



NYU Alumni Executive Mentor Program

2021-2022
MENTEE STORY BOOK

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Message to Mentees

Dear Mentees,

Unlike previous years, this year's mentorship program was beset by traveling restriction and prolonged lock down. Despite that, I believe all of you were still able to learn from and build a lasting relationship with your mentors through technology and effort. I'm glad that is the case.

Most of you joined the program because you're apprehensive of the choices you're to make for your future. As your mentors, we can see how that can be a scary proposition. We've been there. That's why we created this program. But as much as we tried to give you the best advice, it is you who must make the final decision. As such, I like to leave you all a few words which I hope capture some of the key messages our mentors wish to imprint upon you through this program. As I'm not a person known to be eloquent with words, I will instead borrow from a few people who are.

"In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing." – Theodore Roosevelt, former US president

"I hope that ... you make mistakes. Because if you are making mistakes, then you are making new things, trying new things, learning, living, pushing yourself, changing yourself, changing your world. You're doing things you've never done before, and more importantly, you're doing something." – Neil Gaiman, English author

"You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it." – Maya Angelou, American poet

Lastly, it is my sincere wish that your remaining years at NYU will be some of the most enjoyable in your life. And when you graduate, you'll be ready, or at least be brave enough, to face any challenges that may come your way. For challenges are not sent to destroy you. They are sent to strengthen you.

With warmest wishes!

Sincerely,
Alfred Wong
Program Co-Chair

Contents

Frank Bao	1
Bale Chen	3
Daiane Chen	5
Marian Chen	7
Zihua Chen	9
Kexin Deng	11
Jose Etienne Ortega Flores	13
Celia Forster	15
Jason Fu	17
Jingyao Fu	19
Yue Jia	21
Ziye Jin	23
Binxi Li	25
Ivana Li	27
Yutong Li	29
Yuxuan Li.....	31

Mark Ma	33
Sara Mui	35
Christy Natalisa	37
Xiao Peng	39
Zishan Qiu	41
Shuyi Shen	43
Maya Spaulding	45
Ruoming Sun	47
Xiaotong Tan	49
Han Wu	51
Peiyang Wu	53
Chenyi Xu	55
Nuo Xu	57
Shuhan Zhang	59
Xinchen Zhao	61
Lauren Zheng	63
Valeria Zhou	65

Mentee:
Frank Bao
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Frank is a sophomore majoring in Social Science. Before meeting with Wei, he had lots of questions about his future academic and career path. But every time he met with Wei, he heard many new insights and gained a lot of inspiration for his life, learning process, and future path.

Mentor:
Wei Gu
(GSAS '02)

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



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

I was so excited and could not wait to meet with my mentor – Wei Gu – when I got the admission email from the NYU Alumni Executive Program. Wei impressed me with her diverse background and career experiences in her bio. During our first meeting, I was hesitant about which location to choose for my study away semester, and Wei offered me comprehensive advice about this question. After telling her my potential “site list” and the reasons behind my choices, she advised me to make the decision based on my interests and the expectations of my future life. She explained to me a detailed example – Tel Aviv which is a city with the prominent features of “innovation”. She said: “Tons of tech companies grow there with their advanced technology and creativity, and they support their countries in constructing in the desert as one of the developed countries.” She also emphasized the important role that innovation and creativity play in further studies and future jobs. After that, I understood that the meaning of Study Away is seeking different lifestyles and cultures compared to Shanghai and finding more possibilities of experience outside of Shanghai.

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

During our meeting, I asked Wei

a question that haunted me for a long time – “should I go to graduate school or work directly after my graduation?” Wei’s answer made me reflect on my future introspectively. She recommended people carefully consider their reasons to pursue a graduate school degree because some students just follow the major trend with the thought that they can earn more money with a higher degree. Wei mentioned that people should better understand what kind of knowledge they should learn and master their field after personally experiencing it and devote themselves. More importantly, during this process, people can figure out whether they truly love their work. At the same time, after working for a while, people also can absorb knowledge more effectively and implement it practically and flexibly.

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

I would say, compared to one year ago, I am clearer about what my future goal is in my academic and career paths, which Wei helped me a lot with. Wei always supports my ideas for my future and provides me insightful advice on each of my ideas, which makes me consider them carefully. Also, Wei helped me to analyze feasibly to achieve my career goals, which makes me clearer about the directions I should make efforts in. The experience I gained from this program will contribute not only to my future career plan but also to my daily life. During

our meetings, we heavily discussed the topic of cooperating with a team effectively, both in work and study settings.

Wei told me that she thinks one effective method is that there should be one person who plays the role of handling the overall process, facilitating all the tasks within the group. At the same time, efficient communication is also one of the most significant factors that contributes to great group collaboration. I totally agree with Wei’s suggestions and think it would be beneficial to me in my future group projects.

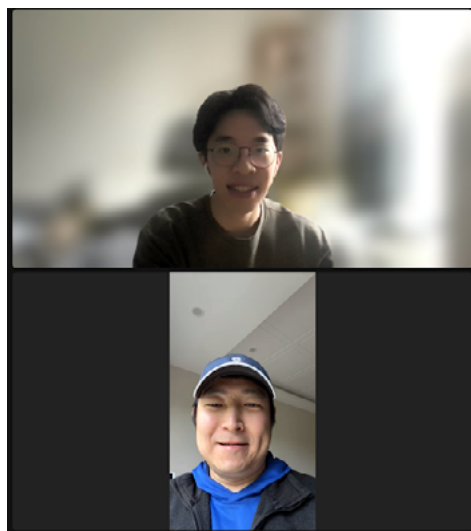
I really enjoyed the conversation I had with Wei throughout this year. Words cannot express my sincere gratitude. Thank you very much, Wei!

Mentee:
Bale Chen
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Bale is a sophomore student majoring in Data Science with a concentration in Artificial Intelligence. He's also the student worker leader at the NYU Shanghai Career Development Center and a Resident Assistant. He wants to become a researcher in a Data Science and Artificial Intelligence field or a Data Scientist.

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 the EU. Jie's practice focuses on mergers and acquisitions, private equity investments, and capital market transactions.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

My mentor Jie Zhu is a very established lawyer in his field, while he is also knowledgeable in different areas of studies. His huge life twist really impressed me. He quit his Ph.D. program in Computer Science at CMU and pursued a J.D. in NYU Law School. I really admire his decision-making skills, especially in those life-changing key moments. He taught me to follow my passion and put in my best efforts when making life decisions. You will be more decisive and motivated; then, your endeavor would eventually result in success. That's how he realized his passion for legal service and resolutely applied for NYU Law School. Jie is a great decision maker at those critical moments in his life, and really a role model for me.

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

Aside from being passion-driven, I also learnt how crucial self-motivation is to a researcher. I'm personally leaning towards a more academic career, and some of the other students who share the same goal as me might also find his advice very helpful. Jie once told me that researcher work in graduate school and after graduation are mostly self-directed, which requires strong self-motivation. If you aren't adequately interested in your field of study, you might not be able to take it as a lifelong job. He suggested

doing extra readings on recent academic papers to familiarize myself with the current state of the field. Also, enhancing the mathematical and computational skills would be helpful no matter how my area of study might turn out. This advice will help me build up my motivation and practice self-discipline, bracing myself for future research.

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

The mentor program is more than just advisory meetings. It's more like having a knowledgeable person to help me reflect on my past and plan for the future. I had three meetings with Jie, and everytime we met, I would update him on what I had been doing these days and what inspired me recently. He would help me discover the value of my current and past commitments as a sophisticated alumnus. Moreover, having a mentor to help me reflect on myself cleared away the mist of my future. Based on what I have been devoted to, he encouraged me to consolidate my mathematical foundation, actively communicate with one or two professors, and make full use of my study away year in New York. He truly listens to my bewilderment and needs, shares his rich experiences, and gives practical and insightful advice. I believe all the suggestions and wise words he shared with me would ultimately be the booster for my future, and I genuinely appreciate his time and generosity to share and advise. His mentorship helps me be more deci-

sive in the present and more sensible in the future.

Mentee:
Daiane Chen
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Daiane Chen is a sophomore student majoring in Business and Finance. Daiane is open to diverse career opportunities and ready to challenge herself to start from the beginning after talking with Carol. She is now actively exploring different career paths within the finance industry.

Mentor:
Carol Zhou
(STERN '03)

As Senior Vice President of China Business Innovation & Investment office for Shiseido, Carol is helping to shape the next phase of transformation for the company. Previously, she has held a number of management positions at multinational firms such as Unilever, Burberry, L'Oréal, and Marriott.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

From the moment we met, Carol impressed me with her friendliness in treating me as if she had known me for a long time. During both of our meetings, she set a comfortable environment to talk about my education, career development, and background. Through our conversations, I was very eager to hear about her background and how she rose to such prominent roles throughout her career. Having worked in a couple of beauty companies, Carol was an expert in explaining to me the work she had done and was able to break down her career in simple steps for me to understand. Carol's open-mindedness and adaptability showed me that she was as interested in learning from me as I was from her. I was very impressed with her constant motivation to keep challenging herself, whether that was through a different industry, different company, or a different country.

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

As an expert in the beauty industry, Carol was able to offer me many insights and advice in navigating my career that I would like to share. She taught me that an individual doesn't have to be an expert in beauty to work within the beauty industry, but must be passionate about their work and aware of what is ongoing within the market at all times. Being knowledgeable about

ongoing news and events will not only allow you to determine how it will impact your work but also make you a well-informed and rounded person. Additionally, if one is looking to restart their career in a different path or industry, they must be willing to start from the beginning and re-learn all the skills needed for it. Moreover, I learned that the right time to change careers is the moment you feel as if there are no growth opportunities left for you, meaning that you've learned and gained as much knowledge as possible from your role. It's about looking for new experiences, new challenges, and developing new skill sets while also keeping in mind what best fits you and your career path at that time.

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, the Alumni Executive Program helped enhance my knowledge of the intersection between the business and fashion industries as I tried to figure out where exactly I fit in. The experience and insights I have gained from this program taught me how to maintain professional relationships, communicate effectively, and keep an open mindset. Since the program, I have tried exploring different paths within the financial industry by applying to sophomore diversity programs. Through meetings with my mentors and discussions with other mentees, I became more comfortable in

shaping my own career paths and decisions. Whether it be finance, consulting, or fashion, I know that the career path I choose is not the one that I have to stick to for the rest of my life. When I expressed concern about the ability to change career paths, Carol told me to be open-minded and willing to challenge myself to start from the beginning if needed. Her insights really resonated with me as I feel much more content in expanding the opportunities to come and not feel limited by the goals I have as goals change over time. I am excited to see how I will continue to grow in my career and as an individual.

Mentee:
Marian Chen
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Marian is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. Through the program, she and her mentor Crystal talked about a variety of different topics. Marian felt more clarity and excitement towards her future career plans and aspirations.

Mentor:
Crystal Gao
(STERN '00)

Crystal Gao is a senior Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) member, and 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.



Below is my interview with my mentor:

Q: How has working at a venture capital been different from your previous industries ?

I always encourage young people to get into venture capital because you get to meet many interesting people from various different backgrounds. Private equity and investment banking are focused on mature businesses. When you work with them, they are already an adult and therefore, you cannot necessarily change the way they think. If you are a VC, you know these people from when they are young and flexible. They have a vague idea of what they want to do, but they mostly don't know how to get there. It's almost like you are going on a discovery trip with them. You get to see them struggle, you get to see them fall, you get to see them strengthen themselves again and try new directions. It's a fun journey where you get to witness a lot of that and really start to understand humanity.

