and more proficient in asking the right and valuable questions.

I appreciate the time, suggestions, and encouragement Gloria has given me during the past year, which supports me to embrace challenges bravely and grow constantly. I also want to stay connected and keep learning from her as such a professional, sincere, and dedicated mentor.

Mentee:
Yuanxin Zhang
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Yuanxin Zhang is a sophomore student majoring in Mathematics. After the Mentor Program, she learned a lot from others' career experiences and developed different approaches to get an internship.



Mentor:
Danny Bao
(STERN MBA '01)

Danny Bao, has 20 years of professional experience, with 8 years of US financial service and 12 years in Asian Real Estate and Investment Management. As the founder of HJY Capital, he currently manages a hedge fund investing in beneficiaries of China's new urbanization trend.



Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

Danny is currently the Managing Director and Chief Investment Officer, HJY Capital Advisors (HK) Limited, and since he has been dedicated to this program for 6 years. He is proficient in guiding mentees and replying to any questions I had on my mind. When we first had a coffee chat, he helped me check my resume and cover letter. Then in terms of the AWMC competition, Danny instructed me to analyze the case and gave me the necessary information and resources based on his asset management experience in JP Morgan. Meanwhile, Danny shared his past career journey from graduation until now with me. He mentioned that when I met a dilemma on choosing a new job confronted with two offers, I should look ahead towards the potential development of this position, not only the immediate advantage.

Since the summer internship has opened, we discussed the current situation of recruiting. The official summer internship is eligible only for most of the classes of 2022 and 2021. It's hard to get into interviews because of the prerequisites above. So Danny gives me two efficient approaches. The initial one is utilizing available resources around you, such as official channels (i.e. NYUSH internship Wechat group), and the other one

is networking with NYU Alumni. Although my hunt for an internship is still in the process, I take advantage of these opportunities indeed to help my summer internship.

What's more, besides the dialogues above, Danny and I keep in touch to discuss some daily issues. Danny and I still keep in touch with each other. For example, I help Danny summarize the weekly dividends of Hong Kong stocks. For another example, when I am faced with the choice of internship (choosing a central enterprise or a foreign company), Danny will help me analyze the pros and cons one by one.

Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?

Danny, his previous mentees, and I have a dining chat. Although there are no specific topics about our conversation, I, as a sophomore, learn a lot from their experiences, which bring me new perspectives on my career development.

First, several mentees talked about their career dilemma during the eruption of the pandemic. Lawrence, who is already a junior this year at NYU Shanghai, shared his struggles in the past year. From being accepted by New York to staying at home due to the pandemic, he mentioned how he finally gives up going to New York in January 2020. Meanwhile, he accepted an internship in Tel Aviv as

part of the study-away program. Although Lawrence couldn't commit to the internship onsite, the kind boss finally agreed to offer this internship remotely. Coincidentally, Cindy also experienced this struggle. Last year, She was studying at NYU London while conducting an internship at that time, the pandemic also constrained her residence in London. As a senior, she strives to work on enterprise ESG. Luckily, although the school has halted the cooperation with her intern company, her boss decided to reserve this internship for her.

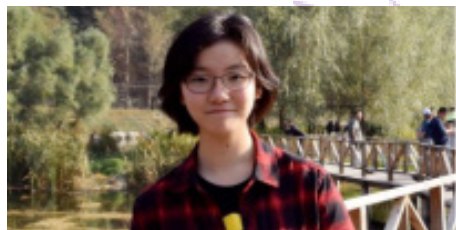
Now, Lawrence is seeking a summer internship while Cindy strives to seek a chance to work and stay in China as an international student.

Based on their career strait during the pandemic, I was inspired by how they adapted their career and study goals to the changing circumstances while learning more about the enterprise ESG business consulting knowledge, and investing industry.

Mentee:
Yuejia Zhang

(NYU Shanghai '23)

Yuejia Zhang is a sophomore and is majoring in Mathematics. Since there are many branches in Math like mathematical statistics, computational mathematics, and maths of finance, etc., she is confused about her career direction. Through communicating with her mentor Guoyao Wu, Yuejia hopes to figure out her future career path.



