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From Bloomington to the Big Apples: Why Not?

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software consulting firm. She updates software and consults business and institutional clients on its use.

Matt Mikulcik, '97, is employed by Hewitt Associates, a health and pension benefits consulting firm.

Ashwin Kapur, '98, is training to be a trader with the global equities derivatives group at J. P. Morgan in New York City.

Anjali Shah, '98, has taken a position as an auditor with the U.S. Department of Education.

I would like to thank everyone who replied to my request for updated information. The alumni of Illinois Wesleyan University's Economics Department is perhaps the best group in terms of keeping in contact with the department.

From Bloomington to the Big Apple: Why Not?

By Julie Dusek

Dave Antolik ('97) is a living testament that a degree in economics can take you anywhere. Dave works as an analyst in the Investment Banking division of Donaldson, Lufkin, & Jenrette, a Global Investment Bank in downtown Manhattan. He conducts analyses that center around companies' abilities and desires to undertake financing. Specifically, he works in the Private Placement Group, where his direct focus is on a specific product group and private placements. Dave gets to work with companies that are relatively entrepreneurial. A great deal of his clients are recently created companies with innovative business plans that need financing in order to implement their business plan. But, the best part of his job is the exposure he gets and the responsibility that he is afforded. He says that he has had the opportunity to work with entrepreneurial companies and see them as they attempt to finance themselves for future growth. "I speak with institutional investors regarding our

offerings. I work with CEOs and CFOs of successful companies in situations where I am allowed to make meaningful contributions. This is an opportunity that I think is hard to come by for most people only two years out of college."

How, one might ask, does a student at a small liberal arts university in central Illinois get a job like this in New York? First, he researched his opportunities and targeted what he wanted to do. Dave then looked for a job within the investment banking/corporate finance arena. And, the best opportunities in this arena are in New York. According to Dave, "A person is exposed to a greater part of the investment banking world when in New York." So, he worked some connections to get an interview, interviewed, and was eventually offered a position.

One might think that life changes dramatically when you move from central Illinois to "The Big Apple", but Dave does not see his life as changing much. Basically, he "wakes up, goes to work, and then comes home when he is finished." However, he does not intend to continue this daily routine from now until the day he retires. Dave hopes to go on to graduate school in business with a joint degree in a separate discipline. "I do know that I have a fondness for academic pursuits and I feel I want to learn more in a scholastic environment. I miss having the opportunity to learn in this type of environment. I rarely have the time to pursue matters for pure intellectual pleasure." In addition to pursuing graduate school, Dave also knows that he would one day like to teach. "In my mind, [teaching] is the best way to make a significant impact on society."

What impact did the education that Dave received from Illinois Wesleyan University have on his life? Well, as you know, Dave majored in economics. "(Economics) simply made sense. With economics, events I had dismissed as coincidences became sensible causal relationships." Dave's micro skills come in handy when he is analyzing competitive relationships and pricing predicaments facing companies. He states that he is able to find cause and effect relationships due to his economics training that others may not see. On a broader scale, the school "possesses a certain innocence that should

be respected. In my classes, the environment between student and professor, as well as among the students was cooperative, not adversarial. That nuance is what I liked best about IWU.”

If Dave had his college experience to do all over again, he would pick up a major in accounting. Additionally, he wishes he had studied abroad for a whole year rather than for only one semester. He took a great deal from his experience studying abroad. “Basically, I would [try] to squeeze more into the four-year period.” Nonetheless, he is glad that he had the good sense to become an economics major.

In short, whether you are a freshman just starting out or an upperclassman, it is never too late to put these good words of advice from a successful graduate to use: “enjoy college, get good grades, never procrastinate, put yourself in challenging situations, STUDY ABROAD! Focus on school and put the working world on hold until graduation.”

The Graduating Class

By Kristopher Kaneta

Melissa Arms, from Marion, IL, enjoyed an early graduation last semester with a double major in economics and international studies. She is currently working as a Management Consultant with Ernst & Young. She reports that she is slowly adjusting to the real world, but for fun she is in the midst of figuring out a way to hike Maccu Piccu. Melissa has previously served on *The Park Place Economist* as an Articles Editor and News Editor.

Andrew Beath is an economics major from New Zealand. He graduated early and can currently be found in India, where he is doing volunteer work. Andrew’s senior project measured how much political and economic freedom leads to a prosperous economy. After India, Andrew plans to start graduate studies in the United States.

Jaynanne Calaway, from Bethalto, IL, is a double major in economics and international studies with a minor in business administration. Jaynanne is

planning to attend a joint degree program with the University of Illinois’ College of Law and the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations. She plans to practice labor law. For her senior project, Jaynanne analyzed gender wage differentials and several aspects of its decomposition. She is currently an Articles Editor for *The Park Place Economist*. She has enjoyed working for the Economics Department as a Research Assistant because there is a close interaction among faculty and students. Her advice to future economics graduates is to do whatever you have a passion for, and everything else will soon follow.

Justin Etnyre, from Casey, IL, is a double major in economics and international studies with a development concentration. His senior project predicted foreign direct investment using macroeconomic and social indicators. Justin has served as the Articles Editor for *The Park Place Economist* and worked on *The University Avenue Undergraduate Journal of Economics* for the past two years. After graduation, Justin plans on beginning a career in econometric modeling and then returning to school for an advanced degree.

Patrick Holly, Jr. is the current Web Administrator for the Economics Department and is finishing a two-year term as Technical Editor for *The Park Place Economist*. Pat is a double major in economics and business administration, and will work for Hewitt Associates as a Business Analyst after graduation. This Downers Grove, IL, native advises future IWU economics students to take advantage of the CLA Economics Lab because it is a valuable resource that few students on this campus are provided with. Patrick’s senior project involved technology’s effect on the supply and demand for money. He eventually plans to return to school to earn either his MBA or a graduate degree in economics.

Jaelyn Hood is a double major in economics and math from Normal, IL. Over the past three years, she has participated in *The Park Place Economist* as an Alumni Editor and as an Assistant Editor. During her time at Wesleyan, Jackie has studied in