Q: Can you break down what consulting is and the general skills required?

In consulting, you are working with very mature clients and companies. They have a problem that they don't think they can solve by themselves, so they come to you. Sometimes the solution can be quite simple, but they cannot make the decision or are too busy. Other times, it is truly a problem they cannot understand.

Consulting provides a good framework and will help you understand different organizations and types of businesses. If you are unclear about what you want to do, consulting is a good place to start. You get to see different sectors and you can figure out which ones are right for you. Consulting takes analytical skills and soft skills. If you have been in consulting, generally speaking, you tend to be a bit more people-oriented and more skilled in getting in people's favor. You also develop the skill set of doing good research and the ability to synthesize and summarize a problem to form a hypothesis.

Q: How was the process of getting into McKinsey while in the graduate program at Stern?

For us, there was a placement office that was quite good at Stern. In the first year, the school already started helping people to organize resumes, networking, and mock interviews. There were also many recruiting events, so you try to go to as many as you can. My unique angle of getting into McKinsey was through information technology rather than consulting. The majority of the interview was about my overall fit to McKinsey and my previous experience. I went through three rounds and then I received an offer. I decided to choose this role as opposed to the other one I was offered because it provided a better office environment and decent people. I also went to McKinsey and asked if they were willing to increase the wage because it was

lower than NYU's surveyed rate. They agreed and even matched my other offer. This also caused them to realize that the wages offered to interns were lower than the school average, so they ramped up everyone else's pay as well. I really appreciated it because they didn't have to do it, but they were very fair.

Mentee:
Zihua Chen
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Zihua is a sophomore majoring in Neural Science. Now, Zihua has a better understanding of how to become a medical scientist and what life would be like. He realized the huge effort it takes to take care of patients and conduct research as he visited his mentor's lab and talked to his lab members.

Mentor:
Dr. Shisuo Du
(Clinical Oncology, NYU Langone Medical Center 2011-2015)

Dr. Du is an oncologist in Zhongshan Hospital Fudan University, one of the most authoritative hospitals in China. He holds an M.D. and a Ph.D. in radiation oncology. He is not only a physician, but also a medical scientist, with a solid background in clinical medicine and scientific research.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

What impressed me most was the courage that my mentor, Dr. Du, demonstrated to make major shifts in his career. After completing his doctoral training at Fudan University and working at a hospital for a while, he made an unusual decision: go to NYU Langone Medical Center to do post-doctoral research. I can't imagine how hard it would be to suddenly shift one's center of life from clinical staff to biomedical research, not to mention the difference in culture. More surprisingly, even after receiving a tenure-track professor position at a U.S. university, he returned to China to continue his career as a clinical doctor. If those decisions were never made, Dr. Du would never achieve what he has now accomplished. He has made exceptional achievements both as a medical scientist and a clinical doctor.

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

To be a medical scientist, only knowing the functions of a specific protein is not enough. You might also need to know the future applications and implementations. More importantly, Dr. Du showed me that although such a career is often less well-paid; the feeling of finally seeing the research result published in the journals and being accepted by other searchers is something that other jobs could not provide.

Dr. Du's experiences and advice changed my career development plan. More specifically, he helped me make a decision as either a lab scientist or a physician-researcher. At the end of my freshman year, I was quite confused about whether I should change my major to some other field that requires fewer school years so I could start my career earlier, a field such as computer science or business. At that time, having seen so many negative remarks about a career in biology and medicine, I was once struggling with whether quitting early would be a good idea. Thanks to this program and Dr. Du's introduction of his career story, I realize such a job can offer something that other careers cannot, which helped me better determine a career in research in biomedical sciences.

Q: How does it feel to follow the only mentor who is not in the field of business and finance?

Indeed, having this unique mentorship is different from other mentor-mentee pairs, as the main focus was not on networking. However, this kind of uniqueness provides other kinds of benefits. Only a few students are studying life sciences in our university, and the research topics that our faculty covers are limited. More importantly, we don't have an affiliated hospital, so we cannot see the direct applications of the research outcomes. With the help of Dr. Du, I can directly appreciate how research can benefit patients.

Mentee:
Kexin Deng
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Kexin Deng is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. She holds great interests in auditing, consulting, quantitative analysis, and investment banking, and she is still exploring possibilities. She gained more insights into the finance industry and to gain advice from an industry expert in the program.

Mentor:
Felicia Li
(STERN '95)

Felicia joined Deloitte U.S. in 1998. She is currently a senior technical partner at the Deloitte Shanghai Global Capital Market Group. She served more than 20 companies in obtaining their IPO in the US 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 lady who is kind and helpful. She's been treating me like her family, advising me about career exploration, life attitude, and ways of thinking that will be beneficial to me for a lifetime. Felicia always looks on the bright side. Whenever I talk with Felicia, I feel empowered and goal-driven. Felicia's genuine attitude reminds me of the gentleness of a mother, but her dedication to career reveals her strong personality. Ever since she graduated from NYU Stern, she has worked for Deloitte for twenty years. Whether cooperating with other teams, providing additional client service, or shouldering different responsibilities at different positions, she can always combine progression with gaining different experiences and is dedicated to every single task she does.

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

Networking:

Felicia said the Asian kids tend to have technical skills, but we tend to find ourselves at a disadvantage when competing for internships. What matters is not only what you know but also who you know. In other words, excelling in a business career is not just about your academics and the number of As on your transcript. It's about impressing someone so that they think of you next time they have an oppor-

tunity. Socializing is all about building trust. It's about making personal branding, being present, and involving. Mixing with people not similar to us also helps us learn to operate outside of our comfort zone.

Resume-building vs. personal fulfillment:

Personal fulfillment is about enriching what we have, which is different from resume-building. Resumes are one-page summaries but do not say who we are. People can have very different stories even with the same academic, professional, and background information, so what matters the most is our own unique personal experiences.

Career exploration and expectation management:

Felicia said that being so young and having a lot of time and resources, spend some time finding out what you want, who you are. Different fields require expertise, so strive to stand out. Whoever smiles to the end is not the smartest but always the most diligent one. So we should learn to manage expectations and realize that even little achievements are crucial for our personal growth.

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

In terms of major choice, I decided to declare Business and Finance as my major and did so by the end of the mentor program. I also decided to pursue Data Science as a double major or at least a minor, as well

as math as a minor. Felicia didn't choose anything for me, but recommended that BF and SS may not be as tight as a combination of BF and DS. She believes that I shouldn't give up my passion for social issues and should integrate social science belief in Finance and the research and extracurricular activities, especially in sustainability and social responsibility fields.

In terms of study away sites, I decided to study away in New York for two semesters. Felicia shared her New York memories with me, recalling that it is a place of "two extremes with all the possibilities in the middle." She warmly encourages me to cherish the opportunity of studying in New York, and also engage in Stern's business courses and major-related activities.

Finally, Felicia believes life is about pursuing happiness, and we should value the process. Inspired by Felicia's rich life experience, I've realized that life is full of uncertainties and possibilities. Each of our choices will lead to a beautiful journey. As Felicia suggested, we should step out of our comfort zone to embrace the uncertainties. If you feel like you might regret not doing something in the future, don't hesitate to do it!

Mentee:
Jose Etienne Ortega Flores
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Jose Etienne Ortega Flores is a sophomore majoring in Data Science. After talking to his mentor Jack, he had a clearer picture of the Data Science and Computer Science industry. He looks forward to putting what he has learned in class to practice through taking internships.

Mentor:
Jack Huang
(STERN EMBA '12)

Jack is the Managing Partner at M&S Systems Designers Inc. He is a Counsel and Business Leader for organizations ranging in scope from ground start-ups to multi-million dollar corporations in IT services and market segments in the financial services and insurance industry.



My mentor and I met at a Japanese hotpot restaurant near the school. He told me he was helping a Japanese financial analysis company expand into China, thus the Japanese restaurant. He had a similar track as other mentors. He finished his undergraduate studies in China, but he went abroad for his Masters degree. Once he had deep knowledge about computer science, he changed tracks and got an MBA at NYU Stern. He now specializes in the administration of IT services and financial analysis. At least in China, there is this notion that young people will work in programming but will switch tracks to administration as they get older to become project managers or operations managers.

We discussed a few trending topics in the field of computer science and data analytics. We found that we are both conservative about what data we share on the internet, since he knows first-hand all of the data that is extracted and how it can be used. This topic naturally took us to cyber security. The biggest problem in cyber security is the people who, for example, are too eager to provide information to the internet. A reason why managers need such a strong background in computer science is that they know what corners can be cut and which cannot. For example, experts will often insist on the company using password managers and constantly updating libraries even if the updates don't add features. But the non-IT people must still be trained in not opening suspicious emails.

He said that at some point he could offer me a non-paid internship at his company, although I have not been able to follow up on the offer because of finals. Taking a data science internship now is quite appropriate since I've just finished taking a course in Probability and Statistics and I will take data science centered-courses next semester like Econometrics and Machine Learning. An internship would allow me to learn about the application of the theory I am learning in school.

I feel the talk with my mentor and all the experience of discussing in the kick-off events were really rewarding and helpful to my understanding of the career world of computer science and data science. It certainly made me gain an overall picture of the career, academic world, and the industrial side of computer science, data science, and financial analytics. There are more and so many questions and I hope to put theory into my future practice. I hope to continue to be in contact with my mentor for years to come!

Mentee:
Celia Forster
(NYU Shanghai '24)

By completing this program, Celia is no longer limited by the path that she initially intended to take and is now expanding possible opportunities by taking a set of courses that she may not have considered a year ago. Celia is excited to see how this new mindset continues to influence her academic career.

Mentor:
Lei Yao
(STERN '15)

Lei is a 10+ years' veteran in Marketing Communications. She has held various positions in marketing communications, starting with Nokia, then moving to BMW, General Motors and Jaguar Land Rover. In 2014, Lei has since transitioned to the financial industry, and has worked for Standard Chartered and Vanguard.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

My mentor, Lei Yao, has been a very insightful figure during the past academic year. While her numerous high-level marketing positions throughout her career are certainly impressive and inspiring, I would say that her optimism is what truly makes her stand out. From the first time we met and introduced ourselves, she radiated positive energy, encouraging me to let go of my initial nervousness and feel comfortable enough to ask her anything. Even in our most recent meeting, a phone call from each of our respective lockdown residences, she reminded me to “be positive.” Naturally, the COVID-19 pandemic has become a common topic of our conversations. We have discussed how it has shaped the marketing industry, and how it has prompted the fast digital transformation of our daily lives. There are many negative aspects we could have found ourselves grumbling about, but Lei always manages to put a positive spin on these challenges. Because her job requires frequent travel to Beijing, where the company is managed, the most recent lockdown has allowed her to spend more time with family in Shanghai and refresh some hobbies such as reading. This has given me a new perspective on the situation and inspired me to reflect and continue working hard towards my goals.

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

The Alumni Executive Mentor Program coincided with a great period of change in my own academic path. I entered this program as an Interactive Media Arts major, with little understanding of what kind of career I would pursue in the future. In fact, my motivation for joining the program was to gain more insight into a potential path. Through the many meetings with my mentor and hearing about the experiences of my peers in our Mentee Get-Together event, I was motivated to take charge of my academic path and shape it in the direction I desired. I am now pursuing a double major in Social Science (Psychology) in addition to Interactive Media Arts. When I expressed concern over my unclear postgraduate plan, I recalled my mentor, Lei Yao, reminding me to explore my interests and not burden myself with the stress of the future.

