Career Planning: A Crash Course for Families
Transcript

We've got a whole bunch of advisors and advisors with different backgrounds. And so we do, self-assessments kind of some testing. I'll talk more about how I kind of think about that. The typical stuff, reviewing a resume, mock interviews. We also do graduate school prep and coaching. I'm one of the pre-law advisors for example. We also do prehealth, premed, advising as well. We have, I think, five people in the Career Center who are part of that larger pre health advising team, including a couple of physicians who work in the Career Center.

Now here's the thing we've got extraordinary resources, but your student has to take advantage of them. And many of them won't for a variety of reasons. And I just raise this because like I said, I have a number of kids. One kid, the oldest one, he would take advantage of this kind of stuff and come in. My second son, which I suspect some of you have got a Michael in your family. So the equivalent of last year, when you were going through the application process, we would, my wife and I said to Michael, "Michael, how's the personal statement going?" And he said, "it's going great, dad." And then we were like, "that's great, Michael, can we take a look at it just to give you some feedback?" And hesaid, "well, I haven't actually written it yet." And by definition, Michael, that doesn't mean it's great. It means you haven't started it. And I think sometimes, the kids will say, well, things are going great, but they're not actually doing something. And we know we can always tell their engagement with us. And we keep records. So feel free to call me and we can try and engage them more.

And in terms of our advisors, they can go see anyone. They can create an ongoing relationship. They can hopscotch around it's up to them.

Let's go to some more services here in the next slide. We have these career interest groups, probably as a first year, they may not join it, although like pre-law or pre-health, they might join. Again, each group is a little bit different. They're focused on outcomes. And some groups will do like regular, weekly emails. Others will have meetings and it's up to the student, but that might be something they think about. I think one of the handouts in the chat is a listing of those career interest groups.

We also do all these events and many of them will be they'll all be done virtually this year. I was saying before we started, I think the work we do in the Career Center, lends itself very well to the virtual sphere. I've been doing student advising appointments over zoom and phone all summer, it works very well. I mean, I like meeting the student better, but we can do our work really well.

Another thing on here is the Management 200 Class. And I always like to highlight this class. It's a class that is for non-business course students, but it is taught at the business school. And it's taught by two folks from the Career Center, Aimee Wittman, who's the Executive Director of the Career Center and Jim Beirne, who is my Director of External Relations. And Jim used to run the Weston Career Center at the Olin School, we'll talk more about that. And before that, he spent 10 years as the director of the MBA Career Center at the Wharton School. And they teach a course, a three hour course that's focused on career elements, but then it's supplemented with faculty from the business school who teach things like how to make decisions with quantitative data, how to do oral and written presentations, how to read basic financial documents. I think it would be appropriate for anyone who thinks they might want to go into business, want to go into a not-
for-profit, government, for a future doctor, for a future lawyer. Its things that I think everyone should kind of know. And that’s a course that’s offered every year. There are also other courses that are offered in arts and sciences, everything from one to three hours focused on career stuff.

Okay, let’s go on to the next thing. The peer-to-peer networking. We have an online device that helps connect students and it’s searchable. So students can find upper-class students who maybe did things that they’re interested in. They can search it by geography. They can search it by, I want to see if anyone worked at this particular, the children’s legal defense fund, or I want to see, I want to just put the word “writing” and see if anyone had anything like that. And then they can connect with them through the internet. It’s a great way to connect. Obviously, LinkedIn is another great resource to connect with alums. Let’s go on to the next one.

We’ll talk about some Career Center Partners. So the Weston Career Center is at the Olin School. And for those of you have students like say in McKelvey, I have three people who kind of focus on helping the engineers. Engineers can see anyone, but, and so I feel I will often work with the engineers who are thinking about law school, but I have engineers who are doing career counseling for the engineers. I have somebody in the art school at Sam Fox who comes from the art industry, and an architect for the architecture students. But anyone can see anyone. Weston does not report to this office, but we have one database of jobs. So all the jobs come to one place. We work together, partner and our outreach to the employers. We have business students coming over to our Career Center. We did probably like thousand appointments last year. So it’s pretty fluid.

We partner closely with the different academic departments, student groups, everything from sports teams to the National Society of Black Engineers to there’s consulting club. We’ll do that kind of work. A&D were mounting up or we’ve just bought some new software that will allow for more alumni mentoring. And that should be fully operational by the first of the year. But we do a lot of events where we involve A&D to connect alumni with current students.

The Skandalakis office is for entrepreneurship. And one of the reasons that’s important is because, if your student is interested in that, it’s a great resource. It’s open to students from all schools and it’s open to first year students. They also provide paid internships in St. Louis with startups in both for-profit and not-for-profit startups. So that might be something if your student is interested in something like that to think, Hey, maybe you want to stop by the Skandalakis Center.

There’s also the Office of Undergraduate Research, which helps with undergraduate research and then the Gephardt Institute, which is more about civic engagement, voter turnout, things like that. But they also have some internship opportunities during the summer more on the, in the civic engagement area.

