

Carson Career Info Sessions: John Sommer from Hilton Worldwide

JOHN SOMMERS: All right. Well, good evening, everybody. And thank you very much for taking time out of your busy schedules to join us here today. We really appreciate your coming to learn a little bit about Hilton.

My name is John Sommers. I'm the regional director of human resources. I support about 30 of our hotels on the west coast, including the state of Hawaii, Washington, Oregon, Utah, and northern California. I've been with Hilton, well, longer than you've been alive-- for a very long time. I am a Cougar, though. So it's always great to come back onto the campus here at WSU and talk to our students about a potential career with Hilton.

I started as a management trainee when I left WSU. And I went down to southern California, trained at the Hilton Anaheim, and did our management training program at the Hilton Anaheim, where I actually met Dean at that time. From there, I moved up to our corporate office in Beverly Hills-- it was located in Beverly Hills at the time-- and worked as a college recruiter for all of our hotels at that time, and then moved to Orlando as an assistant director of HR.

Then I was there for-- I don't know-- a year and a half, two years, before I was offered a director's position down in Miami. So I went to Miami in my first director's role, director of HR, then moved to Atlanta, Washington DC. Reno, Nevada-- that was back when Hilton was involved in the gaming industry. So I tried my hand on our gaming side. Back then, that was where we made all of our money. So it was an interesting part of our business to be associated with.

And then we spun off our gaming business. And I wanted to stay on the hotel side, so I moved back to the Hilton Anaheim as the director of HR down there, and then had the opportunity to take on this regional role a number of years ago, and have been serving in this role since then. So that's a quick snapshot of my career with Hilton.

But as you can tell, it's the only company I've worked for. It's the only company I know. People ask, why have you worked with Hilton for 31 years? And it's because they've never given me a reason to leave.

So it's been a real fun ride. And it's still a very exciting time at Hilton right now. And I wake up every morning looking forward to go to work. So that's my quick background. I'll turn it over to Dean real quick and let him introduce himself.

DEAN FELDMIEIER: Thanks. Like John said, I started at the Hilton Anaheim, which is a big, 1,600-room property. It has two 30,000-square-foot ballrooms. And I started there directly in what

you called convention services in those days, but catering and events these days. And I thought every hotel had 1,600 rooms and two 30,000-square-foot ballrooms. And I found out quickly that they didn't, that that was a big place.

But I started in event services, realized that I was killing myself getting up really early in the morning, checking on all of the rooms sets, checking to make sure all of the catering and AV and everything was set up like it was supposed to. And I watched the salespeople, and they were going to lunch with customers every day. And I thought, that looks a pretty good deal. So I trained and moved into sales.

And I moved up to Beverly Hilton and worked at the Beverly Hilton for about six years, which was a lot of fun, and left there the last three years as the director of sales. I then went into Hilton Worldwide Sales. We called it the Hilton National Sales in those days. And it represented all of our properties to accounts that were based in southern California.

And after doing that, moved back into hotels and worked as a director of sales in Portland, decided I wanted to go into operations, was very fortunate to get the opportunity to move into a general manager role in a smaller property, and then parley that into other general manager role. And then I went back down to Santa Barbara and worked across the street from the beach in Santa Barbara, a beautiful place to live down there, and then moved into a couple of different corporate roles. So I did branch op and then another sales job, and decided that I missed operations and missed being with our team, and moved back on property. So I've been at the Doubletree in Spokane for the last couple of years. But I actually was working there previously in the early 2000s.

So operations is awesome. Sales is awesome. John'll tell you HR is awesome.

The good thing about a career with Hilton is you can do pretty much anything. You can be in engineering. You can be in revenue management. You can be in sales, human resources, finance, a lot of different options-- but really, a fun company to work for.

And like John, there's no reason to leave. I mean, both of us have moved all over the country. I've had opportunities to literally travel all over the world. I've traveled to Dubai. I've traveled to China. I've been to Europe a ton of times in corporate roles. A lot of opportunity, and a good opportunity to work with different people from all over the country, as well.

So we all cross paths. And it's amazing when you look at LinkedIn or at any of these other social media things, you make connections with people. And they sometimes turn up-- I was doing a presentation to owners in our McLean corporate office a couple of years ago. And a guy that I worked with-- he was actually a Cougar grad-- he was working for the ownership company. And they were looking at having Hilton come in and brand one of their properties.

So you just keep crossing paths with people. So unlike John, I didn't go to school here. But I do have a daughter that goes to school here. So go Cougs.

JOHN SOMMERS: Thanks, Dean. I also brought with us today three gentlemen that are actually in our management training program, which most of you are probably here to learn about, or at least one of the avenues that you are here to learn about. And they're not Cougs, but we invited them anyway. But if you guys would please introduce yourselves and give them a little bit about your experience, if you would.

CONNOR DELILLE: Sure. Let's try that again. My name is Connor. I work at the Hilton Doubletree Seattle Airport Complex as a sales and marketing manager in development. Trevor and I actually went to San Diego State University together.

I started at Hilton when I was a freshman in college as a busser, because that's the only experience I actually had, worked my way up slowly, worked for a Westin for a small little stint, then went back to Hilton because they were just better. But it's a great company. Like they echoed, there is no reason to leave.

Now is probably the best time ever to be with Hilton. They have so many resources ready for you, not just at work, but for your family, paid time off, I mean, everything. It's a pretty good time to be with Hilton right now.