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

I believe this program has helped me break out of my comfort zone. As I plan to study away in New York for the Fall 2022 semester, I sought out my mentor's advice from her time at NYU. One thing that she said that stood out to me was how she discovered some new talents and

was able to implement them in her career. She told me that she never considered herself to be talented in math, but when taking some math classes at NYU, she realized that it came rather naturally, and she was later able to bring in these analytical skills to sharpen her marketing skills. This story stuck with me and I am now looking forward to selecting some courses in New York that I ordinarily would not attempt.

It has also boosted my networking skills, which is something that will continue to help me in the future. Although I am relatively shy and new to the professional community, the time spent with my mentor and fellow mentees has given me substantial insight and practice to move forward confidently in my future endeavors.

Mentee:
Jason Fu
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Jason is a sophomore student majoring in Business and Finance. Jason grew not only as a student looking to find the right industry for him, but also as a student who gained knowledge and confidence in his passions for that industry.

Mentor:
Joshua Fu
(STERN '03)

As a Chinese American who grew up all around the world, Joshua brings this global perspective to everything he does. His career includes an organic mixture of creativity and business. He is the founder of Splendor Plus, a global philanthropy effort, enabling and inspiring humanity to grow and develop in love.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

I remember being nervous and I was always thinking about, “Will my mentor and I get along?” On the first day I met Joshua, he was so open and willing to communi-

cate with me. His kindness and willingness to talk about his history in various industries and diverse background taught me to have a more global perspective while pursuing my passions. Joshua grew up with immense talent in business, finance, and the arts. Our passions for acting and the media and entertainment industry while pursuing a finance degree really allowed us to connect on both a personal and professional level. Though he studied Finance at NYU Stern, he steered away from the conventional investment banking profession, and decided to use what he had learned to start his own company known as Splendor Plus which focuses on the connection of investment, innovation, culture, and arts to create a bridge to help nurture and develop those with a globally-minded perspective.

What also impressed me, besides his incredible background and experience, is how patient, kind, and friendly he was to me when we first met. He was real with me and was always there to give advice whenever I have a question in mind. When I came to Joshua, I planned on majoring in Business & Finance and minoring in Film Production but never really explored the various career opportunities to combine both into one. This was when Joshua introduced me to film finance, which could combine my passions for the media and entertainment industry and finance. One of the greatest quotes I will always remember from Joshua is: “The key is to balance ‘being professional’ and ‘being you’.” Joshua not only taught

me about the processes of entering the film and investment industries, but also taught me the emphasis of staying true to myself and carrying my passion into whatever I do.

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

This program definitely benefited me throughout the whole academic year, as I had someone to ask for advice, whether it be about class related or career related questions. Joshua was already there for me and gave me the right advice, giving me the confidence and opportunity to sharpen my skills in finance, acting, and understanding the film industry. I am extremely grateful to have known Joshua, and he is someone I know I can talk to any time. Joshua isn’t just a mentor who will show you paths to the career you would like to be a part of, but he is also one of my best friends that I could always share my happiness and passions with. Whether it be talking about video games, acting, film, or finance, he is someone that will always be there for me and believes in me.

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

As I look back on this program, I most definitely learned many incredible things, whether it be communicating with new people or understanding the technicalities behind the finance and film industries.

I will never forget the time Joshua invited me to a Thanksgiving dinner where many of his associates were present. I remember being nervous, and I wasn’t sure how to interact with the new people as they were much older than me. I remember Joshua telling me to just be myself and never be afraid to be the first one to reach out, and I took his advice to heart. I slowly but surely gained the confidence to interact with those who were new and older. One of the biggest takeaways being a mentee of Joshua is the confidence in connecting with others. Even though I still worry about my future at times, seeing my peers get internships, Joshua told me that every person has their own road and that life isn’t a race, but a marathon. His words provided me with a lot of patience and I learned to not rush things just because everyone else around me is doing the same thing. I know that I always have someone there for me and whom I could seek advice from.

Mentee:
Jingyao Fu
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Jingyao Fu is a sophomore majoring in Interactive Media Business, minor-ing in Chemistry. She is currently in-terested in pursuing a career with sus-tainable business development. She is hoping to achieve the status of “doing well by doing good” in the future.

Mentor:
William Hsieh
(STERN MBA '00)

Will has worked mostly in the Great-er China wellness and entertainment fields for the past 20+ years. He is cur-rently the Vice President of Content for FITURE—a smart wellness equip-ment 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?

My mentor William Xie is the Vice President of Content for FITURE and is kind, diligent and warm-heart-ed. He often gives me the warmest welcome and hug, providing me with full security and honor. There are three important and memorable sectors according to William: luck, personality, and enthusiasm.

Luck:

He said he was very lucky that his friends knew his passion for music and then offered him the marketing position. Yet, I originally regarded it as indulgence. Without their excel-lent violin levels, without his nice communication skills, how could he get to know this friend and how can his friends offer the job to him?

Personality:

Concerning memory and person-alities, William mentioned that he believed his “star trait” was respon-sibility, which was the key point that led him to success. This perspective taught me that although “unique-ness” is a great point for potential employers to remember you by, re-sponsibility is the true foundation of yourself.

Enthusiasm:

The music industry is William’s fa-vorite industry and it is full of en-thusiasm, so he is full of energy and motivation for his work. He has been to some game companies before, but the boring work experience of writing reports is very different from playing games, which made

him choose to continue to work in music and yoga (another hobby of William’s).

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

William maintained that we were now too young to know our strengths and passions, thus “ex-ploration” will be the backbone of our career development. However, a result was still needed after ex-ploration, which was the answer to two questions: “What do you like?” and “What you are good at?” The final answer of “likes” needed to be narrowed down (e.g., consult-ing, design consulting, mouse de-sign consulting). The final answer of “strengths” didn’t only focus on hard skills (e.g., UI/UX design) but also paid more attention to soft skills (e.g., business development, preference for group study, prefer-ence to work independently).

Apart from this, William taught me a lot when I was feeling down. At one moment, I felt really depressed and couldn’t be lit up my spirit to concentrate on work, so I asked William for help. He taught me a solution that sounded contradicto-ry but true. First of all, hang in there. You should believe that nothing is really worth getting depressed about. Then, just think about what you can do about it, whatever the next step may be. And if you can’t do anything about it, then you don’t need to be upset, since you can’t do anything about it.

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

I have received many insights from my mentor William, which have been helpful for my future career as I mentioned above. He has helped me become a more rational person who can analyze facts and phe-nomena. For example, I haven’t been in a low mood for a long pe-riod of time since our last meeting because I would usually only worry about the issue itself, instead of the reason and future plan to improve it. Now, I have a detailed spreadsheet to manage my emotions and make plans for the short-term future.

Besides, I also feel really inspired by other mentees. During the get-to-gether meeting with all the men-tees, we shared a lot about what mentors told us in the small group. Since each mentee focused on dif-ferent fields and angles, I learned interview strategies, and the im-portance of a unique personal sell-ing point for my future career path. From my perspective, there could be more get-together meetings with similar background mentees. We should not only produce sum-maries of our meetings with our own mentor, but we also can gen-erate summaries organized by re-search group and brainstorm more insightful results. In the future, I will continue to practice the mentoring spirit and provide more help and support for those who need it.

Mentee:
Yue Jia
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Yue Jia is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. Yue learned valuable advice from Michael. To find out where her interest lay, she participated in a business competition in Asset Management, tried getting an internship in consulting, and has planned to take law-related courses in the future.

Mentor:
Michael Qi
(LAW '96)

Mr. Qi is a founding member of Fangda Partners with over 25 years of practice experience in China and New York. Mr. Qi focuses on corporate finance practice, including PE/VC investments/divestments, domestic and overseas merger/acquisitions/restructuring, capital markets, corporate matters.



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

The first thing is to always figure out the rationale behind your choices or preferences. Once Michael and I casually talked about what my favorite movies are, and I said *Interstellar*, *Mission: Impossible* – *Ghost Protocol*, and *Dead Silence*. It didn't occur to me that there was a deeper connection between these movies until Michael pointed out that my movie preferences all centered around “fantastic things” beyond ordinary life. Not only is this about my movie preferences, but it may also reflect my life attitude and type of life I long for. Similarly, this mindset of finding the rationale behind choices could be applied to the choice of major and future career path.

Knowing what's behind your decisions helps you to understand yourself and discover where your true passion lies. In terms of finding future possible careers, try asking yourself, “What has motivated me to follow this career path? What will it bring me in the future? Is it a reasonable choice made by myself or is it just a projection from the outside world?”

After figuring these out, the second thing I learned is to never limit yourself. Don't let external factors affect your own judgment and thus limit your thoughts without even realizing it. Our choices of majors and careers could be influenced by our

parents' expectations, peer pressure, and the social mainstream. There would indeed be constraints when making up our minds. Yet we still could explore our real passion throughout our time in college, for example, by taking advantage of school resources. Even if you choose a certain major in college, that doesn't mean that you can only pursue that one path. Don't limit yourself to future options. Listen to your heart and follow where your passion leads.

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

In the past, I was only imagining one possibility after graduation, which was to get into law school and possibly become a lawyer in the future. Now, I realized that there's not only one way to achieve my ultimate goal after talking with Michael. I stopped setting limits for myself and started to explore my interest in different fields and embrace every possibility. I began to rethink what my strengths are and reflect on how my past experiences would lead me in the future. Now, I feel relieved from the pressure to go in the only direction into the future. I have become more passionate and confident to explore different fields in every aspect of life, and more determined to take any chance I might have with a more open mind. I joined a Shanghai Student Arts Jury as an extension of my interest in dancing, became an assistant editor in a digital business

challenge to learn about digital innovation in modern business, and committed to being a Residential Assistant to practice my leadership and communication skills. I could always learn something new from these seemingly irrelevant activities to get to know my inner self, and finally, help me to find and pursue the path I'm most suitable for.

Mentee:
Ziye Jin
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Ziye is a sophomore, intending to major in Computer Science. Through this program, Ziye has gained a clearer insight of her future academic and career pathways. She has also received a clearer picture of the job market and feels more confident with her choice.

Mentor:
Mark Yang
(CIMS '99)

Mark is the managing director and board member of Yueyang Kaimeite Electronic and Specialty Rare Gases Co., Ltd., and a partner of First Rainbow Ltd. Mark is also a General Partner of ValueFuse Investors LP., which invests in North American stocks by combining quantitative trading strategies and long-term investing principles.



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

During our second meeting, I asked Mr. Yang whether I should apply for a summer research program or apply for a summer internship. He suggested that if I plan to go to graduate school and work instead of going to a PhD program, then internships are more important than doing research. This suggestion gave me a clearer direction and helped me better allocate my time.

Moreover, he also suggested that I find the field that I have a passion for before applying for graduate school. It is better to first know what field I want to start a career in, and then apply for a related masters degree to learn specifically how the industry works. As internships are an important exploration of my interest, Mr. Yang also gave me some suggestions on finding internships - finance internships like hedge funds, consulting firms, or technology companies, which can give me an overview of how the industry functions.