One thing I would say, while it’s up here, the Office of Undergraduate Research, many of your students are interested in research. Here’s just a little tip that you can pass on to your child. They’ll often say, well, I want to do research. And so we’ll say, well, why don’t you reach out to faculty? And so what they’ll do sometimes is they’ll send an email to like four or five faculty members, maybe the faculty that they have in the class and the subject line of the email will be looking for research work. And it’ll say, "Dear faculty, I’m a first year student looking for some research work. You have anything I can help you with?" And then they will sign their name. That’s not going to work. I always say that’s like when I was in college as a single guy, going into a bar and saying, "I’m looking for a girlfriend, anyone interested?" That’s not going to work either. They need to tailor this. So what they should do is read, know what this faculty is doing research on. Maybe read
some of her articles, maybe set up an appointment with her to say, I'd like to see if I could talk to you about your research and then talk about that, show that they've got some connection to it and then say, "is there some way I could help you?" Or even in the email, just say, "I noticed you were doing this kind of work. I'm very interested in for this reason. And I've done this kind of work. I'd love to talk to you more and see if there are opportunities, the ways I could involve myself with your work." Something like that.

So, okay, let's go onto the next slide here. Some other way things we do on campus, on campus interviews, and they are happening this semester virtually. We're also doing career fairs. We used to do huge career fairs on campus. They're happening virtually. We're actually doing more career fairs than we have done in previous years. And I think we'll probably add even more. We have shadowing and mentoring programs with alumni, lunch with a pro, coffee with the pro, where we might bring in an alum in, a reporter from the New York Times. And they sit down with students and talk about the industry. Obviously we can't do them in person, but we'll be setting them up by Zoom. So it's quite possible.

In the past, we've done roadshows, we've done 10 to 15 a year where we would take a group of students to a particular location and then visit a bunch of employers. So for example, a couple of years ago, I went on the Silicon Valley Road Show. So it was over winter break, when students are not here at WashU and they get out to Silicon Valley, we meet, we set up two or three days of appointments. So like the one I was in, we rent a big bus and drive them around. And we went to Google, Facebook, LinkedIn a place called Jawbone, Box. And the alums at the place and then the HR people will come out and kind of do a little dog and pony show about their company. And it's great because it allows students to see a particular geographic area. Maybe I'm from Omaha, Nebraska. I've never been to Silicon Valley. I want to see what it's like. It allows them to kind of get an insight glimpse at some of these employers, make some connections with alumni and with the HR folks. Now we're probably not going to be able to do those this year, but we will do them virtually. And then, next year things are back to normal, we'll start them up again. And it's a great way to introduce students. Also, if your student doesn't have the finances to participate in these, if they're receiving financial aid, I typically have funding to allow them to participate in these shows.

And then we have CAREERlink is our database of jobs and internship. And we have literally thousands of postings that are updated, everyday we're getting new things. CAREERlink though is not all jobs or internships and so I would encourage your child to look, there are some outside sites that maybe collect certain types of internships. So for example, if your student is interested in kind of changing the world, there's a site called idealist.org that has thousands of posting for jobs and internships, kind of doing social justice type stuff. If I'm from, let's say Denver, I might be looking at some of the organizations in Denver and looking at their websites. There may be internships there, but they just haven't sent them to us. We'll go out and solicit them and we'll do some scraping, but we can't find everything. So I would encourage your student to target organizations that they're particularly interested in and we can help them with that. Let's go to the next slide.

So I have a whole team that does employer engagement and they're coordinating visits by the employers, whether they're virtual or in-person, courting them, coming to their postings, coming to career fairs and stuff. But I always like to talk to the parents cause I figure, you all are working, and your organization may be interested in recruiting WashU students. This is how I sell wash U to employers. First, as you know, our selectivity is extraordinarily high. If you look at average ACT, SAT, high school GPAs we are one of the most selective universities in country. And the last time I looked, and I didn't look to today before we did it, but we were more selective than most Ivy league schools. So it's a very selective, if you know your students, it's
a big deal to get into here. So we are a great product for these employers who are looking for the top students and they can get a good yield from WashU.

I think, the Midwest work ethic. I know many of you are from New York or LA or whatever, but I think, spending time in the Midwest, there's a put your head down, do the work, the idea of earned leadership, that you're not coming in expecting to take over the company on the very first day, just because you went to a top school. And while that quite frankly, well, it's not true for all of our students, the employers are buying it and I'm always selling it to them.

The St. Louis location, I'm a native St. Louisan, and I love St. Louis, but for those of you from Manhattan or in Santa Monica, I suspect your kid didn't come to WashU because he was realizing a lifelong dream to spend some time in St. Louis. They came here because of the opportunity, and that's what employers are looking for too. And so what I say to employers is, yeah, you're recruiting for New York right now, but down the line these people may need to move around, who do you think is going to go where the opportunities are some kid from Manhattan who went to Boston or my kid who came to St. Louis and they get that.

I think we offer a real cross-disciplinary approach to learning. Your children will have a major in sociology with a minor in Chinese and maybe a second minor in some kind of business thing. And they're learning very different approaches to problem solving. And the one thing when you talk to employers, the one thing that's constant is change. They need people who are smart, hardworking, the admissions office has done that for us, that is through your children. And they need people who can learn new things. And that's, I think what we teach in critical thinkers, and they've got this robust approach to problem solving.

