

BAKER SCHOLARS

CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER



SPRING TRIP | SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

One of the top highlights of the year included visiting Seattle, Washington for the Baker domestic trip during February winter break. The Bakers visited several companies, met with one of the original Baker Scholar advisers Tony Muiderman, hiked Rattlesnake Mountain, and explored the top sights of Seattle. We happened to be in Seattle during one of the worst snowstorms the city has ever seen, but we still made our visits happen! Since we were able to visit such a diverse range of companies, each visit allowed the Bakers to take away a different view on business. Companies we met with included Starbucks, Amazon, Microsoft, REI, and Point B Consulting.

STARBUCKS

During our trip to Seattle this February, the Bakers were fortunate enough to visit the Starbucks headquarters and meet with Andrew Ohm. Andrew graduated from Hope in 2000 after majoring in Business and Psychology. He currently works as a manager of Global Whitespace Innovation at Starbucks. Andrew led us on a tour of the Starbucks headquarters, where we participated in a coffee tasting. He talked with us about focusing your career on where you feel passionate and the importance of lifelong learning. Andrew encouraged us to always ask questions, be open to new experiences, and keep yourself grounded through faith and family. Andrew advised us to mindfully invest in ourselves, and use our Hope network to learn from as many people as possible. The Bakers left the visit inspired and excited to put Andrew's wisdom into practice in our own lives.



REI

The Baker class also had the privilege of visiting the REI headquarters. We were fortunate enough to meet with CEO Jerry Stritzke, CFO Tracie Winbigler, Senior Vice President Susan Viscon. These executives shared their professional journey to their current positions, and provided the Bakers with some amazing pieces of advice. Each gave significant insight on how to establish yourself in a new job, including taking advantage of your early days to learn as much as possible about the role, company, and leaders. The Bakers were advised to keep their curiosity about people they look up to and never fear asking questions. Along with learning about those around us, Jerry heavily advised that we all need to learn about ourselves and personal values to apply them throughout our careers and life.



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MICROSOFT

Another great opportunity was our visit to Microsoft's headquarters. Kelli Muilenburg, a North American Talent Consultant, was kind enough to host us. She took us through her professional journey starting from a path much like ours, as a graduate from Calvin College. One of her key suggestions was to volunteer for global opportunities in order to gain diverse experiences. She personally achieved this through working in Prague, Czech Republic for the summer to look for global talent to join Microsoft. Kelli's colleague, Lakeisha Jackson, also spoke to us about self-advocacy, the value of a mentor, and taking a chance in the unknown. We ended our visit with a little bit of friendly competition playing Xbox in the Visitor Center.



POINT B

During our visit to consulting firm Point B, we met with Senior Director Rob Auffant and two of his coworkers, Molly and Calyssa. Upon arriving, we made our way to a conference room and had a very informative Q&A session. We discussed the operations of Point B, how their firm is unique, and received advice on pursuing careers out of college. One interesting aspect of Point B that Rob mentioned is that the organization didn't make a single layoff during the recession, which is one of the factors that leads to its high employee satisfaction reputation. Highlights from the visit included hearing from employees with both senior and entry level perspectives, gaining a deeper understanding of the consulting industry, and finding out how Point B built the incredible culture it has.

AMAZON

Although the weather was not on our side for our last day of visits, that did not stop the Baker spirit! Umbrellas in hand and rain coats on full display, we headed to one of Amazon's Seattle locations to chat with Thao Le, a 2011 Hope graduate. While at Amazon, Thao shared some of her favorite experiences from Hope as an accounting major, her global perspective (a theme among many of our visits), and her current role and duties as a Senior Financial Analyst for the company. Thao's passion for the work she does, and the work Amazon aspires to do, was apparent. We gained some awesome insight on how Amazon operates, and what the company may look like in the years to come from the lens of a young and motivated employee.



BAKER SCHOLARS

WELCOME CLASS OF 2021



Brenda Indekwe
Accounting Major



Michael Pineda
Business Major | Jazz Studies Minor



Ana Rumstadt
Business and German Majors



Drew Schmitz
Business and Econ Majors



Parker Scholten
Business and Econ Majors



Rebekah Segrist
Business Major | Econ Minor



Joey Stark
Accounting and Business Majors |
Communication Minor

SENIORS - CLASS OF 2019



Kirstin Anderson
Pursuing a PhD in Political Theory
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Madison, Wisconsin



Christina Armbruster
Cintas Corporation
Management Trainee
Grand Rapids, MI



Roberto Escalante-Gonzalez
Herman Miller
Sales Specialist
Zeeland, MI



Ben Hagman
J.P Morgan
Banking Analyst
Chicago, IL



Lauren Fette
Lockton Companies
Employee Benefits
Chicago, IL



Zach Gebben
Merrill Lynch
Financial Advisor
Grand Rapids, MI



Madeline Miller
Steelcase
Brand Communications
Grand Rapids, MI

Thank you seniors for your dedicated leadership and passion that have shaped this program into a life-changing experience! Congratulations on becoming Baker Scholar Alumni!

Semester Highlights

• Tim Long

A highly awarded wealth management adviser at Merrill Lynch, Tim kindly met with us during one of our weekly meetings. Tim touched on his steps to success in his career, and gave us insight into the life of wealth management consulting. He also provided the Bakers with valuable life advice on how to save and invest money. We truly appreciate the wisdom Tim brought!

• Sophie Guetzko

As a Consulting Senior Analyst at Accenture in Chicago, Sophie was kind enough to drive to Holland from Chicago and chat with us during one of our weekly meetings. Sophie gave us great insight into the busy life of a consultant, and how project timelines work. We greatly appreciate Sophie's visit and the ability to learn about Accenture!