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

I was hesitating between a finance major or a data science/computer science major. But Mr. Yang emphasized the importance of laying a solid foundation of math and pro-

gramming skills during my undergraduate studies. So, I decided to pursue a computer science major now. Furthermore, my networking skills have been greatly improved, and I began to know how to communicate with a senior professional in my future field.

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

I'd like to see more gatherings with all the mentors and mentees, like the program kick-off event. At the program kick-off event, I had the chance to communicate with other mentors and mentees from other fields and majors. I learned more about how other industries function from their sharing. As interdisciplinary learning is essential in society nowadays, having the chance to communicate with professionals from other fields may be beneficial to our future career. Also, the kick-off event was a very social occasion, which was a good opportunity to improve our networking skills with both peers and senior professionals.

Mentee:
Binxi Li
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Binxi is a sophomore majoring in Math and Data Science. She did not have a clear career goal, and she felt that the professional industry is far away from her academic life. After meeting with Guoyao, Binxi has a better view on her future plan and feels incentivized by Guoyao's passion and insistence in his industry.

Mentor:
Guoyao Wu
(TANDON '10)

Guoyao is the co-founder of a Fintech company which is a key supplier of automatic trading system and derivatives pricing solution 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.

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

Financial markets are divided into primary and secondary markets. The primary market is mainly for investment, securities, mergers and acquisitions, etc., which requires practitioners with good image and communication skills. Their responsibilities include helping merge two companies, and help companies to appear in the market.

On the other hand, the secondary market is more related to industries such as quantitative measurement and private equity, which require practitioners with solid mathematical skills. Practitioners mainly predict future market trends through industry research and establish mathematical econometric models to make investment decisions. The working hours of the secondary market are relatively fixed, usually from 9 to 6, and there are legal holidays. The practitioners in the secondary market that we are familiar with are fund managers. However, there are potential risks for practitioners. For example, in recent years, the prospects of researchers in the real estate industry are doomed to be bad, while the prospects of researchers in the medicine and new energy industries are good. Because of the directness of private equity with money, the return is also comparatively high.

The working environment in the secondary market is often dull and repetitive. I think that there is one thing you need to think about is your future career path and whether you'd like to stick to it, and do it without pain.

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

I believe that not all students are lucky enough to identify their academic passions at an early age and commit themselves to a certain field without further hesita-

tion. Many students, like me, enter university without a clear academic interest and potential career path. I confirmed my determination in Financial Engineering, which is also the path Mr. Wu chose. It is more challenging than investment in technical aspects. My career goal is to enter a private equity company in the future. Mr. Wu encouraged me to try hard courses like Machine Learning, Linear and Nonlinear Optimization, and Econometrics. He uses his own experience at work to tell me the importance of coding skills. Also, he reminded me that in finding an internship, I should think clearly about the direction. And, if I have the plan to enter big names, it is of vital importance to keep a high GPA. A good way to find my career path is to go through some job descriptions of companies, to get an idea of what they do. I used to decide to just get a minor in Data Science, but now I plan to double major in mathematics and data science. It is Mr. Wu's passion for developing new things and insistence on the financial industry which stimulated me to continuously work hard and challenge myself.

Q: Other things to share?

Mr. Wu first completed his undergraduate studies in applied mathematics at Tongji University, and then finished his graduate studies in financial engineering at New York University, Tandon. He said that It would be much easier to study financial engineering after my undergraduate mathematics studies. Regarding my upcoming interview

in the fixed income department of a fund company, he recommended that I read books about economics. He suggested that being familiar with the trends, GDP, and actual interest in China in case of being asked. I benefited a lot from my meeting with Mr. Wu this time. He said that he would talk to me about some specific professions in the primary and secondary markets, such as insurance and quantitative measurement, as well as the detailed information of these professions, such as salary and specific work content. I appreciate Mr. Wu so much.

Mentee:
Ivana Li
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Ivana is a sophomore majoring in Data Science. Her mentor shared lots of useful information and resources about careers, life and personal development, which strengthened the bond between Ivana and her mentor in this wonderful union.

Mentor:
Theodore (Teddy) Low
(STERN '03)

Teddy is currently Senior Director at Nippon Paint China Holdings where he focuses on value creation in the China chemicals space. He was previously in the Chairman's Office at CP Group, a Thailand based conglomerate, focusing on APAC markets.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

Teddy is a really kind and considerate person. When the lockdown in Shanghai just began, although he had a lot to consider, focusing on corporate strategy for Nippon Paint China, as well as taking care of his own family and newborn, he would still consistently care about how things were going for me as well as other previous mentees.

In Teddy's life and decisions, I see how a person can maintain a role as a strong leader in a global corporation while truly considering the well-being of every single person around him. The efforts he made really impressed me and helped me learn a lot.

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

In my first year at NYU Shanghai, I used to struggle a lot with taking additional major courses that would help me better acquire the hard skills I need for my future career. The predicament was that courses I am truly interested in did not seem to be fully relatable, and even in opposition with my career development direction.

When I was faced with this pressure of guaranteeing a satisfactory job and stable career path, Teddy told me to take a broader view and take courses that I have a curiosity in and passion for during my college life. He told me that while hard skills are an important foundation, these can be learned from different chan-

nels, even beyond the college classes you choose to take. He highlighted that the values and insights you learn from the discussions with professors and students are an integral part of college. While college courses can provide you with background and introductory knowledge about fields that you are interested in, they are an appetizer to a subject.

Therefore you also need to take the initiative to explore beyond the knowledge presented to you and reach out to the industry leaders and professors (both in classes you may or may not be enrolled in) of subjects, and projects you are interested in. This better formulates who you are and what you really want to devote most of your time to.

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

First of all, this program aims to build mentorship connections between mentees and their mentors. This encourages me to learn how to connect with people with successive achievements and how to do informational interviews. In the beginning, I was afraid and didn't know how to behave when talking to my mentor.

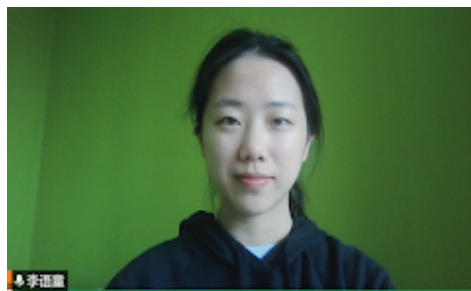
But as the program went on, I was given a lot of constructive suggestions from the reflection meeting with the CDC staff and a great amount of support from talking with Teddy. These experiences gave me the courage to reach out to any-

one I would like to learn from in academic fields at any moment.

Moreover, the soft skills I learned in the program will not only help me in the future workspace, but also throughout my whole lifetime. The program reminded me of the fact that I should be more proactive when networking with other people and actually get out of my comfort zone and communicate with others. That's when invaluable insights and learning experiences come.

Mentee:
Yutong Li
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Yutong is a sophomore, pursuing a double major in Business and Finance and Social Science. Yutong is now more motivated to actively seek for opportunities with goals and more prepared to face incoming challenges with adaptations from her mentor's guidance.



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: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

Rooted in the industry with rich experiences and sophisticated insights, Danny certainly has been a wonderful mentor and guide. When Danny introduced his career path to me, I was impressed with his choices and dedication to find and fit into the positions where his talent could shine. Danny listed two significant moments in this path that had a major impact on him.

The first important moment is how he decided to enter the path of business. Danny chose the major of Business under quite accidental circumstances. It was from a suggestion of one of his classmates during undergraduate studies at a university in New York. Now looking back on it, Danny thinks it was indeed the right decision for him.

The other moment also concerns studying. After joining JP Morgan and working for some time, Danny wanted to improve his own capabilities. Asking one senior colleague about how to be more successful in his career, the suggestion Danny received is to continue studying with a MBA degree to gain both more skills and individual competency in the workplace. Benefiting from JP Morgan's arrangements, which encouraged employees to continue a higher level of education, Danny entered NYU Stern School of Business and earned an MBA degree. Danny said, "During my time in Stern I learnt a lot about business and the industry I was in, the knowledge I

received had a profound impact on me and my future career."

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

Exploration is always essential, and it is crucial for both personal and professional growth! When success is all about one's approaches to learning things and making connections with the world, it could really be of importance to take your pace and think before rushing into things. Danny pointed out during our meeting that when everything seems so undecided, people could actually calm down and find regularity, such as referring to history. Personally, I would like to interpret the idea to apply it to the overall situation, in which the single individual can make personal adaptations. Danny actually employed Yi Jin's philosophy to explain to me how to empower myself. In addition to that, when it comes to specific steps for one to explore and adapt, Danny suggested digging into one or two careers in 8-10 years for undergraduates, and I think it is very useful for students like me to have this estimation to refer to, especially in business-related fields.

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

I am doing a double major in Business & Finance and Social Science and have been very struggling with

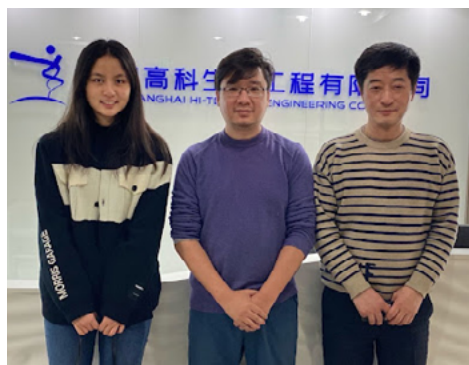
the balance between the pursuit of the two majors as well as academic and professional choices. I would have a feeling of panic when thinking about the future path during the beginning time of my sophomore year. Danny offered some insights regarding finding the intersections in between, such as the real estate industry he had experience in and ESG for corporate business; also, it is feasible to keep the interest as a life-long hobby or a leisure activity when finding the related job opportunities are relatively limited.

Mentee:
Yuxuan Li
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Yuxuan is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. Although she felt peer pressure, she learned from Wayne to explore first and then make the right decision. After the program, she feels less stressed and more confident about her future career.

Mentor:
Wayne Lee
(STERN '03)

Wayne Lee 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's something you would like to share with other students?

1. GPA is important, but university is more than that. Since NYU provides us with the excellent opportunity of studying abroad, we should fully take advantage of that opportunity. Wayne told me that I should spare one day every week to do a city tour or exploration. Interactions with the city and people will leave a wonderful experience in my life, which may affect my future views and choices.

2. Find what you are good at and make full use of it. Everyone has their own strengths and weaknesses, so don't be upset for being not perfect. Look for the aspects you are good at and utilize your advantage to reach your goal. Similarly, when facing a question that you are not familiar with, one can use research ability to learn it online or reach out to professionals by networking. You can always find a suitable solution to the problem.

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

Wayne is an expert in investment banking. Throughout this program, he clearly pointed out the competitiveness and working logic in the industry. Other than professional knowledge, investment bankers need strong socializing skills to build up a relationship with their clients. You need to have several client resources or strong interpersonal relationships to enter and gain success in the industry. Networking

is an important part of investment bankers' work. Wayne encourages students to be open to any possible career choice. He wanted to make this path clearer for us when we make our choices.

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

The mentor program provided a great opportunity for us to gain professional perspectives from our experienced and outstanding alumni. If students fully utilize the opportunity, we will not only establish industry insights but also improve lifelong personal development.