We also, unlike many schools offer undergraduate business school courses. I'm not saying your kid needs to take business school courses, hardly from it, but they can, if they want. If they want to learn some of that vocabulary or they could take that business fundamentals course I was talking about. So I think these are all ways that we can sell that you might be able to sell within your place of work. We're always looking for more paid internships and jobs. We're particularly looking in, not-for-profits, NGOs, consulting is very popular, health, public health, finance, banking, arts and entertainment. Everyone wants to do that. Government public policy is very interesting to our students and research and think tanks. So if you, have an opportunity, let me know, let Jim Beirne in my office know. We'd love to help you with that. Let's go on to the next slide.

So kind of as a parent, here's what I want your student to do. I want them to get started early. So during orientation, all the Arts & Sciences students did a two hour program with the Career Center. And both Engineering and Sam Fox also did programs like that as well as did Olin. So we've kind of started talking to them about that. They don't necessarily need to come in the next couple of weeks, but maybe before the end of the semester or the beginning of next semester, actually before the end of the semester might be great, because then they can use their time over the winter break to do some work. And often students want to go back home for their first summer. So why not do that over the winter break? I do some programs that are specifically focused on first year students on networking in the fall, they'll be closer kind of between Halloween and Thanksgiving. You might encourage your kid to look for those. We'll send them lots of emails. But making a connection with the career adviser, I think would be a good thing to do sometime this fall.

Over the course of their four years, I want them to just make a multiple meaningful experiences. It doesn't have to be an internship, but something where they're getting some experience and we'll talk more about them. I want them coming to our events. We're going to do lots of events. And even a career fair as a first
year student, just to kind of get the lay of the land and see what it's like. And then coming to our skill building workshops on resume, how to interview. And then we have lots of stuff in the office that we can, where somebody can review their resume or where we could do a mock interview, whatever. So let's go to our next slide.

So here's kind of what we're talking to your students about in terms of, one of the biggest things is students don't know what they want to do. And I think, I didn't know what I wanted to do when I started college. I think most students, if they were honest would admit they don't know, but you get all these students coming in and saying, I know I'm going to go to medical school and then I'm going to become a neurosurgeon and I'm going to specialize this. And they're just trying to psych out the other kids, I think or make their parents happy, or get everyone off their back. But the kids who don't know they get, they're very insecure about that. And it's the majority of students. So I think helping your students think about it. And the way we kind of approach this is we're asking students, what are your interests? What are your skills? What are your values?

So using me as an example, I wasn't particularly driven by any value. I liked helping people, but basically I just needed to pay off my student debt coming out of law school in college. But my interests were varied. So like now, if I were to do it, I would say, well, my skill is a lawyer. I was a very good lawyer. The world we can debate whether or not the world needed it, but people would pay me to be a lawyer. I really wasn't interested in being a lawyer. So I only got some of them. I really like poker, like my wife thinks I got a problem. I see those people on TV who make a living, playing poker. I'm not that good, my skills are not that good. I really like watching TV and I'm a skillful TV watcher, but the world's not going to pay me.

What the kids really have problems with is they don't know what the world needs. They don't know what jobs are available out there. And I mean, think about it. We don't really know what most people do in their jobs. And they think they're the only ones that don't know that. They say the average college student knows 30 jobs out of like 30,000. So talking to them about what's out in the world. And then, they're going to say, well, I don't have any skills. And you're going to say, well, you're a really good writer. We're going to go over some of those skills. But what I want you to help your students realize is these skills, interests, and values, they may be dynamic. They may be changing over time. They may develop certain skills or interests while they're in college. That's very normal and they may continue to develop them over the course of their life. So let's go to the next slide.

So over their four years, I want them to collect some skills while they're here at WashU. They could be doing this in the classroom. Maybe they take some quantitative modeling class or some language classes or something. But they could also be doing it with extracurriculars, or they could be doing it with summer work or internships. And some of these are skills, some of these are just attributes. Learning to work. So I had a kid who spent a summer landscaping. That was a great experience for him. He learned how to show up on time and he learned how lucky he was. So then the next summer he had a job where he didn't have to do landscaping every day. I think that's good skills. So we want them to collect some skills over their four years.

I want them to have some experiences so they can talk about how they've used those skills. Those could be experiences through work, through extracurriculars. I did public relations for my sorority, so I can do short form writing as well as long form writing. And I've also done social media presence. So that could be classroom, extracurriculars, through work. And then gradually we want them to develop context, connections in their area of interest. Meeting people, whether its alums, friends of their parents, parents of their friends, people that we connect them within the Career Center, who could kind of tell them more
about this area and are the people that they could then ask for positions. And once again, this is going to be dynamic too. They're going to continue adding and changing this. Let's go to the next one.