TREVOR YARNELL: Hello, I'm Trevor. As Conner mentioned, I went to San Diego State. Thanks for having us. We're going to beat you in football this year. [LAUGHS]

I'm doing my MDP program at, again, the Doubletree in the Hilton Seattle Airport. I'm in revenue management because I like to stare at computer screens and do puzzles. It's been a really good experience thus far.

So I'd never worked for Hilton before. In college in San Diego, I'd worked for a small boutique hotel in the Hard Rock Hotel down there. So I didn't think I was going to go work for a large corporate hospitality company. But after this information session, when they held this about a year ago on San Diego State's campus and I got to talk to people, I really learned how great the program is and how it really sets you up for a really bright future.

So if you guys have any questions, we'll stick around a little bit afterwards. We might be at the bar later, too. So if you want to ask us questions, you let us know.

CARSON JONES: My name is Carson Jones. I went to Millikin University. It's in Illinois. I've done two property internships with Hilton down at Hilton La Jolla Torrey Pines and then up in the Drake in Chicago. I'm currently the front office MDP for the Hilton Seattle Airport Conference Center, so right next to these gentlemen.

But as these two have said, Hilton's a great company to work for. I really can't imagine another company right now. Do you want to travel anywhere in the world? It's easy to do, plus cookies from the Doubletree.

[LAUGHTER]

That's about it.

JOHN SOMMERS: Great. Thanks, gentlemen. I appreciate that very much. And Carson did mention the cookies. So please, don't leave without grabbing a cookie, because otherwise, I'm taking them all home and giving them to my kids, and that's too much chocolate for them to have.

So you know now who we are. Quick show of hands-- how many freshmen are here? I know we had a couple. So all right, good. And how many sophomores? None. Juniors? And then the rest are seniors? Very good.

Well, thank you very much for joining us. We appreciate it very much. So we're going to run through and give you a quick little overview of our company so that you get a sense of who we are, our culture, the type of offerings that we have for you in regards to future employment opportunities. But most importantly, we want to leave time at the end for you to ask any questions that you have of any of us about our company. So with that, Dean, I think I'm going to turn it over to you for a little bit.

DEAN FELDMEIER: Great. Thanks, John. And feel free to interrupt. If you have questions, go ahead. We want this to be really interactive. This is not-- I mean, I could go on probably for a day and a half talking about Hilton and great stories and fun times and all of that. But we want it to be interactive, so we answer the questions that you have, and you learn more about Hilton.

So this is our vision, mission, and values. And this is really important to our company. Does anybody want to read our vision? Can anybody read that from where you're sitting? [? Anybody?] Somebody?

AUDIENCE: To fill the earth with the light warmth of hospitality by delivering exceptional experiences-- every hotel, every guest, every time.

DEAN FELDMEIER: Exactly. Now, can anybody guess where that came from, originally? Our founder, Conrad Hilton, said that. It was amended a little bit recently, a couple of years ago.

But our founder, Conrad Hilton, said that. He was the one who started the company, grew the company, and took it to the level that it was at. It keeps growing from there. But really, the delivering exceptional experiences, every hotel, every guest, every time was added to it. But it's a key part of our vision.

And then our mission-- anybody want to read our mission?

AUDIENCE: To be the most hospitable company in the world by creating heartfelt experiences for guests, mutual opportunities for team members, high value for owners, and a positive impact in our communities.

DEAN FELDMEIERS: Exactly. So that's a critical part of what we do on property every day. And each of our different brands has a way of bringing that to life. And then our values-- anybody want to read the values real quickly? And then I'm going to-- yes.

AUDIENCE: Hospitality, integrity, leadership, teamwork, ownership, now.

DEAN FELDMEIERS: Exactly. So what word do you see in all three of these?

AUDIENCE: Hospitality.

DEAN FELDMEIERS: Hospitality, exactly. We are a hospitality company. And we always talk about the difference between hospitality and service.

Can anybody tell me what they think? There's not a right or wrong answer, but making a distinction between hospitality and service. Yeah?

AUDIENCE: So I guess [INAUDIBLE] hospitality [INAUDIBLE] hospitality [INAUDIBLE].

DEAN FELDMEIERS: All right. [CLAPS]

JOHN SOMMERS: Nice work.

DEAN FELDMEIERS: Yes.

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE] 131.

[LAUGHTER]

DEAN FELDMEIERS: Good.

JOHN SOMMERS: You get two cookies today when you leave.

DEAN FELDMEIERS: It is. The hospitality really is how we make our guests feel, and it's the emotion that goes into it. It's not just the technical execution of serving a meal or checking somebody in or cleaning a room. But it's the hospitality part of it that's taking it, really, to a personal level.

So that's exactly right. And we use those values-- hospitality, integrity, leadership, teamwork, ownership, and now. And now just means acting with urgency. It means acting with purpose and acting with urgency for both our guests and for our team members, so very important.

Hilton, as a company, has grown both organically and through acquisition over the years. Conrad Hilton started it. And there was no difference between the company of Hilton and the brand of Hilton. It was just one thing. It was his last name.

But now, today, we have almost 5,000-- or I think it's a little over 5,000 rooms, to be honest-- and 14 different brands. Each of those different brands occupies a different position, so it's got a slightly different value proposition for our guests. Has anybody stayed in any of the brands, the Hilton brands, personally? Yes, which ones?

AUDIENCE: All of them.

DEAN FELDMIEIER: All of them, all right. Good.

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

DEAN FELDMIEIER: All right. Good, good. Any feedback? We've got some very new brands. We've got some, of course, legacy, older brands-- Hilton, of course, being the original brand.

I work for Doubletree brand. Anybody have any experience with any of the brands? Any feedback? Anything that you like or that you thought was interesting? about the brands?

