Hiep N Nguyen

Prof. Holy Caldwell

Bus 480X: Internship with FR Drake

FR Drake

I started with FR Drake in May and am expected to finish the end of August as soon as classes begin for the fall semester. FR Drake is a subsidiary of Middleby Corporation, the parent corporate head of 72 other companies all related to food processing, packaging, and appliances. FR Drake itself was started in 1979 and incorporated in 1984 upon the completion of the design and development of a new automatic frankfurter loading systems. In 2007, F.R. Drake Company announced the acquisition of the assets of the Food Loading Division of Planet Products Corporation of Cincinnati, OH. In 2010 it acquired Marel Townsend Further Processing’s automatic sausage and cheese loading systems for randomly oriented cylindrical products. Drake was acquired by the Middleby Corporation in December of 2011 and is now a part of their Processing and Packaging Technology Brands Division. Under this umbrella, global manufacturing, sales and support meet increasing demands for advanced technologies in food production. Industry leaders provide a broad portfolio of patented technologies and integrated system solutions. Drake itself has over 20 patents and has recently installed and built custom machines for big names like Wendy’s, Tyson’s, and ToFurkey.

I worked for their accounting department under their Controller and staff accountant while splitting my time with marketing and occasionally the HR office. The Accounting Controller and Director of Marketing are both Bridgewater College alumni. Every weekday, I would come in around 8 am and leave at approximately 5:30 pm, getting strictly 40 hours every week since the beginning of May. This fulfilled my 120-hour requirement for May Term by the end of the month and continued to intern for the rest of the summer. In Accounting, I audited and journalized expense vouchers and acquainted myself with using Quantum, their accounting software. I reconciled Amex bank statements the end of every month and keyed in Payroll journal entries every two weeks. I also filed and helped organize documents to be purged within the next 7 years, flagging what needs to be approved after Amex vouchers have been created. My Excel proficiency has notably improved since I started at Drake.

With Marketing, I organized data and tracked expenses from tradeshows most prominently a recent one in Germany called IFFA. I also followed up on leads with future expos and inquired about costs, aligning with budget for marketing expense allocations. Their website also needed to update new brand logos and content, all of which are highlighted for editing by me and their technical writer who is the link between marketing and engineering. After I compiled the information on expos Middleby is attending in the future, I researched and followed up with hotels and brand marketing materials like booth space, magazine ads, etc. As a side project, I had also written an article for Drake to be posted on LinkedIn.

Accounting had me track marketing expenses by scanning invoices and compiling them onto Excel worksheets for the department to reconcile. I used other worksheets to track various other expenses like employee travel liabilities that must be reimbursed and ghost card expenses that accounted for airfare paid by Middleby Corporation. The entire Quantum software is in process of being replaced by Infor, and I was also able to sit in on company evaluations for software adaptations.

I had completed all goals set up for me during my time, assisting and various accounting and marketing projects, and this gave me not only insight into the corporate for-profit world but I was also able to utilize knowledge from my Finance and accounting courses to carry out my day to day duties. I was not the first Bridgewater student who had interned with them as their intern last year was also a student who has now graduated. I believe this foreshadows a legacy for other Bridgewater College students to experience what I had. It was tremendously valuable and relevant to my major, and through this I hope to be able to further my career in the field of accounting and finance administration.