And then many of you have seen something. This is kind of that design thinking that's all the rage. And I do think it's a good way to think about your career. You kind of do some assessment of yourself and then you do a little exploring and maybe that exploring is to see how those skills and interests might fit together and where are you trying to go, and then you're searching for some potential opportunities, you take an opportunity. So I spent the summer working at a place and then I do another assessment. What did I like about that? What didn't I like? Where could I maximize the things that I liked and minimize the things I didn't like? So I'm in that circle again. And that's not going to just go through college, that may go through their life. Or they might find the perfect thing first time. That's pretty rare. But then they can go from there. We've talked to your kids about this model and the skills and interests, everything.

The one thing I would add to this, this is a nonlinear process, and this is one of the challenges I think your kids have. I mean, and remember back when you were in school, I mean, when you were a kid, third grade, you go to fourth grade, there's no thought there after grade school, you go to high school, no thought there. After high school, you go to college and they knew exactly how to get into a college like WashU. They had to take the hardest courses, get the best grades, keep taking the ACT or the SAT till they got where they wanted. They were doing extracurriculars. This one's for leadership. This one's for sports or music or whatever. And it was a very clear path. And then what I noticed is about sophomore year kids go through kind of an existential crisis because they realize, Hey, there's not a definite next step after college. And I don't know what I am. Before I knew what I was, I was a third grader and then I was a fourth grader, high school student and college student. And so they can get paralyzed by that. And because it's not a linear process, it's more meeting people and, trying to figure it out, they can sometimes get paralyzed by that. So we'll talk more about that later on.

But they also are not comfortable with people like us telling them when we say, how'd you end up in this career, you say, well, it was kind of happenstance and they don't want to count on happenstance, but that's a part of it. But you can make your own luck by doing certain things. Let's go to the next slide.

So this is one of the things I want them to do. I want them to have some meaningful summer experiences. So one thing might be a traditional internship, but that's not the only thing. And I think that's critical to remember. And a traditional internships are often very tough for first year students to get. CAREERlink, we have this whole listing of internships. Like I said, you can go to employer websites, industry websites, they will typically have summer opportunities, but you can also network with your family and friends. What did the kid down the block who's a year older or two years old or three years, what did he do during his summer? What did your cousin? How did she spend her summers? She's kind of got the same interests. Those are great places, to look and we can help with that. And I told you about that database, where they can look.

You can create internships. This is something that students don't always get. If you're out talking to the people, particularly at like, not-for-profits who are doing the kinds of things you're interested, they will often start internships. So, as I said, I've got a daughter who's a sophomore here at WashU, she's created two internships that way, where she just was talking to somebody and they said, yeah, we'll create something for you. It's going to be part time, but it's been great for Laura. I want you to kind of joining these communities that you want to be a part of. So you can kind of find out more about it. You can talk to talk. You can figure out what you need to do. Let's go to the next stage.
Research opportunities. We already talked about how to reach out to faculty. But talking to this Office of Undergraduate Research, or just talking to upper-class students. Who do you do research for? How’d you get in there? That kind of stuff.

Volunteer opportunities. We run a stipend program in the Career Center. Last year, I gave out a little over $300,000 in stipend money. Most of it goes to students with demonstrated financial need, but even students who don’t have financial need, I can give them a small stipend. Or maybe they do a part time unpaid thing, and then take, continue working at the water park as a lifeguard, 30 hours a week or something like that. Summer school can also be another option study abroad. I just like you, don’t want them sitting around doing nothing, playing video games all day. We want them to have an opportunity to do something.

So this summer things were more difficult, but we were talking to students about, well, create a website where you can demonstrate your use of Italian and you can create an Italian language guide to your particular city, or you’re doing your comedy writing online. Or you just do a research project on your own and publish it. They can be very creative here. And that’s part of what we’re here to help with. Okay, let’s go into 15, our next slide.

So once again, I think, having you help, you know your kid probably better than anyone else, helping them identify their strengths and their interests, because they don't always, you know, they're very modest about what they can and can’t do. And in terms of interests, think about like, if you go to a bookstore, what kind of books do they look at? What do they like to talk about? What are they really into? Helping them think expansively about options. Like I said, they don't know what most people do in jobs. And even if it’s just saying, ‘Hey, this guy down the street, he does that kind of work, I bet he’d talked to you.” Your kids and my kids, they don’t get why old person like me would want to talk to them. And, while I’m busy, I love talking to college kids. And I think I suspect most of you are the same way. I mean, it’s so nice to have a college kid who seems interested in what you’re saying and says, you’re really interesting to talk to. I mean, our whole culture says they are the cool ones. They know what bands to listen to, how to dress. I’m completely out of it, and if they tell me it’s cool, I start thinking that I’m interesting. I start thinking, my own kids, they’re wrong. They roll their eyes when I talk, I still got it. And I think that, they don’t get that there's something in it for us. And that we remember what it's like to be starting out, trying to figure out our path in the world. So encouraging them to do that kind of stuff, encouraging them to come to our events and meet with an advisor, encourage them to set up a LinkedIn account. It’s very easy to do.