Mentor:
Guoyao Wu
(TANDON '10)

Guoyao is the co-founder of a Fintech company which is a key supplier of automatic trading systems and derivatives pricing solutions for banks, securities, and hedge funds in China. He is in charge of the system design and leads the team to develop the company's automatic trading platform and build-in algorithms for Bond/Precious metal/FX, etc.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

I was impressed by Mr. Wu's strong passion for his major and profession over the years, in which he always found joy and fresh ideas to absorb. This surprised me a lot because for most people, even when they are in the field they love, their passion would somewhat be eroded by the frustrations and many conflicts between ideals and reality along the way.

He's been a talented avid mathematics lover since very young, and what really impressed me was when he was talking about his experience about his university graduation project, a perfect combination of maths, his intrinsic love, and its practicality. Inspired by his mentor, he marveled at the power of maths as a fundamental subject that assisted him in building up financial models and solving numerical problems quite smoothly. This experience kindled his interest in entering the financial industry and making his hobby a profession.

What's more, he has always maintained a curiosity and interest in novelty and innovations, from newly published research reports of financial industries to some more advanced, cutting-edge technologies, such as artificial intelligence, deep learning, and Internet gaming industries, and he's always willing to combine those new trends with possible opportunities for his own industry to better fit in the changeable environment. The grasp and adaptability of the out-

side world is really crucial to survive and thrive in this era.

Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

Mr. Wu gave me a lot of suggestions from a math professional's perspective, some of which can be generalized to apply to all majors and disciplines. He advised me to pay special attention to what I am particularly interested in or good at while taking classes or internships, and also to be familiar with the areas I'm not interested in at all. In other words, we should be clear about our own personality traits and interests to find own "selling point" as early as possible, because for a company, a candidate who can do anything is actually the same as he or she can do nothing since the company can easily find someone who performs better in that area to replace him or her. Once I've determined my field of interest, I can focus on perfecting this particular aspect of my skills and target my internship search with higher accuracy, which will take fewer detours.

Another important takeaway from our conversation is that, for the field of interest, one should not just stop at the level of gathering information, but rather, make full use of our prior knowledge to do a few practical work and reproduction, such as making some small investments, or using open-source data to roughly simulate certain quantitative trading strategy and

process. These can be very difficult at early stages since the procedures are brand new, but can really provide more detailed industry insights than reading webpages because the most critical part only concerns how to handle bugs and challenges throughout the whole process. He shared with me that of the candidates he interviewed, in fact, very few had done practical hands-ons. This fails to equip them with in-depth understanding and practice of the industry.

Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

I found the quantitative finance industry research reports that Mr. Wu sent me something really informative and beginner-friendly. They clearly explained the theory behind models and data processing methods, arousing my interest in doing long-term research on this topic.

Moreover, I used to consider it would be very difficult to get in touch with an industry elite like Mr. Wu, thanks to his great sense of humor and empressment, all the time we spent was quite relaxing. I was really lucky to have Mr. Wu as my mentor and he will be my life-long role model to follow in both academic and professional directions.

Mentee:
Yu Zheng
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Yu Zheng is a sophomore and currently trying to figure out her major. She is interested in many majors like Business and Finance, Economics, Math, etc. Through talking with Wayne, she hopes to know more about the Financial world, which she has always been curious about.

Mentor:
Wayne Lee
(STERN '03)

Wayne Lee has worked in the global investment sector for over a decade, mainly dealing with financial regulatory bodies including the SEC in the US, the SFC in Hong Kong, and the CSRC in China. His areas of expertise include public listing and offering and regulatory compliance.



Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

Before meeting with Wayne, I was anxious and had limited ideas about my major and career di-

rection. I am interested in majors like Business & Finance, Mathematics, and Economics. To better plan for my future, I've conducted many different internships, hoping to discover my genuine interests. However, it turned out that what I could gain from internships is rather limited. For most of the time, I was solely doing simple and repetitive tasks. So, I asked Wayne about the true purposes and benefits of Internships.

Wayne's view on Internships is very insightful. He shared that observations are very important for internships. For example, we can observe how people from different departments interact with their counterparties and how people interact with their clients. These are practical skills that can't easily be learned from classes. Also, if we don't have a clear idea about what to learn, we can set targets, such as understanding the composition of Articles of Association or financial statements, as our goals during an internship. They are very useful knowledge to grasp.