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

DEAN FELDMIEIER: Oh, they kill me. I've competed against Embassy Suites, even though they're part of the family. They have three pillars. What are their three pillars? Every room is a two-room suite, cook-to-order breakfast every day, and manager host at cocktail reception every night.

Hard to compete against that. It's a great product. They do really well. Any other brands that you have experience with?

AUDIENCE: The Hilton in Bellevue is really nice. I go to a conference there every year.

DEAN FELDMIEIER: Oh, good. Good. Yeah, Hilton is, of course, that's the namesake. That's the legend. They've got a lot to live up to. Yes?

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

DEAN FELDMIEIER: Oh, good.

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

DEAN FELDMIEIER: Oh, good. Go Hilton Anaheim. All right. Good.

So as a company, we've got these different brands, because people want to buy different hotels for different occasions. Some people are attending big meetings. You need a big hotel that's got meeting space. That's typically going to be a Hilton, or it might be a Doubletree.

Then you've got some of the more boutique-style brands like Canopy, which is a smaller footprint hotel, our luxury brands, Waldorf and Conrad, our new cutting-edge Tru brand, which has just launched. And those are going to be smaller, more-- I was going to say millennial-focused, but they're really cool, very functional hotels. You're not going to find a lot of room service and bellmen in those types of places. And then brands like Hampton-- Hampton's probably one of our most successful brands because they're everywhere. There are tons of them.

What we're talking about mostly here is working for the management company of Hilton, which is who we all are. And you're going to see that we manage most of these brands. We don't necessarily manage all of the brands.

But we do manage luxury. We manage full-service. We don't manage as much in the focused service space, but we do manage some of the focused service hotels.

And then I want to touch a little bit about the spin-off of our own assets. Hilton, the company that we work for, is a management company and a branding company. So we do both of those things.

What we've gotten out of is the real estate ownership business. And most of the big hotel, the brands that you know, don't own much real estate. What we did is, we took all of the real estate that we owned, and we spun it off into its own company called Park Hotels and Resorts. So it's a publicly-traded company.

Right now, everything that they own is a Hilton-branded property. And actually, the property that I manage up in Spokane is part of that Park portfolio, as well as the Hilton Hawaiian Village, San Francisco, the properties that these guys work at over at the SEATAC are all part of that. So the ownership of a hotel is different than the flag that's on the building, which is oftentimes different than the management company that's actually running it.

But we run and brand hotels. That's the business we're in. Great business to be in and great opportunities.

So let's go to the next. This talks a little bit about our culture. We talk about travel with purpose, creating opportunities, strengthening our communities, and preserving our environments.

As a company, we really want it to be an awesome place for people to work. We want to be an awesome corporate citizen in the communities that we're in. And we want it to be a great place for our guests and for us to do things that people really believe in. We don't want it just to be a

place for people to sleep and to get a good meal. Although we do want that, we also want it to be a place where people know that we treat our team members well, we treat our guests well, and we're a good partner in community.

And I can just give an example-- the hotel that I manage, we're involved in three different organizations. We're involved with the YWCA. We're going to be going to a women's shelter next week, I guess.

And we serve meals. We partner. We donate things. We get involved in that.

So the YWCA is one of our featured partners in the community. The Humane Society is another one. And we participate in the Parade of Paws. So for our team members, they can pick from a variety of different things to get involved in.

And then we're also a partner with the Centennial Trail, which is more of an outdoor. And it extends if you haven't been up to Spokane, but from west of Spokane, all the way through Spokane, and all the way up to Coeur d'Alene. So we support that.

And we do trail clean-ups and we do a lot of outdoor things. So we want to be very involved in our community. And we get all of our team members to volunteer and participate in that.

So let's talk about the Hilton Honors program. This is your first homework assignment. It doesn't matter whether you're a freshman, sophomore, junior or senior-- there are no sophomores here-- but sign up for Hilton Honors, because you will then be exposed to all of the marketing and click all of the boxes for everything, because you saw that cool picture at the beginning-- Bora Bora. You could earn some points and maybe go on a trip there.

But this is a great way to learn about the company and to learn about the marketing that's going on for Hilton. It'll also allow you to earn points. And eventually, you'll possibly stay at one of the properties. And this is a really good way for you to get to know the hotel, or the company, and the loyalty program that we have.

The Hilton Honors program-- free to join. Just go to honors.com, sign up. And that's your first homework assignment of the evening.

JOHN SOMMERS: [LAUGHS]

DEAN FELDMEIER: So John, do you want to take over?

JOHN SOMMERS: Sure. Thanks, Dean. This quick slide just gives you a little idea as to different ways that you can become engaged with our company.

So we're here on campus a couple of times a year. I come over for meetings outside of recruiting activities. But we come over for the company preview. And then we'll be back in two weeks for interviews.

But we started talking to students. We have the freshmen in the room. We want to let you know that there's opportunities for you now to get engaged with Hilton to pursue your career in the hospitality industry, if that's what you're interested in doing.

So we offer externships. That's the primary way for freshmen to get involved with us, or summer internships. So either avenue, you can begin to pursue with us. Same with sophomores, we have internships that we offer.

We also come back for the career fair and are talking to you-- when was it? February, I think, we did the career fair here. So we were talking to you then about opportunities. Most of you that are interested in internships, we have formal internships that we offer through our corporate office where we send you out to our properties. And I'll talk a little bit more in detail about those.

