

Kennedy Daniels, Prairie Capital

From researching prospective industries, to anxiously waiting for the next Monday Morning Meeting to know whether our bid was accepted by the investment banker and management team of a company, I can truly say that over the course of my time with Prairie Capital I have been completely immersed in the deal making process. The team at Prairie welcomed me with open arms and made me feel that I was a part of their family.

Over the past 10 weeks I have worked on various parts of the deal making process. Some of my projects this summer included:

1. New Deal Sourcing: I learned about, and executed on, several creative strategies that PE firms utilize to identify new investment opportunities.
2. Market Research: Researched trends and a competitive landscape for potential investment opportunities in a specific industry of interest to Prairie.
3. Industry Growth Research: Looked into specific sectors within healthcare tech, education, and industrial products to assess the growth opportunities in each.
4. Alternative Google Alerts: Sourcing a new system to deliver digestible news about the firm and portfolio companies to the deal team.

Each project that I have worked on allowed me to get a better understanding of what PE firms and professionals look for in deals and has advanced my knowledge of what makes a good deal.

Through the IVCA program we were not only given the opportunity to work and study under great firms for a few months, but also able to visit each other's firms and attend events to engage us in the PE/VC culture of Chicago. One of my favorite and most interesting days this summer was the IVCA Golf Outing which took place on June 24th. Not only did I meet amazing people, but I was able to use some of my creative skills and put together a slideshow of photos from throughout the day of everyone enjoying the course and having fun -- after the rain left us!

One thing that surprised me the most over the summer was how quickly and wholly I became a member of the team at Prairie. In my previous internship and work experiences, I have never found a work culture that easily integrated everyone into the team as seamlessly as I have here -- and I was not the only new addition to the team over the past couple months. Asking an intern, who's just halfway through their college career, their opinions on an industry and asking for their input on a prospective deal is somewhat unheard of but is one of the aspects that I truly enjoyed and that I respect the entire team at Prairie for.

During my tenure at Prairie, Steve King told me to "take advantage of the opportunity" on multiple occasions. While I've heard this from a bunch of my mentors and contacts, I feel that this is especially true for the IVCA scholar opportunity. Many of my friends weren't able to, or simply didn't, take advantage of the opportunities placed in front of them by their summer internships and

experiences. So, to a 2020 IVCA Scholar, if you can honestly see yourself in PE or VC or even Investment Banking, this is the opportunity that you should take advantage of because there is no better edge against your competition than being able to say “I worked in PE as an undergrad”. We were exposed to so many different cultures, firms, and careers to help us make a decision on whether or not PE/VC is where we wanted to be in the future, and have time to make changes if necessary, to put us on the right path to end up in our dream fields. Network, make great connections at events and follow-up, and take advantage of all the tools being given to you to build your dream.