• Craig Spoelhof

In conjunction with the Business Club Leadership Team, the Executive Director of the Boys and Girls Club of Holland, Craig Spoelhof, came to speak with the group. The Boys and Girls Club is something near and dear to the Bakers' hearts due to the involvement of Elly Muiderman. We enjoyed learning more about Craig's background and transition from for-profit to non-profit business, as well as the impact the Boys and Girls Club has on the youth in Holland.

• Steelcase Headquarters

On our first visit with the new Baker class, the Bakers were given a tour of the Steelcase campus. We were able to see the creative work-spaces and visit the desk of our very own Baker senior, Madeline Miller, who is a Steelcase intern! After the tour, several Baker and Hope alumni joined us for a Q&A session. Panelists included Sara Yockey '15, Laurie Jellison '15, Laurel Hall '16, and Julia Toren '17. After the Q&A, several other Steelcase employees joined to chat with all of us. The Bakers enjoyed this visit and the opportunity to learn about Steelcase!



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Baker Scholars Alumni, Family, and Friends,

Two years ago, when I was first selected into the Baker Scholar Program, I did not have a true understanding of how fortunate I was to be a part of this program and all the opportunities it provides us. Alongside our week-to-week responsibilities, we brought a handful of speakers on campus, went on various local visits throughout West Michigan, and visited the metropolitan-areas of Chicago and Seattle. However, the most impactful memories created as Baker Scholars were the leadership opportunities used to make an impact on the program and in the broader community.

During our trip to Seattle, we had the opportunity to visit 5 wonderful companies, but our greatest honor and privilege was traveling to Eugene, Oregon, to visit Tony and Elly Muiderman. This program would not be where it is today without their unforgettable 31 years of contributions. You will be able to read about additional successes from our trip and throughout the academic year within the enclosed Connection letter.

Upon the reflection of our mission statement, we acknowledged the fact that there is room for improvement in our “leadership experience” pillar to make a greater impact within the program and the broader community. Starting in the fall of 2019, we will begin to implement a long-term project in conjunction with a local non-profit or for-profit organization. Not only will we engage in current-state and future-state analysis, but we will also be involved in the implementation phase – which, in our opinion, is what makes this experience one of the more unique opportunities we can receive as Baker Scholars. We look forward to seeing where this new group of Baker Scholars will take this idea and turn it into something special.

The selection process was a great success. The 6 selectors we had joining us this year consisted of: Brad Chassee, Jon Hatfield, Kurt Goldsby, Jody Vanderwel, Melyn Vanden Berg, and Professor Tom Smith. Each of the 20 applicants were worthy of becoming a Baker Scholar; however, 7 were chosen to join the program. In the short time we have gotten to know the new Bakers, they have made it apparent that each of them possesses a strong desire to develop as students, business professionals, and community leaders. It is evident that they will continue to improve on the foundation built within this program.

I am very excited to announce that Joseph Dawson will be taking over as President next year. He has shown a passion and dedication to leave this program better than he found it, with the goal in mind of developing each Baker Scholar towards their full potential. We all look forward to seeing what the talented 2019-2020 group can do for this program over the next year.

On behalf of the Bakers, thank you all for the support you provide for the program. Without you, none of this would be possible. Also, a special thanks to Professor Steve VanderVeen for his contribution towards the consistent improvement and empowerment of the Baker Scholars Program and each member of it –past, present, and future. Being President this past year has been the most valuable experience of my college career and above all, an incredible honor. If you are ever interested in connecting with the Bakers, please do not hesitate to contact us at our Baker Scholars email account (bakerscholars@hope.edu).

With Baker Love,

Zachary Gebben

ADVISER'S LETTER

Dear Baker Alumni, Family, and Friends,

Like this year's Baker President, Zach Gebben, I can say that two years ago I did not know what I was getting myself into when I agreed to be the Hope College Baker Scholars adviser. It has been a pleasant surprise and deep learning experience.

First, I have had the opportunity to meet with old and new friends. Without a doubt the highlight of the year was spending time with Tony and Elly Muiderman in Eugene, Oregon.

Second, I was able to see old and new places; that is, I got to visit cities I've been to before (e.g., Seattle, Chicago) but also many new places within those locations (e.g., Amazon, Point B, REI, Starbucks; Boeing, Epsilon Economics, JP Morgan, Slack and Company, etc.) and an entirely new place (e.g., Tokyo, Japan). Clearly the highlight of last year was spending time with the Bakers and my former student, Emi Hattori, who served as our guide in Tokyo, Japan. All of these adventures were made possible through the Baker program's pillar of business engagement.

Third, I had the opportunity to develop as a person. I was able to participate in conversations and assessments; but most of all I was challenged -- by the Baker students; our guests and hosts; the Baker selectors; the Department of Economics and Business chair, colleagues, and staff. These interactions are because of the Baker's focus on personal and professional development through another one of the Baker program's pillars, leadership development.

However, the experience I have enjoyed the most is seeing each individual Baker grow as a person. That growth occurs in part when each person dares to be vulnerable --to be stretched. This year has been an exceptional year, in my experience leading programs, because of the depth of investment made by each Baker participant and a shared vision with the Economics and Business Department for leadership enhancement excellence. To implement this vision, next year's group will be engaging in a significant, all inclusive, service project, to see if we cannot only understand a problem and craft a solution, but also help implement it. These changes are occurring because of the importance we place on the leadership experience pillar of the Baker Scholars program.

Discovering and developing potential is an ongoing process. It is an opportunity to build relationships and change lives. And next year, I have the privilege of being part of that process again!

With Gratitude,

Steve VanderVeen
Ruch Director of the Baker Scholars Program



Hope College Baker Scholars



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