Chicago Career Fair helps 2014 alumnus land job with Motorola Solutions

Ross Venhuizen, a double major in business marketing and strategic communication, recognized the importance of building a professional network. Throughout his time at Calvin he took advantage of the large number of networking events and opportunities offered by Career Development. Although Ross admits that in the moment, many of these events felt like a waste of time, now he realizes how valuable they were.

“I met genuinely awesome people who were looking to help me as a student become an attractive candidate to employers, and I consider many of the people I met through networking to be good friends and mentors now,” says Ross.

One of the connections that Ross made through a networking event was with Gary Van Prooyen '88. The two met at the first annual Calvin in Chicago Career Fair in 2012, where Gary was recruiting for Motorola Solutions. They connected again at the following year’s Calvin in Chicago event, and Gary helped Ross get an interview and eventually get hired by Motorola Solutions.

“There was actually a bidding war for Ross here. I offered him a job on my team; another colleague did the same,” says Gary. “I lost out, but Ross landed a great position.”

Ross is now a marketing specialist for the global solutions team at Motorola Solutions, which involves creating presentation materials for the sales team; developing posters, videos, advertisements, and other marketing materials; traveling to conferences to demonstrate products to customers; and writing blogs for the website. These activities have given Ross the chance to combine creativity and critical thinking every day, which he has found very rewarding. He also enjoys working for a company that “helps keep the good guys safe,” since Motorola Solutions specializes in technologies for public safety officials, such as the radios and laptops inside police vehicles.

While networking was a key factor in obtaining his position at Motorola Solutions, Ross also understood the necessity of setting himself apart. Since many large companies tend to recruit only at large universities, Ross realized he had to be more innovative in his job search and find alternative ways to be considered as a viable candidate.

“For me, it was networking, as well as gaining unique experiences to stand out on my resume,” says Ross. “I made a personal website, freelanced for a housing company in Georgia, and used Adwords to market myself to companies I wanted to work for.”

Ross first learned this lesson of setting himself apart during the four internships he completed as a student, and he advises current students to find ways to add value to their employers.

“One of the most important things I learned from my internships was how to make myself useful for a company,” Ross explains. “The most successful people in companies are those who find ways to bring value to a company in ways beyond what is listed in their job description or what their boss tells them to do. If you can find ways to make your boss's life easier or improve the company’s bottom line, you will be rewarded.”

This year’s Calvin in Chicago Career Fair is scheduled for Tuesday, October 28. More details about upcoming events are available on page 3.
Summer Interns

Over 450 Calvin students reported having a summer internship, giving them the opportunity to develop the professional skills employers are seeking in candidates.

Students: report your internship at www.calvin.edu/career for a chance to win $15 to the Campus Store!

Additional internship photos are featured on our Facebook page.
Upcoming Events

The Career Development office is preparing for several events happening throughout the fall semester. Check our website (www.calvin.edu/career) for more details.

Accounting & Finance Reception
Tues., Sept. 23, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Aquinas College, Wege Ballroom
In partnership with Aquinas College, the Accounting & Finance Reception is a mini-job fair for accounting majors, as well as business majors with a finance concentration. Seniors and those in the business law class can arrive at 5:30 p.m., juniors at 6:00 p.m.

Spectrum Health Information Services Networking Event
Thurs., Sept. 25, 1:30-4:00 p.m.
Spectrum Health Information Services Facility
Sophomores, juniors, and seniors of all majors are invited to this networking event to learn more about internships and career opportunities with Spectrum Health’s Information Services division. No IT skills are required; the only requirement is an interest and openness to a career in healthcare technology.

Business Careers Networking Reception
Thurs., Oct. 2, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Prince Conference Center
The Networking Reception provides Calvin business and accounting students with the opportunity to learn from experienced business professionals, while polishing their networking skills. Students must pre-register for the event and pay a $5 registration fee. A training session for this event is scheduled for Wed., Oct. 1, at 10:00 a.m. during the Calvin Business Forum meeting.

Nursing Careers Workshop: A Day in the Life of a Nurse
Mon., Oct. 13, 5:00-6:00 p.m.
Meeter Center Lecture Hall
Part 1 of a workshop series designed to prepare nursing and pre-nursing students for a successful transition into their profession. This workshop will feature a panel of nurses working in a variety of health care settings, sharing their experiences and advice with students.

Fall Careerfest
Tues., Oct. 21, 1:00-5:00 p.m.
DeVos Place Convention Center
Companies attend this job fair to recruit students from local colleges and universities for full-time positions as well as internships. Free shuttle available.

Calvin in Chicago Career Fair
Tues., Oct. 28, all day
University Club of Chicago - 76 Monroe St., Chicago, IL
Students interested in interning or working in Chicago can attend this event to connect with employers from the Chicago area, as well as network with Calvin alumni. $25 fee and pre-registration is required; students can register at www.calvin.edu/alumni/careers. Transportation and lunch will be provided.

Nursing Careers Workshop: Graduate School
Mon., Nov. 10, 5:00-6:00 p.m.
Meeter Center Lecture Hall
Part 2 of a workshop series designed to prepare nursing and pre-nursing students for a successful transition into their profession. This workshop will focus on graduate school options for nurses.

Recruiting Trends 2014: Hiring and Developing Today’s College Graduates
Mon., Nov. 17, 3:00-5:00 p.m.
Prince Conference Center
This new event is being planned in partnership with Dr. Phil Gardner of Michigan State University and will help students and employers understand the latest research on recruiting and hiring trends.
Internships and support from mentors leads to better long-term outcomes

Gallup recently published the results of the 2014 Gallup-Purdue Index, which examined the long-term success and outcomes of 30,000 college graduates nationwide. The Index focused on three primary outcome areas: workplace engagement, well-being, and alumni attachment.

The chief finding of the 2014 Gallup-Purdue Index was that where a student went to college mattered less than what they experienced there, in terms of long-term outcomes of workplace engagement and well-being after graduation.

The types of experiences that were most strongly related to graduates having increased workplace engagement, well-being, and alumni attachment were having a professor or mentor who supported and encouraged them, and being involved in experiential learning such as internships.

“For example, if graduates had a professor who cared about them as a person, made them excited about learning, and encouraged them to pursue their dreams, their odds of being engaged at work more than doubled, as did their odds of thriving in their well-being. And if graduates had an internship or job where they were able to apply what they were learning in the classroom, were actively involved in extracurricular activities and organizations, and worked on projects that took a semester or more to complete, their odds of being engaged at work doubled also. Feeling supported and having deep learning experiences means everything when it comes to long-term outcomes for college graduates” (Gallup, Great Jobs Great Lives, 2014, p. 6).

The full report on the 2014 Gallup-Purdue Index is available to download from Gallup’s website.