The social media, you may or may not know what they’re doing. I don't know what my kids are doing on social media, but sometimes, and I see it particularly get problematic when they put up humorous things that are sometimes in bad taste. And just encourage them and remind them that even people like us know how to look up, do a Google search and find their stuff in social media. Or if they burn a bridge with one of their classmates, they might rat them out to somebody else. And while it's rare, I ever heard of, graduate programs or jobs revoking offers because of things on social media.

Emphasizing, what are we going to do over the summer, activating your network and just encouraging. This is a very discouraging process oftentimes for them, because you typically do it until you get some positive, you get an offer, but up until that point, it's all either they're ignoring you or you getting nos. And that's very discouraging. Let's go into the next slide.
So this is what the parents can do for the Career Center, 'cause as my wife says, everything's always about me. I'd love to have your help hiring our students. And we have this Hire-a-Bear program for internships. You can go on our website. If you've got, internships or full time positions. We have the architecture internship network, but we have other networks like that. You could serve as a resource for our students. And I talked about some of the areas we're particularly interested in, but we have a shadowing program. If you were willing to let a student shadow you just let me know and we can talk about that.

And then I know, you know, got three. Well, I've had three kids go through college. I know it's expensive, but I say this because we have had some parents who have been very generous and have the capability of being very generous and who started basically our stipend fund for us and have kept it going and I would love to expand it. So if you're one of those folks and you're looking for a good cause this is helping students who are working and not getting paid. And it's leveling the playing field for all our students. I mean, I know when I was in college, my first summer I had to work in a factory because I needed to make money. And it was only because of a stipend that I was able to get a kind of internship after my second year. And I want that opportunity for all our students. So if you can help, I'd be happy to talk to you about that. Let's go on to the next slide.

So some final thoughts here, and then I'm happy to answer any questions. Here's some other ways you can help me in terms of setting expectations with your kids. So first I can't tell your kid any more than you can tell your kid what they should do with their life. I can help them figure it out, but ultimately it's gotta be their decision. And so, just kind of reminding them of that.

This doesn't happen often, but I think setting expectations in the world of work. And I sometimes see this with kids and it always kind of makes me laugh. And it's usually a male student, they'll come in and they'll say something like this. So Dean Smith, here's what I'm looking for. I want to do something socially, good. And that is very important. I just don't want to work for a paycheck. I want to believe in what I'm doing and I want to, and maybe there's a particular issue with it, but at the same time, I'm not naive about money. I know I want to live a good life. And so I want a good salary also I see my parents, they work all the time. I don't want to work that hard I want to have a nice, flexible balance between. And I feel like saying “kid, look it, I could find a job that really paid a lot of money, did social good and I could work whenever I wanted. I mean, I'd take it before I give it to you”. There are some times tradeoffs there. And so helping with that.

And the other thing is, while we have lots of opportunities here and we collect that, I can't hand somebody an opportunity. It's not like I have a drawer where here's your internship. They have to go out and do it. And so kind of reminding them of that.

Now I think I mentioned I'm a lawyer by training. I always like to anticipate the other side's argument. Here's what your kids are going to tell you. They're going to say a couple of things. One, they're going to say, look it, I went to the Career Center. That's an hour of my life I'll never get back. I met with that Mark Smith, no help at all. And that may be the case, I kind of doubt that, but it may be the case, but don't give up and don't have your kid give up. I mean, if they came to you saying, I went to the first day of class, he says, I'm going to get an F and there's nothing I can do about it. You wouldn't say, well, I guess you're getting an F. That's just the way it goes. No, you'd say there's gotta be some way. And the way is come to me. Maybe they went to the wrong person, but I'm willing to meet with them personally, get them to a different person. I want to make sure they're having a good experience.
Another thing they're going to tell you is, and I see them, I hear them talking on the phone. They'll be like, yeah and it's usually their mom, "yeah mom, no, I'm just too busy to do that". Now they're busy, but I've been on the South 40 on the weekends. They've got their time, trust me. They can give me an hour of time to come in and meet with somebody and just get going on this. So they do have some time.

The last thing they're probably going to say is, well, they can't help me because I'm very specialized in what I want to do. They don't know anything about, and it'll either be some geographic area or some particular area of employment. And that may be true. I may not know about Boise, Idaho, or quantitative modeling for blah, blah, blah. But what I do know is how to network, how to meet people and how to work the process, and that works with everything. And so we can always help them with that and help them find the people that can help them and get them going on it.

I think, I kind of talked about this before, their paradigm for looking for an internship or a job is applying to college. That's what they want it to be like, because it worked out really well. They get into a really good school and they liked that it was very set out. Their college counselor told them exactly what they needed to do to get into a top school. This is a different paradigm. And I think, well, it's not a perfect paradigm. And it's a little bit inappropriate. I think the correct paradigm is dating. It's arbitrary and capricious. It's about a lot of rejection. It's about, they have to like you and you have to like them and there's no set path. And it's a lot of just meeting people and then hoping thing kind of happen. So there's no safety. And in college, I couldn't say, okay, woman, over here, you kinda like me, I kinda like you, you're my safety girlfriend, You just wait here. I'm going to try these two women over here. I know they're out of my league, but I'll give it a shot. If it doesn't work, I'll come back to you. That doesn't work in that world, and it doesn't, there are no safety internships and they want to think that way. It's like, well, I have this, what should I do? And they think there should be one thing. And what they major in was completely unrelated to what they'll do. It can be related, but it doesn't have to.