But the other way for you to get involved is just reach out to a hotel that's in your particular geographic area of preference, and get your foot in the door that way. It might be a franchise hotel. It might be a managed hotel. We have hotels everywhere, but not all of them are managed, as Dean talked about earlier.

But right now, it's about just getting in, and getting yourself familiar with the brand, and getting the experience, because we all know that you guys need that 1,000 hours. So then when you're a junior, internships, as well, and we will start doing some other engagement activities with you. And then we're interviewing you here on campus for a number of different opportunities when you're a senior. So just different ways that you can get involved with our company as you're progressing through your college career.

So let's talk about some of those in more details. We talked about the externship. So this is a one-week program that we offer the freshmen, and sophomores. If you want to go in and get involved with our company for a week instead of traveling to Bora Bora on your spring break or going to Cabo or wherever the students of Poland might be going these days-- I know it's always south, out of the cold temperatures and into the warmer climate. But this is an opportunity for you to go get your foot in the door with us.

Around the nation, we would expose you to disciplines, either in food and beverage, front office, or housekeeping. And this gives you a little overview of what that experience is. So you're a team member by day. You would be shadowing, partnered with a member on the team there, and living at the hotel. So that's the externship.

Then we have a 10-week internship program. And again, you can do these through our corporate offices, or you can do them by reaching out and contacting a hotel directly. But our

formal programs is a 10-week program running from June to August. We know that you get out early here, but also go back to school early.

And we can expose you to these different disciplines. So you've got services, finance, food and beverage, front office, HR, housekeeping, revenue management, sales marketing. And it just gives you a quick little overview.

We also do corporate internships. So these are out at the properties around the country. These are corporate internships that we offer, either in our McLean office, which is our main headquarters, or we have satellite offices in Dallas and Memphis.

Many of you have interest in the management training program. When you're talking to companies that come here and do previews, they're probably talking about their management training program. So I want to spend a little time talking about this. But again, this is only one way of getting your foot in the door.

This is extremely competitive. We interview at campuses all around the country for about 75 people. And we are all of the primary hospitality schools, fortunately, WSU being one of those key schools.

But 75 opportunities-- not a whole lot. So very, very competitive. So that's why I want to stress these other opportunities in terms of direct placement. Just so that you know, if Hilton is where you want to be, we can find you a home.

So requirements for the MDP program-- bachelor's degree, graduated in the fall of 2017, so a December grad or next spring, GPA of 3.0. We're looking for you to have work experience. That's usually not an issue because of the 1,000 hour requirement that you guys all have.

So you need to be willing and able to relocate. We will put you at a training hotel somewhere in the country. We try to match it up with your geographic preference, but we can't always make that happen. So the more flexible you are geographically, the better off we are.

You need to speak and read and write English fluently, and you need to be able to work in the US. We'll be back here on October 9 to do interviews. So following this preview, you can go and sign up for free interviews if Hilton is of interest to you. And we would love the opportunity to talk to you about joining our MDP program.

During that time, you'll have two 30-minute interviews. There'll be two of us here. You'll go and meet with them, spend 30 minutes with one person, and then 30 minutes with another, and then you'll be done.

Then we follow that up by inviting all of our top candidates back for an interview weekend that we host in Orlando this year. You would come out, interview with general managers from

around our country for the weekend. And of course, you're competing against similar students from all of the hospitality schools around the country that we recruit at.

And then from there, we make a decision. So it's like draft day, but for students. But it's a lot of fun. And you guys can speak to it. So you know, it's a lot of fun. I think it's a lot of fun for the-- a little stressful, maybe, but it's still very fun. But for those of us that are there doing the selection, it's great.

Our management training program is a six-month training program. You'll spend two months in the training program rotating, visiting all areas of the hotel, outside of your area of interest. So if you're a sales and marketing person, that's great. You won't see sales and marketing typically until after two months with us. You will go and spend time in the front office, food and beverage, all of the other disciplines, so that you get an understanding of how the entire team works together as one. Then you will spend four months concentrated in the sales and marketing arena.

When you're done with your six-month training program, we will place you into an entry-level management program-- or not program, into an entry-level management position-- either at the same hotel that you trained at, or at another hotel of your interest geographically. We can't guarantee you that at that time that you graduate from the program, there will be an opening for you to slide into your training hotel. So sometimes the timing works out very well. Other times, we work with you to move to another hotel.

And it gives you a quick little overview of the main departments where we do placements for MDP. When you come and talk to us in two weeks about your interest in Hilton, you need to know what discipline you are pursuing. So when I ask you what discipline are you interested in, don't tell me, I don't know, because you've had four years to figure that out. That's why you do the internships.

And you're competing against other people for that discipline. So if you're interested in sales and marketing, you're competing against other students for sales and marketing. Does that make sense?

And this is how most people get placed with us. And that's just the old-fashioned way of coming to work for a company. We refer to it as direct placement. So you find a hotel you're interested in working at, you find our jobs online, and you apply. I am more than happy to help you with that process because you're Cougs. Sorry, guys.

TREVOR YARNELL: You're all right.

JOHN SOMMERS: It's a little extra benefit they get. So if MDP doesn't work out for you but you're still interested in Hilton, or you're interested in finding an internship, or whatever the case may be, I will partner with you to help make that happen the best that I can. But we place

people in line-level roles all over the hotel and all over the country-- supervisory roles and assistant managers.

And I've flagged this with a little footnote. We are opening up a brand-new hotel in downtown Seattle in Embassy Suites Pioneer Square. Yeah, it's going to be exciting. We are scheduled to open around February 1.