At the beginning of my sophomore year, I was very anxious about my future. Unlike most of my friends, I didn't have a clear view about my future academic or career plan. When people were preparing for their GRE or ACCA examination, I still struggled with my major. Thanks to the mentor program, I had a chance to get in touch with industry professionals. Wayne is an expert in the investment banking field. He encouraged me to take courses I'm interested in and explore different majors at this stage. No need to follow others or rush to finish those standardization exams; I need to figure out which path fit me the most. However, keeping an open mind and a learning heart will be useful for future career choices.

Also, Wayne encouraged me to find an internship during the holiday. He

didn't mean those positions that respond to repetitive labor work, like printing papers. Even though it is an intern position, trying to get in touch with your boss and get involved in some projects or core business meetings can still be productive. Getting my hands dirty is the most effective way to get to know the industry.

Wayne used his wonderful life experience and career path to teach me a lesson that everyone has their own unique style. Life is not about comparing with others, but with yourself. Most of us have heard about this idea, but only few people can really apply this idea to their life.

Mentee:
Mark Ma
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Mark is a sophomore majoring in Honor Math. Junliang's experience gave Mark the resolution to dig into academic research. Mark also learned from his mentor that he can still be someone with eagerness to learn, to take chances and live his life at any stage.

Mentor:
Junliang Huang
(GSAS '11)

As a documentary filmmaker, entrepreneur and marathon runner, Junliang is energetic and full of passion. After he earned his MBA degree at CEIBS, he started working in the healthcare industry because he thinks the industry is related to people's wellbeing.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

My mentor, Junliang Huang, is a pretty open-minded person with great energy and enthusiasm. Although he is 15 years older than me, I feel like we can still chat freely, from tiny things in life to the grand picture of the world. What impressed me most about him was his energy, which is also an important characteristic of mine. I am lucky to meet someone so eager to learn, share, explore and challenge himself all the time, which, accordingly, also motivates me. I also really appreciate his vision as a former journalist, who gained deep insight into the whole society, while still maintaining hope and optimism. I learned a lot from his attitude towards life, and wish to be as strong as he is.

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

The first time I met him, he asked me if I wanted an opportunity to take an internship. But I rejected him in our second meeting, since I've gained a clearer understanding of myself through our communications and the Healthcare Industry Roundtable we attended. It's important to develop independent thinking based on clear, structured logic behind your own values. Junliang said he only came to realize the influential power of the masses against one's personal judgment after the outbreak of COVID-19. This resonated

with my resolution to stay within academia and do research. This appears rather attractive to me, but is extremely difficult to achieve when most people around me are seeking approaches to entrepreneurship. I know they don't conflict, but I really need someone to tell me, "It's ok to dig into academics, and no rush." Junliang gave me the strong push to develop independent thinking through theoretical approaches. He also said that several famous people in the healthcare industry came from mathematics backgrounds, so I have every reason to believe a further exploration into my own area of study won't be a misguided path.

Also, Junliang gave a fairly interesting tip of self-reflection. He said it's useful to record your feelings and your own reasons whenever you plan to make some important decision in your life. It acts like a time capsule that stores the past "you." So after 1 year or so, you can compare your current situation with your previous decision, and think about whether that was a "wise" one, and how your personal view of the world has changed since then. We both believe that life is a process of shaping and refining your own understanding of yourself and everything around you. The recording for self-reflection indeed plays an effective role in self-realization.

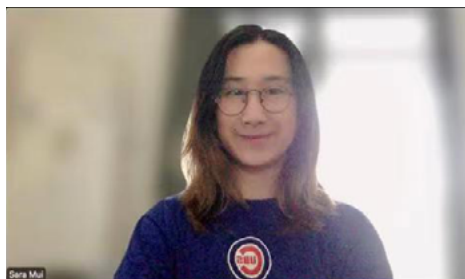
Q: How do you feel the experience you gained from this program will help you now and in the future?

I will keep on shaping my understanding and set of logic, which will

become my powerful argument for independent-thinking. Also, I get to pay more attention to the healthcare industry, and know about the current situations in our country through news, and especially the Roundtable held four times a year.

Mentee:
Sara Mui
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Sara is a sophomore majoring in Interactive Media and Business. She is very grateful for this opportunity to be able to learn from Julliet, and this experience has and will continue to change the way she looks at life and the decisions she will make.



Mentor:
Julliet Pan
(TSOA '04)

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?

What impressed me the most about Julliet was her mindset towards life. I was really inspired by the importance she puts on self-love and self-care, since these were not really things that I cared too much about before. She made me realize that if I am unhealthy, the things I say and do will reflect that. When faced with anxiety over self-doubt and “what-if”s, her advice has always been to believe in yourself and to pursue your passions. She spoke of the importance to “keep going” and to continuously put one foot in front of the other, but at your own pace, not someone else’s.

As people who were raised on trying to please others, Julliet also spoke on the significance of needing to care about yourself and love yourself and what you do beforehand, because you shouldn’t rely on others to acknowledge you; that you need to hold that power in your own hands. You have to know your self-worth and believe in what you are doing, and you shouldn’t let other people dictate your capabilities.

In addition to this, she has also re-defined the concept of “failure” for me. Failure has always been something that I was afraid of, but Julliet explained that failure is a crucial part of life, as it is simply a way for you to learn from your experience and how you can change things for improvement next time.

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

One thing I learned from my mentor is that the definition of success is different for everyone, and that being successful at something does not necessarily mean it is the final big goal that you wanted to achieve. She taught me that every little goal achieved is a little success, and all of those can build up to a bigger success. As long as you achieve what you want to do, it can be considered a success. This allows one to appreciate the process of what they’re doing and learning now, without getting lost in the results.

Julliet also taught me to do things for myself and not for the validation of others. As students, we often do work that we think would please our teachers. As children, we strive to do things that would please our parents. However, she taught me that when we get older, there will be no teachers to monitor and evaluate our performance. We need to be able to think for ourselves and prioritize things that are important for us. At the end of the day, it is our life we are living, and we shouldn’t let other people’s perception of us change what we can or want to do. When asked what keeps her motivated every day, Julliet told me that the concept of curiosity is very important in driving one forward, whether it be to try new things or to delve into what you enjoy. When you do things that you enjoy, you

tend to try your best. Therefore the process can make you happy and the achievement is a result of your own drive, not anyone else’s.

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

It has really taught me about the bigger picture in life, especially surrounded by individuals who I am constantly compared to and influenced by. I have learned to not get overwhelmed by things, and that every task is manageable if you take things one thing at a time. Every task is a learning experience, and I shouldn’t be discouraged if something doesn’t go my way, for I can always try something else.

Mentee:
Christy Natalisa
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Christy is a sophomore majoring in Business & Finance. Through the program, she learned a lot about the working pattern inside the financial services industry and got a clear view on her future development. Christy believes that the Mentor Program brings her more than networking skills.

Mentor:
Tony (Ang) Zhu
(CAS '04)

Tony Zhu is a founder of Deepinsight, providing consulting services to Long-Only Asset Management companies in China. Tony Zhu is a well known KOL(key opinion leader) in the industry. His wechat platform has more than 250k followers, including big institutional investors and high-net worth individuals. He graduated from NYU majoring in economics and joined JP Morgan and UBS for several years before founding his own company.



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

Having rich experiences in the financial services industry, Tony was able to provide insightful perspectives that aspiring professionals should keep in mind when navigating their career development journey. He provided eye-opening valuable insights into how individual priorities would shift at different stages of their career trajectory, and how not switching industries would benefit a person transitioning from academia to work. He reminded me to think well before choosing and have clarity about what I want to do for my career. Tony is very knowledgeable in both the sell-side and buy-side, sharing the convenience and inconveniences of different roles in the industry. A good career path is also one that has a good learning curve, allowing you to keep learning even though you are already years in the career. Tony also reminded me about how more transparent front-office roles are in comparison to back-office roles, and touch upon interesting topics such as internal politics in the financial services industry.

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

I am very grateful to be a part of the Alumni Executive Mentor Program

as it allows me to further expand my network, hearing and appreciate the inspiring life journeys of alumni. The program enables genuine and impressionable professionals in different industries to contribute to the NYU/NYU Shanghai network, opening doors and opportunities for current students. As an international student, this program fulfilled my aspiration of having a figure of a senior professional to rely on and learn from. Tony was very willing to share his network and send opportunities my way. I am sure that the relationship that we built throughout the mentorship program would extend beyond my undergraduate journey as we will continue to be in contact. The program structure is good and I would not make changes to it for now.

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

The guidance, support, and insight from my mentor helped me in defining my path in which direction I want to pursue my career. It acted as a tool that assisted me in carving a clearer vision of what I wanted to do in the future. Having heard from the perspective of someone who was gone through it all motivates me to achieve my best. His constructive directions will affect the next steps that I will take in everything career-related. Not only it has helped me in the past and helping me now, it will also help me in the future by utilizing the tips from Tony. I will continue to be in touch

with Tony to ask for his input whenever I have doubts upon my steps in the professional working industry.

Mentee:
Xiao Peng
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Xiao Peng is a sophomore majoring in Interactive Media Arts. After having conversations with Lisa, Xiao is determined to follow her interests and to work in creative industries in the future. Xiao also learned the importance of finding interests and passions when planning for her career.

Mentor:
Lisa Chang
(STERN '99)

Lisa founded Angle Communications in 2002 and as CEO wore many hats in the fast growing organization from Chief Creative, Business Development, Execution and Finance. Lisa Chang embarked on her polymathic journey after a TV station position inspired her to switch from Engineering to International Business & Marketing at NYU STERN.



During our second meeting, my mentor Lisa shared with me a lot of useful advice. The most impressive suggestion is that I should make use of the opportunity of studying away in New York to experience different cultures, which will not only broaden my knowledge but also help me form a global perspective. She also suggested that I try to find internships or apply for jobs in the United States where I can spend some time working in a different country and experience a diverse working culture. What's More, creative industries in the United States are now more developed and they have a very complete and supportive training system for interns and new graduates, which provides many precious learning opportunities. Therefore, that overseas experience will be very helpful for my future career. I think these suggestions offered me a lot of insights on my choice of career. And now I really want to apply for graduate school in the US after graduating from NYU Shanghai and try to apply for a job in a different country and stay there for some time.

Lisa also offered to me some detailed tips on finding a job in a different country. For instance, I can learn to make use of NYU's global alumni network and to actively reach out alumni to learn more about different industries. Apart from that, writing a cover letter is also very important, which can show your interests in this position. When writing a cover letter, we should express our will-

ingness to join this company, highlight our own skill sets and explain the reasons why we want to get this position. It will be very helpful to be specific and to do some research on the position, the company and the industry. The most valuable quality of interns is that they are willing to learn new things, accept challenges and can fit into the company's work culture.

Even though sometimes our dream job/industry may be hard to get into or cannot get a very well-paid salary at the beginning of a career, we should consider it from a long-term perspective - to consider if it perfectly fits into our talents and values, and if we are willing to spend time and effort to improve ourselves in the industry for many years. I think that's really inspiring and I can see how Lisa carried on that idea in her own career. Because sometimes I feel very anxious that my dream industry is very competitive and consider if I should change my major and work in an area that's relatively "easier" to find a job.

As for the suggestions for this program, I think I really learn a lot from this wonderful experience. However, I think it could be even better if there could be more online activities/seminars from the mentors, especially during the lockdown period. And it will also be very helpful if there are more chances to communicate with our peer mentees and exchange our thoughts. In this case, we can learn the insights from different perspectives since our men-

tors work in various fields and all have a lot of experiences to share with us.