The other thing is your students are very successful. They've never failed before many times. If they wanted to make the team, they made the team. If they wanted to be in the play, they got in the play. If they wanted to be in the choir, they were in the choir. If they worked hard enough, they got an A in their class. And like I said, with the internship and the job, it's mainly rejection or even worse, just not hearing back. And that's very frustrating for them.

So my final advice is, like I said, I got college aged kids. I'm giving them advice all the time. And they're looking at their phone or they're rolling their eyes. And I feel like they're not listening to me. But I can tell you from talking to your children when I'm talking to them, they'll say things like, "yeah, my mom actually suggested the same thing", or "my dad talked about guy who does that. Maybe I should follow up on that." So keep doing it, they are listening.

On the other hand and I don't want to hit this too hard, but I think you need to listen to your kids as well. So I use this as an example, I used to be Dean of Students over at the law school. And if you wanted to drop out of law school, you came in to see me. So every year I'd get some kid to come in and say, Dean Smith, I want to drop out of law school. And I'd say why? And they'd be like, yeah, I don't really like it here. And I'd say, well, what don't you like? And they would kind of like, well, they'd start off slow, but they'd like work themselves up to their friends well I don't know like the work, I don't like the professors, I don't like the other kids, I don't like, and it was like, well, if you hate everything, why'd you come here. And they were like, cause my parents made me do it. And I see this sometimes with the premeds, they're feeling real family pressure to do that and just kind of listen to your kid.
The other thing is just, thank you. It's a great, your kids are so much fun to work with. I feel really blessed to do this job. I'm coming in to work mainly because I want to see the kids. I can do all my stuff from home, but I like seeing the kids and it's just a great environment and you've done a great job as parents raising them.

And then the last thing, if you have a problem, I want to know about it, I want to fix it. So I think we have my contact information, but I'm on, Mark Smith and you can email me. I check that all the time, call me it goes right through to my cell phone. So thank you. I'm gonna look at some of the questions now and see if I can answer.

Are you also, Okay I don't know if I'm starting at the top. Are you also giving this talk to freshmen?

I'm not giving this talk, but I'm giving a similar talk. We did that at orientation where we kind of covered getting them thinking, and then I'm going to do a very detailed, nuts and bolts. How you go about networking and connecting to people and explaining why old people want to talk to them and how to structure the initial contact, follow up to the meeting, what you say at the meeting and break it into three parts. It's very nuts and bolts. So, but unfortunately they don't have to come into my office. I mean, I just get by, on my good personality to get them to come in and we get most students to come in, but there are always some students that don't. And like I said, I'll take them whenever they come in, wherever they're at and we can help them.

Are students in the BUC. I don't know what BUC is program. I don't know somebody tell me what that is and I'll answer it.

Well, do we have a, the question is, do we take a proactive approach to ensuring students have a resume ready to go?

We certainly reach out to students. We'll have like resumania where you can drop by and have it reviewed. We'll be doing that online. We're telling them we'll do all these kinds of programs. I think most students do it. They don't want to go to that career fair with something that nobody's looked at, but I can't guarantee that everyone's done that. But we do see just a huge increase in traffic right before the career fairs. And we do also a lot of we're very proactive in terms of email, your kid will complain. If you asked him like at Thanksgiving, how many emails are you getting from the Career Center they will tell you “God, I wish those guys would shut up. They're just sending me stuff all the time.” But I want to encourage them to come in and use our services.

What is a realistic expectation for summer internship for a freshman, majoring in CS? I assume that's compsci.

It could be anything from an unpaid thing to working at Google for pay. A lot has to do with how soon they get onto it. What kind of skills they have? Some kids come in with pretty high level. I would encourage them to meet with Jen Finney. She is one of the engineers and does engineering career services, and maybe talking to upper class students about their experiences, but whole range of things. We'll also have a lot of kids who will teach compsci and they'll teach for these programs where they're teaching like high school kids in a grade school kids about compsci. And from what I understand is a pretty, it's an okay paying gig. And a lot of times the kids like it because it's a nice transitional type program.
My student is in the Olin Business School, is it possible?

Yeah. Should he talk with the, he can talk with either one. So Olin Business School students, and like I said, I think we get like a, we'll do about a thousand appointments with Olin students every year, but they can go to either place. They have just counselors who are more focused on career that would, most of those students go into finance, investment, consulting, but we have those resources too. But we also have things like public interest work and government work, things like that.

Okay. So somebody said, great talk, thank you very much.

Have the freshmen had this presentation during the orientation?

Not this exactly, but we're covering it.

Parents of current students and alumni are a great resource. This is a question. So the first question is, do we have a database where parents are strongly encouraged to share opportunities of internships?

That's that Hire-a-Bear program. And I would love to have parents who would be willing to help just email me and we can see how, what you're willing to do and how we can work it out. That's part of what Jim Beirne, who I mentioned about our external affairs person, that's part of his job.