So any of you seniors, raise your hand if you're a December grad. OK. So if you are a December grad and Seattle market is of interest to you and Hilton is of interest to you, then we should talk, because we're going to be hiring, for starting, probably December or January, many assistant-level manager positions, entry-role positions, for that hotel. We've got to get it open. We've got to get it staffed in order to get it open. So if that is of interest to you, let us know.

We've not had a big presence in downtown Seattle. So we have a small Homewood Suites that we manage there. There's lots of franchises in the Bellevue and surrounding area, but we don't have any big managed hotels in downtown Seattle.

So it's nice to finally come and talk to people from here, because many of you, I know, are from Seattle and want to go back to Seattle. And the closest we could ever get to downtown is where these three gentlemen are, is out at the airport. So now we've got a much bigger presence right downtown.

Corporate-level, entry-level positions also that are available through direct placement-- and lots of ways to go find us online to find how to apply. We also have some other programs. So analyst-- those of you with an analyst interest, we have a rotational analyst program out of McLean, Virginia, that you can apply for.

We have a revenue management specialist role in Dallas, Texas. And we have an accounting analyst's position in Memphis, or opportunities in Memphis. So if any of those spark your interest, please pursue those, as well.

Let's talk a little bit about working at Hilton. Very important to us that we maintain a very competitive compensation package for our team members. And we have probably one of the better benefit offerings in the hospitality industry today. I couldn't always stand up here and say that. Today, I can.

So coming to work for us, you have a very wide spectrum of benefits that are available to you as a team member. Outside of our health and welfare benefits, this is probably one of our most popular benefits. That's the Go Hilton program. That allows you to travel, see the world, stay at any Hilton hotel for anywhere from \$35 to \$75 a night. So those aren't rates you can find when you go online looking for a hotel room-- so very, very popular benefit for our team members.

Hilton University, that is our-- that's through our website called the Lobby. But that is just full of development resources for you. So whatever it is that you might want to be learning, in terms

of computer skills or leadership skills or how to be a first-time supervisor, or whatever the case may be, we offer all of these training programs free of charge to any one of our team members. And that's through our Hilton University. We place a great deal of emphasis on team member recognition at all of our hotels, and throughout the corporate level, as well.

And Thrive@Hilton is a new philosophy, part of our cultural change. And that's keeping in mind engaging with our team members through body, mind, and spirit. So you'll hear more and more at Hilton in the future about Thrive and how we do that. It's about working smart, work-life balance, making sure that-- in the hospitality industry, those of you that have been working can understand it can consume you.

And we place, at our company, a great deal of emphasis on that balance. So we want you to have your days off. We don't want you checking those phones on a regular basis like we all do. And it's trying to teach and train our managers to just think about how people do things differently.

I have a hotel-- the Hilton San Francisco, actually. They have implemented no-email Fridays. So they don't send emails in-house to each other on Fridays. So if you want to communicate with someone, it forces you to get up out of your chair, get out of your office, and go talk to your colleague face to face.

That's the way we only used to do it in the old days. Now no one even thinks of that. So those are just different things that we're doing to help drive this body, mind, and spirit to change at our company.

Dean, I think I'm going have you talk a little bit about these.

DEAN FELDMIEIER: Great. So most of you are millennials. Actually, all of you are, I guess, by definition. But as a company, we've evolved. So we're a company that's been around for almost 100 years. But we've continued to evolve and tried to make Hilton a great place for everyone to work.

So we've got lots of different generations. We are a very inclusive company. And I just want to hit on a couple of these key things.

The exciting global opportunities-- we actually are a company that is global. So if you want to work in other places, we offer that. We offer the ability to move and to manage and to grow in your career, not only around the United States, but also globally.

We've got tons of development, as John was saying, in the Hilton University, lots and lots of courses available. We've got innovation happening with Hilton. And a lot of that innovation happens at the hotel level.

It doesn't always happen at the corporate level and get pushed down to the hotels. It happens at the hotel level and gets pushed up. So we're looking for people who want to be creative and who want to push the envelope, push things forward.

John mentioned the worldwide travel perks. I'm going to leave you with a couple of thoughts, but one of them is, get out and see the world. See the country. It doesn't matter. You're going to stay in some great places and see a lot of really neat things.

And John mentioned the industry-leading benefits-- health benefits, travel benefits, paternity leave, maternity leave. We've got a package of benefits. And let me tell you, it's expensive. For a guy managing a hotel, John keeps on heaping on the benefits.

We're the ones that-- it does cost money, but it's awesome for our team members. So they don't have to worry as much about the things that people who have thin insurance programs and maybe don't have quite as many. In fact, you'll hear a lot about people getting paid time off. We've got a really, really generous paid time off program. And it really helps people. And it ties right into that thrive-- body, mind, and spirit-- of giving people the opportunity to take some time off to recharge and to have some work-life balance.

And again, meaningful work-- we focus a lot both in what we do professionally, and also what we do-- just the spirit of working together as a team and as a group of individuals. We really take that seriously. So it's a great company to work for. It doesn't matter whether you're a millennial just coming into the workforce or you've been around a little bit longer, like John and I have been. It really does offer something for every age group, tons of opportunity for upward mobility.

And again, if you want to relocate, that's awesome. I've got people that work for me up in Spokane that have been there for years. They like being there. They want to be in Spokane.

They're doing awesome. They can stay there. But if you want to continue to grow and move around, you can do that, too. So let's go to the next.

These are just some of the awards that we've won. We're not going to go through all of them, but you get an idea. It's a big cross-section.

I was joking earlier, but you've got five guys up here. We're not a company that is heavily weighted towards white guys. We've got lots of women. We're very inclusive.