Mentee:
Zishan Qiu
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Zishan is a sophomore majoring in Interactive Media and Business and Social Science. With her mentor Mr. Zhou's encouragement and advice, Zishan determined to pursue a well-rounded development and she became more certain about a career in law.

Mentor:
Yun Zhou
(LAW '01)

Yun Zhou is a partner at Zhong Lun Law Firm's Shanghai Office and is a member of its management committee. He is also head of the firm's corporate M&A department. He has received legal training from prestigious law schools in both the PRC and the United States and is admitted to both the New York State and PRC Bars.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

Mr. Zhou is very kind and knowledgeable. He answered all my questions with great patience, and he is really easy to get along with. I have never felt nervous about sharing my experience and concerns with him because he makes the atmosphere of our meeting relaxing and enjoyable. In addition, the stories and suggestions he provided about how to become qualified and successful in the legal field were really inspiring as he has rich experience in both being a professional lawyer and being partner of a law firm. What's more, he approached my questions from a thorough perspective and takes many possible factors into consideration, which makes me feel his rigorous legal mind as well as deep understanding of the whole legal market. He is definitely a successful lawyer with a careful observation of details and great passion about life.

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

By participating in this program I got to know many excellent students who share similar interests with me and are passionate about both academic study and career development. What's more, I got the valuable opportunity to chat with many outstanding lawyers at the get-together session to hear their experiences and personal opinions about the legal field. Hearing pro-

fessional opinions from experienced mentors make me feel encouraged to challenge myself more and improve my ability to get prepared for being a great lawyer, and chatting with other mentees make me feel accompanied and supported on my way to pursue my dream. That process makes me realize the importance of networking and think of it as necessary and enjoyable. Also, with my mentor's suggestions and encouragement, I now make sure that I want to pursue a career in law and have come up with a clearer plan for both academic study and internship.

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

First, with Mr. Zhou's overview of working in international law firms, Chinese law firms, being an in-house lawyer and working and claiming oneself as a specialist in a specific legal field such as entertainment law, I now have a better understanding of the requirements and treatments in those fields, which is really helpful as I'm exploring my interests specific legal fields. Also, Mr. Zhou provided useful suggestions on what I should work on now to be more competitive when applying for law schools and that helps me clarify my future plan. He stressed the importance of LSAT and suggested that I get fully prepared and pursue a high score. More importantly, my mentor told me that nice communication skills and the ability to get along well with people you

meet are both extremely helpful to a smooth career path. And whatever work I'm given, seemingly light or tough, I'm supposed to keep optimistic and complete all the assigned tasks attentively. Those are all useful suggestions that I will keep in mind in my lifetime.

Mentee:
Shuyi Shen
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Shuyi is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. In the program, she changed her mindset about pursuing a career in B&F and shifted her focus more towards skill cultivation. She values the lessons learned from Andy and the connections with other mentors and mentees.



Mentor:
Andy Xia
(STERN '12)

Andy Xia possesses over nine years of private equity and investment banking experience in Greater China (Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong). Andy currently is an Executive Director with PAG, which is one of Asia's largest private investment management groups with approximately \$40 billion of assets under management.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

I was very impressed by my mentor Andy's career story and accomplishments. During our first meeting, Andy introduced his previous academic and working experiences to me, which inspired me a lot. During the summer of his junior year, he got the offer of Citi Summer Intern. After graduating from NYU STERN, he started his career in the investment banking industry, but later switched to the private equity industry. When I asked the reason for this change, Andy told me that it's important to do the things that make myself feel accomplished. "You have to be proud of your work." This was such a precious lesson for me especially in a period of career exploration. I really admire his courage of pursuing the career path he desired and not afraid of making changes and adaptations. In addition, he is very patient and straight-forward when giving suggestions and answering questions, which also helps me get a deeper knowledge of the industries that I am interested in. Overall, he is such a helpful and friendly mentor who inspired me a lot in many ways.

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

There are many lessons my mentor taught me that I believe are profound and beneficial. During our meetings, my mentor told me that it

is very important to learn academic knowledge well, especially for major curriculums. The knowledge learned from school can build a solid foundation for a future career. In addition, it is very essential to be open-minded and curious about the world. Curiosity keeps one seeking for new things and improving. Andy also reminded me that it is important to step out of my comfort zone, trying to meet new people and networking with them. Don't be too shy and don't think too much when making friends with others. After graduation, everyone will choose different paths, settling down in different cities. Yet the friendship made would never fade away. It is the most precious and valuable gift from the university.

Apart from these 'intangible wealth', my mentor also gave me some very useful suggestions on how to make better preparations for my future career. My mentor told me that it is important to follow the news as it offers a picture of the financial world and its latest events. Besides, it is very helpful to learn from the textbooks as they contain many real business cases. Studying these cases helps to get deeper insights of a real enterprise operation and making key discoveries. Moreover, learning on a theoretical basis is not enough. Practicing in the real world through internships or business competitions is as important. I am very grateful for the useful suggestions my mentor offered me and I believe this can resonate to many students like me.

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

I think the most important thing I learned from my mentor and this program is to always remember to enrich myself and find what is the most significant to myself instead of following what others are doing. Because of this, I changed my mindset about trying so hard to find internships during vacations. Instead, I studied extra financial courses outside of school to better equip myself with the skill sets required for my future study and career. Besides, throughout this program, I get to know so many outstanding mentors and fellow mentees, whom I see as pioneers and examples to learn from. The precious connections are priceless to me. I also become more open to meeting new people and network with classmates I did not know. The lessons I learned and the people I know from this program are a treasure to me.

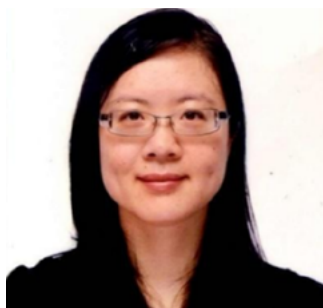
Mentee:
Maya Spaulding
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Maya is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. Maya takes an interest in investment banking. She has got some amazing advice from Gloria and connected with people that work in this industry.



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.



We had our first meeting at one of her favorite cafés near her office, and we just had a conversation. I did not have specific questions in mind or jotted down on a notebook because I wanted our first meeting to be a conversation, not an interview. Because of that, we talked about various topics from industry knowledge, aspirations, personal life, and more. Here are a few of the questions that came from our meeting.

Q: I want to go into private bank and wealth management. What is your understanding of the field?

Private bank and wealth management deals with meeting risk profiles and achieving the best financial returns under those risk profiles for your clients. Clients need to trust you with their assets, and you need to prove that you have the skills to meet your clients' goals. But ask yourself, why do you want to work in private bank compared to other areas like investment bank. If you like working with people investment bank works with people as well as consulting and asset management.

Q: What kinds of internships should I be looking for in my sophomore year to prepare for summer analyst positions?

You do not necessarily need to find a private banking internship as a sophomore. You can if you can find one. However, as long as your internship involves important skills for private bank and wealth management that is the most important.

Like mentioned before, private bank and wealth management needs clients' trust and your investment skills. Therefore, it is best to get an internship that demonstrates either of the two skills. Then when you go for summer analyst interviews, you already have demonstrated and can speak for some of the important skills.

Q: I have been going to company networking events for students and following up with analysts. What more should I be doing?

Connecting with analysts is good, but you should also network with executive level professionals. You need to be more than above average in networking because you are competing with many skilled individuals, not just your friends.

Overall general advice and takeaway was not to limit yourself because you do not know where you will be in five, ten years. Therefore, keep all of your options open. Also keep in touch with the executive professionals who work in your field of interest in order to better understand those fields of work.

At the end of our meeting, I was really happy to have met Gloria and excited for the rest of the program. Gloria also kindly connected me with two of her own juniors from STERN who are working in private bank and wealth management.

Mentee:
Ruoming Sun
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Ruoming Sun is a sophomore and currently pursuing a double major in Social Science and Data Science. She is grateful for the positivity and support from Sydney who also helps her form a clearer vision of her motivation and goals.

Mentor:
Sydney Lai
(STERN '97)

Born in Shanghai, Sydney grew up in Hong Kong and New York. Since returning to Shanghai in 2003, Sydney had discovered her true passion for Communications and Stakeholder Engagement through her wide range of work experiences. She is now Head of Strategic Partnership at Green Monday Group.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

My mentor Sydney is always encouraging and supportive. What impressed me most is the stories about her growth and her career path. Although some particular periods of life must be very uneasy for her, I really admire her courage to pursue what she was passionate about despite all the difficulties. She helps me understand that knowing who you are and what you truly want is the most important.

At the same time, her enthusiasm in the business field and the passion for communicating with various kinds of people allowed her to overcome all the difficulties and succeed finally. I learned that as long as you have realized your strengths and motivations, you will obtain more grit and perseverance along the way.

In addition, Sydney accompanied me through my darkest days with a lot of care, hope, and empathy. She told me everything is going to be better. I am very grateful for knowing her and being her mentee. I cherish the positivity she gave me, with which I will face unknown challenges in the future.

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

I began to take more initiative in planning and visioning my future.

I still remember my first meeting with Sydney. She asked me towards the end: "Have you thought about why you want to apply for graduate school?" I hesitated for a while, not knowing how to answer this question. I haven't ever thought about this question before. After hearing senior students' and alumni's successful stories, it seems definite that we will go to graduate schools after our undergraduate studies. But I never truly questioned what my motivations are.

After my first meeting with my mentor, I began to think about why I wanted to major in social science and data science and how I want to take advantage of them in my field of interest. I realized, through our conversation, the importance of applying psychology to the management of an organization or a company and developed my interest in social and organizational psychology. Based on this, I looked into related graduate school programs. I realized that attending graduate school not only means more advanced study, but it also means your determination and passion in an area that you find fulfilling. Therefore, Sydney's question provided an opportunity for me to reflect on my past experiences, and think about what my goals and my motivations are.

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

The mentorship program should be a platform for us to get a deeper

understanding of an industry and think about our career path. It would be more engaging and instructive if mentees can decide what topics they would like to discuss during their meeting with their mentors.

Mentee:
Xiaotong Tan
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Xiaotong is a sophomore majoring in Economics and Data Science. Xiaotong thinks the experience she gained from this program functions as a light that can direct her path, getting her rid of endless wondering and anxiety.

Mentor:
John Zhaolong Gong
(MED '91)

With more than 30 years of global industry and academic experience, Dr. John Gong is devoted to new drug R&D in different stakeholders from FDA, CRO to biotech companies. He is the Chairman & CEO at 3D Medicines Inc.



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

During my sophomore year, I am going on the process of self-exploration and future planning. By the end of my freshman year, I found that I did not like the majors I had already tried - IMA and finance. Fortunately, I found my interest in health economics in the summer after the first school year. However, since I plan to overload in my sophomore year and hence I have a super tight schedule, which means I do not have the opportunity to examine whether I do have passion in the field of health economics and the business of life science products. Fortunately, I met Dr. Gong via the mentor program. He kindly shares his insights towards health economics, especially how the future of this field is like. Moreover, He also generously introduced Dr. Xiao, Chief Strategy Officer in his company, and proposed a market access research program that utilizes health economics as a main tool. Communicating with two experts makes me feel certain that I will pursue a career in health-related fields and mainly focus on health economics as my academic goal. In this sense, the mentor program helps me determine my future plan.