Still, another important emphasis is that we should not just accept whatever internship appears to be available; it's better to have a clear goal about the internships and choose one based on our developmental needs.

Q: What changes did you make throughout the program?

Throughout the program, my views and understanding toward

academic study and work have changed. Prior to the program, I thought that I need to decide my major as soon as possible, take part in many activities and internships to gain social experiences. However, it's not practical to determine what major I want to pursue at the present stage; joining in different activities is also time-consuming. So, oftentimes I feel like I lose my direction and goals.

However, when we were talking about majors, Wayne told me major is not the only determinant of my future career. People from a history major could also excel in the financial industry. Also, if I find later that I'm interested in other majors, I can still change my concentration during my graduate study. So, I don't need to pressure myself to choose a major now, and I can further explore my interests. Thus, I've slowed down my pace, trying to figure out what I'm enthusiastic to learn more.

Furthermore, Wayne suggests selecting the internship based on my growth needs, I started to reconsider the purpose of my internship and the activities I took part in. I find some of them are not my true interests and I join them more because others select to take part. So, I decided to focus on my development needs and join the activities I have a passion for. These changes are really important to me because I'm clearer about what I want now.

Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?

What benefited me most from this program is that I gained a better understanding of the overall market and different industries, which contributes to finding my interests and strengths. During the meetings with my mentor, I learn more about the financial industry, especially the investment banking section. Wayne informed me a lot of background information about the financial industry, which helped me better understand the industry landscape.

Also, the panel talks of alumni from different industries are very beneficial. Through the talk, I can learn what other industries are like. I find that in different industries, valued and focused traits are quite different. Like in the consumer goods industry, people pay great attention to consumers' needs, which requires creative thinking and empathy. While in the financial industry, people tend to value analytical thinking more.

Before, I delved into an industry mostly through college courses and online resources. But now, I can learn directly from people from these industries. Knowing their working environment and different focuses help me ponder whether I'm interested in this industry.

Mentee:
Lexie Zhu
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Lexie Zhu is a sophomore who now changes her major from science and technology to a multidisciplinary major law.



Mentor:
Jie Zhu
(LAW '06)

Jie Zhu is a corporate lawyer in the Shanghai office of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, a Silicon Valley headquartered law firm with offices in the United States, China, and EU. Jie majored in electrical engineering as an undergraduate at Tsinghua University.



Q:What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

From my experience, I can say for sure that the NYU Alumni Executive Mentor Program is an excellent way to enhance the growth path for sophomore students who have some, but blurred ideas about their future. I use the word 'future' because my most valuable gains from this program are not work-related. My mentor transferred to NYU law school after getting the diploma in electrical engineering from Tsinghua University. Then he refused the return offer of a patent lawyer upon graduation because that would make his future follow the footsteps of his past. When I looked at his introduction on the alumni booklet before the program, I only sensed rebellious spirits in him. However, he gave me much more vibrant insights into the logic of his behaviors through our meetings. The main takeaway is that if we hang back, seek quick success and instant benefits, and prefer the seemingly best results over the fittest ones, we are preventing ourselves from getting the fullest possible value from our effort. Discovering your true interests and talents is so important that it deserves some time and effort. My mentor always told me not to jump to any quick conclusion about my future career because many changes would take place. My performance in one of the major courses or internships is far from enough to define my

competence for a job position. I learned from this program to take some time, try things out and focus on long-term benefits. This is something I believe everyone can benefit from hearing.

The idea of long-run performance casts an ongoing influence over my decisions. Before, I thought internships should be strictly linked to my majors. Their meanings exist only when they can serve for my graduate school applications. I failed to see the importance of professional etiquette, workplace norms, and social networks until I completed the program. Another example is that my mentor reminded me that the choice of your campus, your mentor, and even your surroundings will largely affect your life. I would merely focus on QS World University Ranking to choose my graduate school if he hadn't pointed it out. He also suggested a field trip to my intended school, a comprehensive understanding of the curriculum, and some research on mentors. We also talked about firm cultures in different regions of the world. I used to have some stereotypes regarding the hustle and bustle of big cities. But my mentor shows me the warmth and mildness hidden behind the image of hectic firms. The repulsion to utilitarian, eyes of discovery, the willingness to endure present pains for the sake of future pleasantness is now imprinted on my mind and will continue to help me in the future.

Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

I am very grateful for the opportunity to meet my mentor, an extremely courageous, brilliant, and accomplished man who encourages me to find my interest through trial and error. I freed myself from all those rules and restrictions and finally captured the infinite possibilities lying in front of me after the program. For future improvements, I would suggest that students from similar or interconnected majors can gather together with their mentors to hold some small seminars. More often, the professional interests of sophomore students are described in the form of large categories. This proposal may allow students to explore and evaluate different branches inside the category to find the most suitable path for themselves. Moreover, I'm looking forward to more offline group activities in the post-pandemic era. Now that my online experience is already fruitful and exciting, I cannot imagine how much fun you would have when it is your time to network with your mentors.

Mentee:
Scofield Zou
(NYU Shanghai '23)

Scofield Zou is a sophomore and majors in Business and Finance & Interactive Media Arts. He has a growing interest in media studies and urban sociology, aspiring to be a future strategist or scholar in the intersection. He regards business skills as the tool to understand and execute his visions while the greater good of the society is always prioritized in his career exploration.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

It is undeniably Stephanie's unique academic pursuit and career position at the intersection of law and business. China and the U.S. have entirely distinctive legal systems that are not at all analogous to each other. Stephanie completed her bachelor's degree in law and finance in China and went to NYU Law School for the master program. To study law as a graduate student in the states for a Chinese student is more like entering another universe, where you have no option but to start from scratch. The major connection that could link up her academic pursuit of law is the analytical and logical mindset one gets to practice on a regular basis through the journey. As for her career, she's mainly been in charge of international projects where the American law is involved. However, the solid foundation of the Chinese legal system built up from the undergraduate study, alongside a dual degree in finance, allows her to navigate the project more com-

prehensively. This hybrid existing in the two seemingly distant subjects is a desirable prototype for me to consider my current interest both in Business and Finance & Interactive Media Arts. Stephanie's story shows that there's always a possibility to connect one's potential and skill sets in the real world. Besides, she also made me realize how significantly law plays a role in the job market. It is never solely about debates in the criminal court but deeply penetrates every business regulation, production, distribution, and consumption.

Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year? What changes did you make throughout the program?

What benefited me the most throughout the program is the genuine relationships I got to cultivate with both mentors and peer mentees. Apart from reaching out to my mentor Stephanie for questions and concerns along the way, I was also able to meet other mentors with their mentees who are physically located in Shanghai. This provides me with a more comprehensive and diverse angle to examine the different industries that these mentors have expertise in. At various points in the past year, I started to reflect upon the emerging interest from myself, quite surprised at this age when we are "supposed to" have discovered our exact passion. And in fact, I listened to them. I found it tedious to dive deep into the pure

finance of equity and stocks which lacks the interaction with people. I, therefore, modified my career path from an investment banker to a potential consultant and engagement manager. As for IMA, I resonate tremendously with the media scholarly theories and film critique, which is somehow overshadowed by the heavy engineering focus of our school's curriculum. But I'm indeed determined to reach out to relevant professors and my mentor, as law and media theories are two subsets of social science, to explore the possibilities.

Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

I would say it is the exposure and practice of talking, debating, and interacting with senior industrial experts. This soft skill is actually highly valuable in a lot of prominent companies' preliminary assessment of candidates' personality as I learned from upper-class friends. By constantly reaching out to different mentors, I've developed a sense of professionalism to express my question and argument in a neat and efficient manner.

Mentor:
Stephanie Tang
(LAW '04)

Tang is currently a partner of Hogan Lovells, heading up its private equity practice in Greater China. Trained at law schools in both the United States and China and being bilingual and steeped in Chinese culture and customs, Stephanie specializes in helping foreign clients navigate the intricacies of Chinese issues and assisting Chinese clients who are ready to engage in outbound transactions and investments.