And we are a company, when you look at our web site-- John mentioned the Lobby-- we have got people-- in fact, John, you'd be happy, we just showed the CEO Light & Warmth winners. We showed the video today at our executive committee meeting. People from different brands, different cultures around the globe.

One guy from China who doesn't speak, he's deaf, he's signs, he's training all of the people there-- awesome. Really, really a great company to work for. So you can see some of the recognition we've gotten from many different organizations.

And then social media-- second homework assignment is, follow us on social media. So we've got a lot of different Facebook presence, Instagram presence. Follow us on Twitter.

Follow our CEO, Chris Nassetta. He's always got really cool things to say, give you a lot of insight. So not only sign up for Honors, but also follow us on these different social media handles.

JOHN SOMMERS: The last slide I want to show here before we get into questions is-- as I mentioned earlier, we come back to WSU on a regular basis as one of our primary campuses around the country that we recruit at. And some of you might recognize a few of these names, but these are people that we've pulled out of here the last couple of years. So Nicole, she was a business management major in accounting-- so not a hospitality major, but she's now the assistant director. We pulled her out last year. She's now the assistant director of finance at the Doubletree San Diego Mission Valley.

Ben Walters came out of here last year, who's now a sales manager at the Hilton San Francisco. He also trained at the Hilton San Francisco. Isaiah, last year's class, who's down with us doing his training right now at the San Diego Bayfront, Cara Carpenter at the Hilton Minneapolis, and Rachel [? Backson ?] out at the Doubletree Santa Barbara-- so just a handful of recent alums that are working with us out in the hotels throughout the country.

I share that with you also because, whether you recognize these people, or if you want to talk to someone that was in your shoes last year, send them an email. Reach out to them and just say hey. The nicest thing about being a Cougar is, once a Cougar, always a Cougar. You guys know it. You see it.

You walk down the street, someone's wearing a Cougar hat, jersey, whatever, you just say, go Cougars. You don't know them. It's who we are. We're family.

These are part of the Cougar family. They're also part of our Hilton family. Send them an email. Their email addresses-- all of our email addresses at Hilton are very basic. First name dot last name @hilton.com.

Send them an email and just say, hey, I'm a fellow Cougar. I was talking to those old guys that came to talk to us at their company preview the other night. They were telling us some stuff about Hilton. Tell me about your experience. They'll be straight shooters with you. So they don't know I'm volunteering them right now, so I might have to go back and send them emails.

DEAN FELDMEIER: Now's the time to take your phone out if you want to take a picture of their names. And make sure you get all of that.

JOHN SOMMERS: Or email me and I'll send you their names, or I'll send you names of general managers that are Cougs that are working in our company, or guys that are in charge of brand these days, all kinds of stuff. We've got Cougs scattered all over our company. I'm happy to put you in touch with some if you want another opinion. That's why I share this slide with you.

Can I turn this? I see some people jotting down some names. You OK? I can go back and you can take pictures of-- actually, I'll leave it up, because the next one is really about answering questions that you have.

So of Dean and I, or these three gentlemen that are in the program today over in Seattle, what kind of questions do you have that we can answer for all of you? Yeah?

AUDIENCE: What kind of compensation do you have for relocating for the programs?

JOHN SOMMERS: We offer a small relocation package, initially. And then once you're on board with us and you move from hotel to hotel, we have a very generous relocation package to help me move from hotel to hotel. When you're in a management role, we ask that your first commitment be-- or any commitment to a hotel be one year before we up and move you again, especially as you get older and settle down.

And buying and selling homes and all of that is part of relocation. That can get very expensive. So we ask that people, well, just sit still and do a little work for the hotel we just transferred you to before we pull you out again. But we will give you some relocation assistance to get from Pullman, or wherever home is these days, to your first assignment.

DEAN FELDMEIER: And we realize it's-- John and I have both been through this many, many times. It's hard enough to move. Great creates great opportunity, but as a company, we need to support that so we can get our best people into an upward trajectory with their career path.

TREVOR YARNELL: I don't know if it's market-specific how they break out the compensation packages, but just speaking from personal experience, I moved from southern California up to Seattle a month ago to start the MDP program. We had more than enough in relocation package to be able to put a down payment on the [INAUDIBLE], a security deposit put down on an apartment, get our first month's rent put in, buy some furniture, and things like that. So it's generous, giving that you're probably going to be making more money than you ever have coming out of college.

JOHN SOMMERS: See, \$50 goes a long ways these days.

[LAUGHTER]

What else? Good question. What else? Yeah?

AUDIENCE: So for freshmen, are there any opportunities to do an internship abroad, or do you offer that at all?

JOHN SOMMERS: Those get a little more difficult, I mean, just like it's difficult for international people to come here and work here because of the visa regulations.

AUDIENCE: Right.

JOHN SOMMERS: Going the opposite way is the same thing. So But if it's an easy thing, then those opportunities are much easier.

AUDIENCE: OK.

JOHN SOMMERS: Yeah. Good question. Yeah?

AUDIENCE: For the summer internships, can you guys provide housing or anything, or is it completely on your own?

JOHN SOMMERS: We do not provide housing. So it is on your own. So we will try to match you up in a geographic area where it be your home city, it might be a place where you have relatives or friends that you can-- right?

AUDIENCE: And then for the externship, how much money is that? Do you guys pay for the flights to where we would go? Or do you do that, and do we pay for the hotel room that we're staying at?

JOHN SOMMERS: You don't pay for the hotel room that your staying at. Getting to the hotel-- that's a good question. I don't know that off the top of my head. So I can find out an answer to that.