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

As I wrote for the previous question,

the mentor program helps me determine my future path. I do believe this determination with high confidence will add a main theme to personal development, and probably my CV. Specifically, since I double majored in economics and data science, I am concerned about the fact that my two majors work mainly as a tool to model the decision making process and discover the world; however, neither of them focus on a specific topic. As a result, I may lose the ability to put forward my own insights in a specific industry according to my knowledge accumulations. Therefore, focusing on a health topic guide to guide me to find an internship, conduct research under this field. Hopefully, I can gradually build up my own industrial understanding.

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

First, I think the program can better maximize the use of valuable mentor resources and encourage mentees to talk to more mentors during the gathering session. Though 1v1 mentorship is helpful to build deep connections, I do think extending networking time in the gathering session and enabling mentees to listen to diverse opinions would be great.

Second, I think the program should come up with a well-designed plan-B that could be done online. I think the lockdown in Shanghai and corresponding online mode de-

crease the number of mentor program activities. However, we could change some activities to online mode instead of canceling them.

Third, I think the mentor program can also help connect mentees from different classes, especially those who have the same mentor. I believe that connecting with "senior mentees" and sharing our experiences in mentoring program would also be interesting and meaningful. Besides, I think the connection between mentees from different classes will also help us to build a longer connection with our mentor, since we will have the opportunity to keep in touch with our mentor beyond one-year period.

Finally, I recommend to have mentors from more diverse backgrounds. I observe that most of our mentors work in finance sector, however, the number of students studying IMA, CS, DS is increasing and they may find it difficult to have a well-paired mentor.

Mentee:
Han Wu
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Sandy is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. Alfred's perspective and insights have been instrumental in inspiring and shaping Sandy as a more special individual, which will continuously encourage her to step out of her comfort zone and engage in all that she attempts to do.



Mentor:
Alfred Wong
(STERN MBA '94)

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



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

I was result-oriented and utilitarian when planning my study and extra-curricular activities such as internships, competitions, research projects, and exams for professional certificates. I was also overwhelmed by whether should I study data science to follow the latest trend in the financial job market.

Having Alfred as my mentor, I realized that it's not about using these experiences and academic choices to get access to good companies. What really matters is the attempt I've made to discover and shape myself. I was also exposed to a more multidisciplinary career path and valuable knowledge of private equity as well as the overall financial industry, which greatly relieved my bewilderment and anxiety, renewing my enthusiasm for learning and life. So I am settling down to explore my interests and things I want to try but never did before, being more open when searching and planning for opportunities and activities.

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

Focus on your current need and your desire. Students might have the same kind of concern as me about whether they should go to work or apply for graduate school. Additionally, some companies such as PE or security firms only hire

graduate students, making a graduate degree seem like a must. However, if joining a PE or investment banking firm is your medium or say your ultimate goal, you shouldn't be bothered or too upset that your first company isn't a PE firm or whether you have to do a master's degree. Focus on your current need and your desire. Alfred was determined to work after graduating from college and tried various kinds of jobs. Then after several years, he went to NYU STERN for an MBA because he thought it was about time to gain more knowledge about how companies handle their dilemmas and other business courses. So going to PE or other dream companies of yours doesn't mean that you have to get a graduate degree right after college. All roads lead to Rome.

Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

I was a little bit nervous before our first meeting because it was my first time having a prestigious mentor with senior industry experience, not to mention that it was a zoom meeting since I think it might be harder to have connections through online meetings. But Alfred always got my points and questions quickly in our conversations, sharing his knowledge, insights, ideas, experiences, attitudes, and lifestyle with me without any reservation. He usually helped me distinguish some concepts in two sentences, and then further discussed other knowledge by extending from the question I raised. I'm so honored and

grateful to be his mentee, obtaining more than knowledge but a much more open and positive mindset for life and study. This is beyond my expectations when applying for this program.

Mentee:
Peiyang Wu
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Peiyang is a sophomore majoring in Computer Science. He was confused about which career path – technology or business – to choose. After sharing his stories and learning from his mentor, Peiyang is less stressed and decided to challenge himself academically and professionally.

Mentor:
Zhen Ji
(CIMS '97)

Zhen Ji is the Managing Director at 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. Previously, Mr. Ji was a Director in the Hong Kong office of EQT Partners Asia, focused on China buy-outs.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

It was such an exciting story of meeting Zhen after reading his bio. He graduated from NYU as a computer science student and worked in Microsoft for years, and then went to STERN to study business. And I have a profound interest in technology and computer science, which is the reason for me to pursue Computer Science and Data Science as my majors, and meanwhile, my parents thought I should learn more about business which can ensure higher income and less stress in my future career. Their words made me struggle at that time, and then I met Zhen, who seems to have gone through both career paths and is so successful now.

The first with Zhen was particularly important for me because I had received an invitation from a HUAWEI project which seemed far beyond my current level when Course selection was scheduled to take place weeks after and midterm is just around the corner, so I decided to turn it down. What made things worse is, after taking several internships and school projects I found what I learned in school is almost useless in these practical works and felt it meaningless to take school courses.

After basically telling Zhen my story, Zhen told me never to feel nervous about not learning enough knowledge in class, as he feels the same in his job. College learning is not

necessarily helpful in my future job. But, Zhen further noted, it's always good and essential to get outstanding grades in the courses I enrolled in because an excellent grade is always a strong proof of my potential. He told me in my career, I will always learn and will always have chances to learn, so give up the fancy dream of learning everything I need in college, but learn well what I should learn well, and get good grades.

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

This program changed my attitude towards college classes and internships. I accepted the project from HUAWEI even though I had a harsh schedule at that time, and worked hard on school courses throughout the whole semester, and continued with a full GPA on my major. Most importantly, I decided to take Business and Finance as my minor, since I still consider business a great career option.

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

Know what you should learn from college. College lessons will not teach you everything but through them, you can prove your potential of working. So try to get great grades in your courses, but also, try to take internships, do some proj-

ects, where you can learn many practical skills and be prepared for your future career. Keep your ambitions high and never stop investigating your interest. In our talk, Zhen many times encouraged me to try starting my business. He told me to never be afraid of trying and making mistakes. Be ambitious and keep trying to find out what you really like. Don't give up, never lose faith, and always believe in yourself.

Mentee:
Chenyi Xu
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Chenyi is a sophomore majoring in Data Science, intending to double-major in Business and Finance. She enjoyed the judgment-free chats with her mentor. Through the program, Chenyi discovered her interest in AI applications in data science and set out to sharpen relevant skills.

Mentor:
Yang Xia
(STERN EMBA '03)

Mr. Yang Xia is the Founder and Chairman of Genus Finance. Yang had served as Managing Director and the Global Head of Equities at China Renaissance, and Managing Director and Head of Greater China Equities at Bank of America Merrill Lynch.



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

My mentor, Mr. Xia, not only provided me with valuable professional advice on my career planning, but also opened my eyes on the level of life attitude and pursuit. Half an hour before our second meeting online, he biked to a nearby store for some groceries and he shared a photo taken from the perspective of his bike. At the time I was pretty stressed about the pandemic situation, but Mr. Xia and his lovely photo brought me reassurance that all of these are just temporary and life still goes on no matter what. In fact, we talked about how to manage the work-life balance given all our current activities are restricted to a limited amount of space. Surprisingly, Mr. Xia argued that there might not need to be a clear line between work and life. After all, as he put it, work is just another aspect of life and these two should not and cannot be clearly separated.

He also pointed out that true passion in the work that we're doing would generate initiatives and transform tasks into enjoyment. However, Mr. Xia still highlighted the importance of time management. By comparing his own change of work style before and after the Shanghai lockdown, he demonstrated how one can manage his life well under any circumstances and utilize the pros and cons to deal with whatever life throws at them. In order to reflect

and learn from our experiences, Mr. Xia suggested that I could get into the habit of writing diary entries which helps to keep track of life as we move on into the future.

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

I think my biggest gain from this program is that I got the chance to meet with these amazing alumni and communicate with them in a judgment-free environment. Hearing their unique life stories is like traveling through a time machine to get a taste of different ways of life. I began to understand the underlying connection and unifying purpose of the two pieces of advice that Mr. Xia gave me during our first meeting - first, read more books (especially biographies), and second, never be afraid to reach out and utilize school/alumni resources. I now came to realize that both are ways for me to enrich my life experience without actually having to experience them. This really helped me broaden my horizon to see the bigger picture of the world that I am living in rather than just focusing on my personal life as a university student.

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

What I gained from this wonderful

journey is beyond words, but I would say the most important lesson that I learned is not to set boundaries for yourself. Before the program, like many other students who wish to obtain a good academic standing, I planned to double major in data science, business and finance which I considered a competent choice for future job pursuits. However, I discovered that my interest lies in the AI application of data science rather than finance, and thus I decided to focus on improving my programming skills which leave me with more time and energy to develop my other possibilities. I've now decided to explore the world and really have a life before I finally discover and settle down to the things that I'm truly passionate about.

Mentee:
Nuo Xu
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Nuo is a sophomore majoring in Humanities. Nuo feels grateful for Stephanie because her mentor has taught her lots of life lessons which guides her to solve the current difficult questions and have a clear plan on the future.



Mentor:
Stephanie Tang
(LAW '04)

Stephanie Tang is a partner of Hogan Lovells, heading up its private equity practice in Greater China. Stephanie focuses principally on mergers and acquisitions. She has represented a number of leading private equity funds and multinational corporations in a variety of public and private cross-border transactions.



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

Stephanie and me has spent some happy hours chatting together during this tough semester. We have tried several times to meet in person but both of us were very busy and failed to find a suitable time slot. Especially, due to the lockdown, it's more difficult to meet in person so we scheduled for an online meeting.

I think Stephanie has taught me that I should work hard and try my best on what I can control and accept what is out of my control. I was always very sad when I found out even if I worked hard on something but I still failed to achieve it. Learned from Stephanie, I should be fully aware that there are too many things out of control in the society and even in the natural world. However, I can control my mindset and pattern to pursue what I can do best.

Another good tip is about the team work. I always feel dissatisfied or exhausted when handling with the team work because I always feel like the other team members don't act within my expectations. Learned from Stephanie, she has made me aware that everyone has different goals even for the same event to be hold and we need to communicate with other people to reach the same goal, the upper line and the bottom line for the event. Communication is

always an effective tool during the team work, which can help us work more smoothly.

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

I think this program help make a clearer plan of my future and make me more confident in planning the future. When I feel concerned on ending the undergraduate school, since I major in Humanities, there are a great number of students will choose to attend law schools. From Stephanie, I know that the study of law schools is very practical and can better prepare you to become a lawyer while it's contradict with my pursuit on further study. I will probably give up this choice.

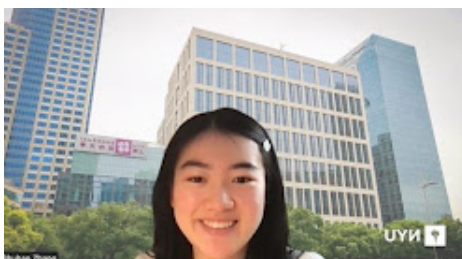
This program also changes my mindset on how to communicating with professional people in different fields. Stephanie makes me understand it's kind like a mutual- beneficial event. She says she is willing to get some energy from the young people and learn what the young people are thinking.

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

I think I gain the life lesson that "I will try to do the best I can within my control, and keep ping for what I can't control." I also gain the truth of the teamwork- "communication".