So somebody wants me to explain the Career Center set up. Do you have centers by school?

We have the Career Center. Weston is separate, that's over at the Olin School. But I have people. So I have two people down at Sam Fox. One has got an art background. One has got an architecture background. The art and architecture students tend to visit them. But like if there was an art student who was thinking about law school, they'd come see me. Or if I have an art student who says, you know what, I really want to do is some kind of rotational program in a big company, they'd probably come and talk to some folks over in this office. Same way with engineering. Let's say that person wants to do like, it's a mechanical engineer, wants to do mechanical engineering. They'd probably talk to Jen or there two other people over there, who are engineers who do that kind of work. But if they want to do consulting, they would probably talk to one of the folks up here who do talk primarily to the people interested in consulting. So you can kind of pick your place where you come in. I hope that explains it. Oh, we're getting some more questions.

Oh, business, computer science. I think I answered that. Cause it was the comp sci thing.

If my child is studying architecture, will I be able to give them requirements to become a licensed architect?

I won't, I don't know anything about it. But Martin, who is the licensed architect down at the architecture school will. And that's part of what he does. He spends a lot of time with that.

We know the career fairs, will they be virtual?

They will be virtual. I think our first one's about two weeks. We've got four planned for this fall. We're planning on add some more. So where we use this product called Simplicity and I was just talking to some of my colleagues who also use it. Who've also already done career fairs because they started earlier. Obviously we just started on Monday and they said that it worked really well. So, I'm worried about it cause
that's my nature and until I've been through it, but I'm optimistic that it'll work. And I, think it also, one of the challenges we've always had is the geography of coming to St. Louis and doing it virtually eliminates that challenge.

Okay. My older child experienced a chicken and egg problem. You can't get internships until you have an experience and you can't experience until you get an internship any suggestions?

Yeah, that's a good question. I mean, I think you can build up experience in other ways. And I think it's tough, although not impossible to get a formal internship program, but maybe you get some kind of volunteer experience for the first summer and then, or you do some work experience here at WashU, and then you just go on to the next thing, but that is what we're here to help them with. And so I'd encourage your kid to come in and see somebody and they can see me if they want and we can talk about it.

We got another explanation of the Business Comp Sci program. I think those kids, I mean, those are still very popular. Sure.

Can an engineer doing a business minor, also use the Olin Career Center?

Sure they can use that one, they can use ours, but like I said, all the opportunities are the same. I still think with the engineering probably Jen Finney would be the best place to start.

An older child of ours walked into career services to have a resume looked at. She said, a student reviewed it with her. Are these students trained by you? For some reason, the student prefers an adult career services staff, and can they request somebody else? This is from Karen.

Well, very nice question. When I started, I came over to work with the undergrads 15 years ago and the first thing I thought we have these career peers doing it. I thought, Oh my God, I cannot believe we're having other students review resumes. And even though they go through extensive training, two weeks of training before school starts, we meet with them regularly. And I was ready to get rid of the program because I was worried, how is this going to look for parents? But what I found by talking to students is the students really like it because going in to see a junior or a senior is a lot less scary than going in to see me. I look like their father and I'm, they don't want to talk. It's like, my kids don't want to talk to me, but this is a good first step. And having one of these people go over their resume, answer a lot of these questions, which doing a resume review, it's not rocket science. And then I can get the real help with the folks in my office who can do it. But if they wanted me to come in and review their resume I'd do it for them, I'm fine doing that. But I would trust the career peer to do a better job of reviewing the resume, than me to tell you the truth. Let's see what else we got.

How is the opportunity for international students to be accepted to medical students, to be a doctor?

I just don't know the answer to that. I don't deal as much with med school. But law school it doesn't really matter. What I would do, Carolyn Herman, who's a Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences heads up our pre health advising. She would know the answer to that. Or if you can't get to Carolyn, just send me an email and I'll connect you with one of our pre health advisors.

So are there specific career resources offered to premed students?
Yeah, we have four. There's a whole pre health advising team, which includes pre dentistry, pre med, nursing, occupational therapy, everything. So they got a big team of 15 to 20 people. My folks are part of that team. I have four or five people on it, including MDs. I've got a physical therapist and then other people who just know all about it. So a lot of times, I think my people might be easier to see sometimes. And so particularly for the mock interviews that students need to do, when they're in the application process, they can come in and talk to them. Or if they just wanted as a first year, second year say, I'm thinking about medicine. I want to talk to a doctor about what it's like, if they don't have any other doctor, they could talk to, the folks from the Career Center could be there. Let's see what else we got.

When should students is first year too early?

No, I mean, they're just trying to find their way around and make friends and that's their priority right now. But sometime before Thanksgiving, I think it would be good to have a meeting with somebody in the Career Center. And it's perfectly appropriate for them to say, here's why I wanted to talk to you. I'm a first year student. I've got no idea what I want to do. And my parents wanted me to meet with the Career Services person. What should I be doing? That's a great first meeting and that's a good use of their time. And it's a very good use of our time.