But no, you're not earning any pay while you're there, because you're there shadowing a team member, but you're living in the hotel for a week and you're eating in a restaurant and doing that kind of stuff. And you're giving up your spring break. You're giving up a week. But it's a great experience to see the insides of a hotel and experience that.

DEAN FELDMEIER: I would-- go ahead.

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

DEAN FELDMEIER: No, I was going to say, probably the three biggest things I would leave you with, regardless of where you're at in this process-- the first is, really try to work in a-- I know you have to work in hotels and do internships, but try to start with your career in a hotel, because it's really a great place to learn. And what you're going to learn from other people and

people in other departments is awesome. And you're going to take that experience with you and be able to leverage that when you go on in your career.

Second thing is, don't worry. As John said, John was in-- what was it, the HPDP program, I think, at the time, now the MDP program. I was a direct hire. It doesn't really matter. We're both here 30-some-odd years later, and a great company to work for.

I think I got paid \$500 more than the trainee people did. And then they caught up after the first year. So it was-- anyway, it's not a big difference. So definitely.

And then the third thing is, if you're open to relocating, you are going to learn so much by working in different sizes of hotels in different geographic areas. Take advantage of that. I mean, you're young. There would be plenty of time to settle down later. But it really will round out your career.

And as a company, Hilton can offer so much opportunity to see different places, to work in different environments, and to work for different types of hotels. And really, it's fun. I mean, it might seem scary. It might seem a little bit crazy. But it really is, it's awesome.

CONNOR DELILLE: Also, the benefits, you were talking about the relocation-- we also get a signing bonus that has been really nice.

JOHN SOMMERS: Oh, don't tell them that.

[LAUGHTER]

CONNOR DELILLE: Sorry, we don't get a signing bonus. But I think the resources and the people have been the coolest thing so far, at least in my personal experience.

TREVOR YARNELL: For me, the coolest thing has been the fact that when you get into the MDP program and you start your trainings, people in management-level positions at these properties that you're going to are aware of what it is that you're doing. So you're going through all these different departments. For me, I'd never worked in a lot of the departments that we were working in, so didn't really know what to expect.

But people come in with that expectation. All right, this is an MDP. They have got to this level within the program, within the company already. So they kind of threw us into the fire, which I think is the best way to learn with that kind of stuff. So I guess, to sum it up, it's that the people that you're working for at these property levels where you're doing your training really trust that you can catch up, you can learn what you need to do, and take on the responsibility that you want to take on.

CARSON JONES: And then for me, it's probably having these two right down the street from me, and then just being so close with everybody that also is doing the MDP program. If we ever

have any questions about, hey, what are you guys doing at your property, we just ask them, and they're probably doing the exact same thing or something better that we can do at our property.

And then my property, I've had one recent MDP alum. And then she went to another hotel in Florida. And so I've just been able to ask any questions that I've had to her, and she's been able to answer anything and everything of them. But just being able to do all of the jobs to the highest potential that we can is probably the best learning experience, so far.

JOHN SOMMERS: And here I thought you were going to say it was your partnership with your mentor, but boy, he missed that opportunity, didn't he?

[LAUGHTER]

JOHN SOMMERS: What else, guys? Good question. Keep going. Yes?

AUDIENCE: So I'm interested in culinary. Is there any spots in Hilton to open a [INAUDIBLE]?

JOHN SOMMERS: We don't do a lot of culinary positions through the MDP program, but we do a lot of them through direct placement, absolutely. What year are you again?

AUDIENCE: I'm a freshmen.

JOHN SOMMERS: Freshmen, OK.

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

JOHN SOMMERS: Oh, you've got some time, that's great. But go get that experience now, whether it be in fast food-- or not fast food restaurants, but restaurants or hotels or whatever. But get that experience now.

DEAN FELDMEIERS: And it can be fast food, even, just to get your foot in the door. It's better to graduate up from that. But I can tell you, we run two restaurants in Spokane. One of them is Spencer's for Steaks and Chops. And I mean, these are people cooking \$65 steaks, but we've got to hire them.

We hire people out of the local culinary school. We hire people that have had all different kinds of experience. So and the good news, by the way, if you want to be on the culinary side, doing it in a hotel means to get all those benefits that John was showing you-- the travel benefits, the health and all the other good benefits. If you go to work for a restaurant, freestanding restaurant, or even part of a restaurant chain, you're probably not going to get that level of benefits.

JOHN SOMMERS: Yeah, very good point. Yeah, keep going.

AUDIENCE: And if I was to contact you directly, what's the best way to do that? I know the executive director at the Waldorf Astoria in Park City, Utah. I used to work with him at the [INAUDIBLE]. Could I contact him, or should I contact someone else in the hotel?

JOHN SOMMERS: You can contact him. You can go through make, since that's one of my hotels. I'm happy to assist you.

AUDIENCE: Great. Thank you.

JOHN SOMMERS: And we need labor in Park City during the summertime.

DEAN FELDMEIERS: [LAUGHS]

AUDIENCE: I know it.

JOHN SOMMERS: We need labor and Park City all the time. So yeah, just let me know how I can help.

We We have a question from a Global Campus student. John asks, in order to apply for the MDP program, a bachelor's degree is required. Does it have to be a business or hospitality major? I'm a psychology major, for example.

JOHN SOMMERS: No, it does not.

DEAN FELDMEIERS: That psychology major could come in handy in a hotel environment. You never know.

JOHN SOMMERS: [LAUGHS] All right. Yeah?

