

8-1-2015

Senior trains with private equity firm in Chicago

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Recommended Citation

Gardner, Sarah and Albee, Dave, "Senior trains with private equity firm in Chicago" (2015).
Press Releases. 349.

<https://scholar.dominican.edu/news-releases/349>

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Senior trains with private equity firm in Chicago

As the first person from her high school in Ethiopia to be selected to attend college in the United States, Mekdelawit (Mekdi) Yilma '16 is making the most of her decision to come to Dominican and the Barowsky School of Business.

This summer Mekdi trained with Red Arts Capital, a Chicago-based middle market private equity firm that consists of former entrepreneurs, seasoned investors and Fortune 100 executives who bring decades of financial, operational, and strategic management expertise. Mekdi completed the virtual internship with the Chicago firm while traveling through the southern part of the United States.

In June Mekdi, with the support of the [Barowsky School of Business](#), received a scholarship from the Financial Women of San Francisco (FWSF) that enabled her to move to the next level in her private equity career.

“I couldn’t have accomplished my business goals for the summer without the tremendous help I had received from the faculty members. With every finance/accounting/math courses I have undertaken, my professors have laid the theoretical foundation for me to begin building upon my business endeavors,” Mekdi says. “For this, I give my gratitude to Barowsky School of Business.”

At Red Arts Capital, Mekdi shadowed the work of one of the partners, sourced certain amounts of deal opportunities per week that fits the firm’s criteria, learned financial and market analysis including market trends and growth prospects within the specific industry. She also developed an investment thesis on a high value industry along the way.

Mekdi believes all the financial modeling and market analysis will help her in her advanced course load. Most importantly, she said, with various private equity trainings she has received, she will become a better-rounded and focused individual.

“Finance puts Mekdi at ease and it is her passion. She is very hardworking and is open to challenges and seeks opportunities to excel,” says Dr. Jayati Ghosh, associate dean of the Barowsky School of Business. “In addition to her academic interests she has pursued internships in the financial services sector. She has a strong desire to learn and to be mentored by leaders in the field.”

At Dominican, Mekdi is seeking a dual concentration in finance and accounting with a math minor. She chose Dominican because of its location in California and Marin County and its reputation for being strong economically. Her life in Ethiopia prepared her for the challenge.

“I had an ambition to come study in the U.S. even before high school. Perseverance and determination have made it happen for me,” Mekdi says. “This journey is not quite over yet. However, as each day approaches, I am growing as a person with one step closer to achieving my life aspirations. Despite my country’s economic plights, I am proud to represent Ethiopia as a possible future leader.”

Her experience at Dominican is helping her realize her lifelong dream. She has been honored on the Dean’s List and, for three consecutive years, received the prestigious Trustee Scholarship. She has been president of [Dominican’s Global Ambassadors](#) and President of [Dominican’s Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society](#). She utilized her leadership skills in the community as Co-President of the student [Rotary Club](#). She also serves as an active member of the [Dominican Accounting and Finance Association](#).

“I now can say that I see the larger world out there. There are many avenues in which I can apply my skills to impact this country and my own,” Mekdi says. “Although I am entering my senior year at Dominican, the aforementioned work is not too early to commence. I plan to continue to closely watch the world regarding the different market trends occurring in a wide assortment of countries.”