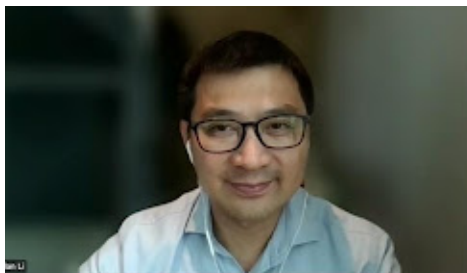
Mentee:
Shuhan Zhang
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Shuhan is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. She took advice from her mentor to focus on building a strong skill set appropriate for multiple careers. She is also encouraged to pursue her entrepreneurial dreams and not be confined by a “typical” career path.



Mentor:
Alan Li
(STERN MBA '06)

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



It's my honor to have Alan Li, STERN '06, as my mentor. He is extremely experienced in the finance field and offers me both professional knowledge background and practical suggestions. His abilities of managing work-life balance and keeping his hobbies besides the work are something that I really want to develop in the future.

Q: How do I choose my future career? Something that I'm good at but have no passion about or a job that I dream about but demanding and challenging at the same time?

The talk with my mentor shows the importance of building up my “own career portfolio”, which consists of diverse experiences from different fields as building blocks. For example, I can move to different fields or companies after working for a few years, as long as I maintain a versatile skillset which includes strong analytical skills. To develop strong analytical skills, I need to be able to come up with problem statement from real but abstract business cases and try to develop solutions. Finding out the problem itself is really hard but worth working on.

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

It's all about balancing between the future studies and its opportunity cost. If I choose to pursue further studies, I cannot gain working experience right away. MBA is more like a career reset option for me to

pause while making career shifts, like moving to a new industry. MBA helps recharge careers for some people; however, this is not the only way. Classmates at MBA will be helpful in future career, and thus again I need to enhance “the building blocks” to enhance my own value-add and keep on expanding the personal and professional network.

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

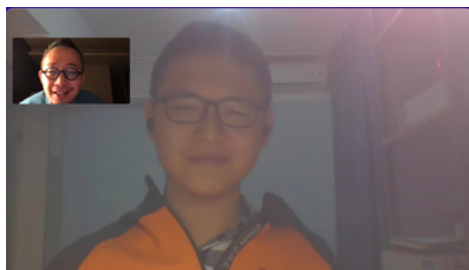
Big thanks to the mentor program. Through the talk with my mentor Alan, I find myself being more confident in pursuing start-up dreams. He told me that the fundamental skills of CEO are to utilize the best of the talents and to treat both majority and minority of shareholders fairly. I already differentiate myself by having an entrepreneur dream, and thus my career options will be different from most others. There is no need to compare with others and follow the so-called typical career path. The balance of different options is always changing and what I need to do is follow tightly with my own trajectory and develop more diverse skills that I can apply to different fields. It is important to have courage and be brave enough to shift to a brand-new field. As for challenges, I can keep an eye on the developing trend and make predictions in advance. If it really happens to me, there is nothing that I'll be afraid of. I strongly believe in myself!

Mentee:
Xinchen Zhao
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Xinchen is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance & Social Science. Xinchen is interested in the law industry and wants to learn more industry-related experience. After talking with Tim, Xinchen has a better understanding of the law industry and has set his goals for the future.

Mentor:
Tim Yimin Liu
(LAW '06)

Tim is a partner with Global Law Office, with 20 years of legal experience. Previously, he worked with Morrison & Foerster, Clifford Chance, Nixon Peabody and Mori Hamada & Matsumoto, also with Accenture as in-house legal counsel / director on complex digital and capital deals.



Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

What impressed me the most about my mentor Tim is his great humbleness towards life. Though being a lawyer is busy, he always managed to find spare time to hear the updates from me about my concerns in academics and the half-baked ideas in future applications. After hearing carefully, he would give me useful and insightful feedback based on his rich experience in the legal field.

The two of us are engaging in the interaction of equals and I would always learn something new from his advice. Talking with him urges me to consider the meaning of lifelong learning and encourages me to further enrich myself through trying something new and seeking unique possibilities in life.

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

I learned from my mentor that continuous learning is necessary for life, and you should always prepare for possible opportunities in advance. Using his experience, he showed me how he started as a freshman in the law field, joining several local and global law firms, learning from the experienced lawyers as an associate, gradually became more competent in practicing law after representing many cases, and finally become the partner of a firm

and guide new lawyers to find their ways.

He told me that you do not need to be super smart to be a lawyer, instead, you should work hard and set strict demands on yourself and always be eager to learn something new and keep yourself updated. Tim showed me that profession comes from practice, and the learning process as a lawyer is not so different from a student's learning experience in school. Everyone starts as a freshman and gradually develops their skills in their senior years. Some good habits you developed during this time like powers of concentration and critical things will bring you long-term benefits. This is something I believe everyone can benefit from hearing.

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

Talking with my mentor deepened my understanding of the legal field and better know what kind of person law firms are looking for. Finding a decent job in the law field is not an easy thing to do and I need to make a lot of effort to realize my dream. It is a wise idea to divide the large goal into several feasible steps.

For my short-term goal, I will keep studying hard and keep my curiosity about things I am interested in. I have decided to spend my next semester at NYUAD getting a minor in Legal Studies by taking four law-re-

lated courses and trying to better understand the basic structure of the common law system. I will also seek related legal internships or research opportunities to develop my practical experience.

For the future, I haven't decided whether to pursue an LLM or a JD degree in the future, or what specific program I want to apply for, but I will certainly continue my study in law and try to find which specific field fits me the best and choose that as my future career.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to meet my mentor, a brilliant and accomplished man who encourages me to find my interest through trial and error. Due to the covid situation, we didn't have time to meet in person, but I hope that someday I will be able to have dinner with Tim and express my gratitude towards his patient guidance in person!

Mentee:
Lauren Zheng
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Lauren Zheng is a sophomore intending to major in Economics and Social Science with a concentration on International Relations. She holds an interest in public policy and consulting. After meeting her mentor Eddie, she broadened her mindset and felt more confident about personal and professional development.

Mentor:
Eddie Chen
(TANDON '95)

Mr. Chen is currently Managing Partner and Head of China/Asia of EURAZEO, which is a leading French private equity company listed in Euronext. Eddie Chen's career path spans sectors and functions, ranging from IT executive and diplomat to senior government official and private equity investor.



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

I asked Eddie about what he thinks is the major trend of the professional world. He said that before understanding professional trends, we should first understand what's happening in the outside world and keep an eye on changes. In the last decades, we have seen the peak time for globalization, and there was a huge demand for talents with international backgrounds. Nowadays, globalization is in a recession and seriously affected by geopolitical conflicts. For the finance industry particularly, people are getting more conservative in terms of investment decisions, launching new products, risk taking, etc. But the challenges also mean new opportunities and new businesses and can light the way for us young professionals. In this cycle of economic development, we must be agile and adapt to the new trend, be well prepared and planned, and keep an eye on new opportunities with great potential in the future. His advice inspired me to think in the bigger picture.

Q: How do you think a student at NYU Shanghai can try to grasp the world trend?

Eddie suggested several ways to help us grasp the world trend. The first way is to stay on top of what's going on in China and in the world, and regularly watch prime news

such as CCTV, BBC, CNN as well as selective on-line news. The second way is to learn from great professors and mentors. In NYU, there are a great number of well-established scholars. We should try to take their classes, such as Nobel laureates in economics, and that will benefit us a lot. Also, we should take advantage of the NYU study away opportunities. NYU has campuses worldwide, and when we are taking semesters in other campuses, we should take advantage of being there to learn and broaden our understanding of the local culture, history, mindset, market development, etc., outside of our regular school coursework. The most important thing is to form our own opinion and judgment about the world.

Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?

From the experiences and the life stories that Eddie shared with me, I am impressed by Eddie's balance of variety and depth. His variety of experience originated from his open-mindedness. He started in the IT industry, excelled in it, but he is also open to change and opportunities and he later dove into diplomatic affairs and finance. The depth of his experience originated from his determination. He always sets clear goals, figures out the optimal strategy, and implements it. Eddie advised me to have an open mind and try to set clear goals for myself.

At the end of this article, I would like to thank CDC for holding this

program and thank Eddie for being my mentor, giving me inspiring advice, and being supportive of me. I feel very lucky to be his mentee and to be a part of the CDC Executive Mentors Program.

Mentee:
Valeria Zhou
(NYU Shanghai '24)

Valeria is a sophomore majoring in Neuroscience, along with a minor in Electrical and Systems Engineering. She plans to pursue a master degree in biomedical engineering and holds a great interest in the biotechnology industry.

Mentor:
Michael Mi
(STERN MBA '00)

Michael is currently with Intel managing its global key account – Tencent. He had diverse experiences in investment, BD and sales in TMT verticals. Michael also had experience in the media industry where he headed for business development for Sun Seven Stars Entertainment & Media Group.



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

As NYU Shanghai students, we are provided with abundant opportunities of internship and research. Hence, it's really important to strike a balance between them. Michael points out that students should think about their intention and goal before they apply for the position. Take internships for example, do you want to explore your career choice and gain a deeper understanding of the industry, or do you wish to obtain a full-time job in this company? Different motivations would largely influence your targeted companies. Additionally, your post-graduate plan also affects the balance between internship and research. For those who plan to work directly after graduation, an internship might be the foundation of your social network.

Aside from internships and research, student clubs are another platform where we could practice our leadership and teamwork skills. I once consulted Michael about the spirit of teamwork due to some real problems I encountered. For instance, I usually prefer to work alone or team up with familiar friends because I once suffered from cooperation with low-efficiency people. I also think that acquaintance with everyone's advantages and weaknesses could contribute to larger efficiency. So I asked Michael whether working with familiar friends would

be more beneficial than strangers. However, Michael told me that in real life, the team is typically in the process of evolution, from strangers to teammates with people in and out. Hence, it's important to learn how to understand and communicate with others.

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

Meeting with Michael changes a lot of my academic and career plans throughout the whole academic year. When I'm confused about my career path, Michael suggests that I should discuss it with my professors and do more research online. So I had a conversation with my neuroscience professor about my idea of combining neuroscience and electrical engineering. Then I identified some keywords and did further research. Therefore, I'm now much more clear about my career goal of being an engineer in the medical instrument industry. Then Michael told me that I should also pay attention to the balance between knowledge of my focus area and knowledge of adjacent areas. In this way, I do not zoom in too much in my interest and lose the comprehensive picture.

Moreover, Michael also encourages me to reach out to opportunities actively, like what I've done to apply for the mentor program. His words motivated me to grasp any precious opportunities I encountered, like the global awards Amgen

Scholars, research chances with professors, internships in medical companies, etc. I'm really grateful to him for sharing his suggestions and solidifying my self-confidence in pursuing my goals.

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

The experience points out a clear direction that I should devote myself to in the future. Specifically, I will keep pushing myself to grasp valuable opportunities. Like Michael suggested, I should take full advantage of the study-away experience at both Abu Dhabi and New York, to have more meaningful conversations with professors and experts in the frontiers of the biomedical industry. Also, I'll try to maintain an open and objective mindset in teamwork. Reflect on myself before complaining about others. Last but not least, building a close relationship with Michael is the most valuable experience in my sophomore year. There's much more to learn from him, so I really wish we could stay in touch in the future-