During this COVID time, how do students go about finding out?

We're just emailing them nonstop with different stuff and just like we do during other times. Go ahead and focus somebody's impressed with the focus that's good. Get them to come out and see a career advisor. That's probably step one. Yeah, there are jobs on campus, right now there aren't as many because we're trying to de-densify the campus. But what I would recommend is there's not, people who are looking for students to work, don't always post them, it's very word of mouth. So, some of the places that do a lot of hiring are things like the library, the athletic complex. The athletic complex is not open right now. But even like talking to faculty or departments to say, I'm interested in doing something, do you have any opportunities? We in the Career Center hire people. So just kind of talking to people and then oftentimes they'll say, well, I don't have anything, but you might try this place.

My child was not able to find a job this past summer.

Well, this past summer, was an extraordinary summer and people are gonna, but yeah, we can help them with changing the high school, resume into a college resume. And as a first year student, they're going to have a lot less on their resume. Everyone knows that that's not a big deal. So I don't think your kid is unique and we're happy to help them work with that.

So this parent says, I think a barrier to coming into your office is that my student doesn't know what he wants to do.

And that's exactly right, it's a huge barrier. But what I would tell him is, Hey, the guy at the Career Center told me, that's exactly why you shouldn't be coming in because they can help you. They're not going to tell you what to do with your life, but they can help you go through the process. We have this testing. So I am not certified to interpret the testing, but I took it, and it told me you would be good as a lawyer. I was a pretty good lawyer. It told me, you should think about teaching. I teach a first year class. I always get good reviews. It told me I should work in HR. That's what I did when I was a lawyer kind of labor and employment. That's kind of what I'm doing on this side. And it told me, I should think about being an optometrist I never
thought about that. But I think helping people is better or is this better, I think I can do that. I think I would have liked it. And so this is what we can help them with. And we're not like going to answered for them. It's not like the sorting hat in Harry Potter, but we can help them. And they're going to have to do some work on it. But that's what we're here for.

A suggestion based on what some elite colleges, well we're an elite college. Okay, hold on. Once you should email all parents every semester. Oh, that would be good. I don't have access to all the parent emails, but I know the, you get that parent regular, I forgot what it's called. Parent like information about what's going on in WashU. I'll suggest something like this to them. Thank you.

You suggest an internship every summer. Yeah I mean, it could be, it's great if they want to, but if they want to do summer study or something like that and see we've reached seven o'clock here. I'm fine answering these questions, but I understand you all have lives. So if you have to leave, I won't be offended. But I, think that would be good. And working, and they can do both. Maybe he's teaching chess on the side and then he's got an internship two or three days a week.

Is there a law prep class that exposes kids to areas of law like med rep?

No, there are a number of classes that touch on the law. I teach a first year one. Michael Cannon, who's a WashU undergrad, Rhodes Scholar, Yale Law School. He was former general counsel. He teaches a course on legal dispute resolution and it's really good. Lee Epstein teaches one on the Supreme Court. Lawyers love to talk about themselves. I mean, I think doing, what I would recommend is just reaching out to lawyers and I can help with ask and asking these questions, which I think are good for other industries. What do you do all day? Are you in court or are you talking on the phone? Are you writing? Are you talking to people? What do you like about your job? What don't you like about your job? And where do you see your industry going? I think whatever field you're thinking about, those are very good questions and you'll learn a lot. And this med prep course, I assume most of you know about it. I think it's a great course. And it seems like most of the premed students go through it. We have doctors come in and talk.

They don't get a pre law advisor assigned, but there's three of us. And the beauty of pre-law it's not like premed. You don't have to take any classes. I'm going to do a program for the first years thinking about law school. And we have a weekly email that goes out, but all you gotta do is tell people you're pre law, that's it, it's a state of mind. And then you take the LSAT temp time, your junior, your senior year. I'll talk to you about what you need to do. I'll encourage you to think about taking some time off, but it's pretty easy process. So it's not like med school where you've got to jump through all these hoops. You got to take certain courses or anything. Let me see if there's anything.

How's the COVID situation affecting recruitment and internship.

Most of our employers, I was surprised I was very worried about this, but most seem to be telling us they're hiring at the same, if not a higher level. There are some that have been hurt, but like I said, I'm optimistic. I do think employers are a little cautious. They're worried about what might be happening with the economy when we've got a lot going on, we have an election, we have COVID and they're just a lot of unknowns.

Freshmen students could reach out and premed students, I think right now they could work with their four year advisor in terms of starting to take the premed curriculum, but they don't probably need to do more than that.
Okay. So I think I answered everything and I'm happy, to if I can help any of you, if you want this power
point, I'm happy, just send me an email at MSmith and I'm happy to send it to you. And I look forward to
meeting you all in person. And thanks again for sending your kid to WashU. You made a great choice. My
daughter's had an extraordinary experience her first year, last year, and I really do think this is a wonderful
place where people really care about your kids and get to know them. And even in this difficult time, I think
that's still a great place. Like I said, I've been thrilled with her experience and I'm thrilled to be a part of this
place. So thank you so much. I look forward to meeting you.