AUDIENCE: Why did you specifically choose Hilton to work at in Michigan? What about it about the company?

JOHN SOMMERS: Who do you want to ask that question to?

AUDIENCE: Any of you. The three works.

JOHN SOMMERS: How about the three?

CONNOR DELILLE: I think I know. I mean, I [INAUDIBLE].

[LAUGHTER]

CONNOR DELILLE: So I started as a busser. And so that's the only experience I had in high school was a busser. And then I applied at Hilton. And they recognized that I had little to no experience, but they took a chance on me.

And I think the biggest word or the biggest thing that I could tell you is empowerment. They let you feel-- they trust you to do things. It's not like-- I won't name other companies that I've worked for, but looking down your back all the time.

They really do trust you and empower you to, let's say, at the front desk, a guest gets mad. You can go ahead and comp a dinner or something or a glass of wine or something. It doesn't matter.

Your manager will come up to you afterwards, and they'll say, great job handling that. If you could have done something better, they'll tell you that. Or if it was perfect, they will let you know, and they'll reward you for it. So they really empower you.

And I've never worked for another company before that really makes you feel kind of special. And when you handle a situation, it seems normal. They go above and beyond to tell you that you did a great job.

So I've worked for Hilton for two and a half years, and I've never felt like I've left feeling down or anything, because my managers make sure that I'm OK. They empower me to do things that I normally wouldn't think to do. They're just a great company, overall, to make you feel like you are valued.

TREVOR YARNELL: Yeah. For me, it was-- I hadn't worked for Hilton before. I didn't anticipate going to working for a large hospitality company. I have long-term goals of owning my own surf resort. So I looked at things in that realistic sense that once I did get the initial interview for MDB program-- and then we had the interview in Orlando this last year, as well-- got a really broad scope for the knowledge base that you can gather in a large company like this to be able to-- I'm talking 30 years, 40 years down the road when, eventually, I want to do my own thing.

But it's a really, really great learning opportunity. I mean, I know it's hard to look at things in the sense of, I've just completed four years of school. But for me, I'm in a program that's another year and a half, two, three, to however long it's going to be. Another four or five years of schooling is how I'm looking at it as a way to get myself prepared to do what I really want to do in the long run.

CARSON JONES: And then for me, I've wanted to work in hotels for a while, growing up watching Suite Life of Zack and Cody.

[LAUGHTER]

And then my best friend's dad works for Hilton corporate, Mr. Hochhauser. He's always stationed in DC. I asked him, hey, how can I do an internship? He sent me the email to apply to - long story short, that helped me lead to getting to two internships, and then successfully being able to do the MDP program.

But it's a great company. And it's just something I've always wanted to do. And the fact that I'm here two years later, and hopefully years to come, is awesome.

JOHN SOMMERS: Any last questions?

AUDIENCE: Oh, I was going to ask if whoever wanted to answer-- it's kind of personal-- but where do Hilton values where you work match up with your values, or how has it challenged [INAUDIBLE]?

JOHN SOMMERS: That's a great question. And I think that's an extremely important one because, frankly, I don't want to work for a company that doesn't share the same values that I have. So first of all, with hospitality being the biggest one, you guys have learned as you've studied this field, you have to have hospitality in your DNA in order to be successful in this business. It's just who we are and what we do.

And if you don't enjoy servicing people, this isn't the field for you. Again, I wasn't a hospitality major, but I quickly found, in the hospitality industry, that I have that hospitality DNA. So that's an important value to me. Integrity is very important to me. I know that I'm working with a company that will always do the right thing, and that's important to me. So that's just a couple that stand up for me.

DEAN FELDMIEIER: Yeah. Really, it's nice to be able to go to work for a company and go to work in a job where you feel like-- I mean, my job, as the general manager of a hotel, I have to support my team members. And I love that. I love giving them-- using the empowerment. We have a program called Make it Right. We want to challenge them to find ways to make the guests happy, even when something goes wrong.

So I leave work at the end of the day, I'm not exhausted. Sometimes I'm tired. But we've done something good.

So we're taking care of the environment. We're taking care of our guests. You can leave at the end of the day knowing that you've done something good for the team members, good for the guests, and oftentimes, when we do these projects, good for the community. So I love it because you don't ever feel conflicted about what you're doing. You're trying to make people happy.

DEAN FELDMIEIER: Great. Yes?

AUDIENCE: We have a question from Laura, who asks, as someone with management experience, what with the perks of the MDP program be versus direct placement? So this person already has managerial experience.

JOHN SOMMERS: Yeah. If you're coming to us with previous management experience, I would encourage you to pursue a direct placement opportunity. The MDP program will give you exposure to the different operations within the hotel, expose you to basic leadership principles and practices. But if you've already got that through your work experience, I would strongly encourage you to go the direct placement route. So thank you for that question.

Well, listen, thank you all for your time this evening. I hope we've answered some of your questions and given you a look into what Hilton Worldwide is, and what we're all about, and a little bit about our culture, and the people that helped make up our company. I am available. My card is up here. I am available to any of you at any time to put you in touch with the right people or help you get your foot in the door somewhere or get you up the street to Spokane because you want to do a site visit.

Whatever may be of interest to you, let us know, and we will help you do that. I don't say that to the UNLV folks or the San Diego State folks.

CONNOR DELILLE: That's not true.

JOHN SOMMERS: Hey, hey, hey. But I do do that for our fellow Cougs. So thank you again for your time this evening. And go Cougs on Friday. All right. Thank you, everybody.

DEAN FELDMEIER: Good job, guys.

[APPLAUSE]