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**How did you find your way into the industry?**

I attended the Orange County High School of the Arts for Music & Theatre and envisioned chasing my dreams on Broadway. When it came time for college, I found myself enjoying both my business and math classes, so I pursued a degree in Business Administration. At the time, California State University, Fullerton was expanding their Business concentration options. They were in the early stages of transitioning one of the Communications concentrations over to Business majors – Entertainment and Tourism Studies. I was among the first few to graduate with this degree and was hired five days after graduation by Makar Properties, a real estate developer in Newport Beach, as an Executive Assistant. Like many, I was a bit overwhelmed with my first job after graduation, but it taught me a lot about real estate, land use, hospitality, & development, all of which I grew to find interesting over the next several years.

**What advice would you give to an emerging young leader just starting their professional career?**

Internships & networking! I took a few internships my last year in college to help me discover what interested me (and, more importantly, what I found to be mundane and boring) – The first, a marketing intern at a multimedia advertising firm, fundraising for California State University, Fullerton. The second, a personal assistant for the owner of a small security company, etc. Ascertain if your employer will cover the costs for you to become a member of local/national organizations that will provide access to educational classes, seminars, conference, etc. This will give you amazing opportunity to network. Build up some substance that will add to your resume and get your name out there.

**What traits do you think define a successful leader?**

A successful leader is someone who sets clear and defined goals, creates and cultivates a team that they continue to educate and empower, and maintains both a creative and determined mindset. They are able to guide through examples and have no qualms about encouraging those around them to constantly better themselves.

**What is your current job and what types of projects are you working on now?**

I have been employed with Wave Hospitality Advisors for the past six years, initially as Operations and Asset Manager, and now as Vice President of Operations. Wave started out as a third party asset management company, but we have grown into a more diverse organization over the last several years – we provide a variety of restaurant and hotel/resort services such as feasibility study development, new and renovation development advisory services, brand selection and negotiation, acquisition

advisory, and more. In addition, the owner of my company has partnered with one of our clients to form Ironwave Management, a new Marriott-approved hotel brand management firm with a handful of properties already under its belt. I am currently working on a new build Autograph Collection hotel and mixed-use property in Temecula's wine country, the feasibility of a brand new development in Micronesia, and the pre-opening advisory for the first Kimpton branded hotel in Palm Springs set to open later this year.

**What do you find most challenging about your profession on a day-to-day basis?**

Our team at Wave Hospitality Advisors is mighty but small, so I wear many hats in any given day. We have nearly 20 different projects, all of which are primarily handled by the owner of Wave and myself. I can review financial reports for an operating asset one minute, and create marketing collateral from thin air the next. I definitely get to use both sides of my brain for my job, and that can be challenging! I am very rarely bored at my job.

**What are you looking for in terms of career development - OR In what areas would you like to professionally develop further?**

I would love to get more involved with ULI and the district councils, to not only build upon my professional network but garner a better understanding of how other consultants (architects, capital markets, etc) interact on projects and within ULI. Our Wave Hospitality project list is at max capacity at the moment, which is great, but I believe that there are always opportunities to further my professional education.

**Describe a situation that was a great learning experience.**

As I mentioned previously, our team was recently part of the creation of a third party management company, Ironwave Management. We had to establish corporate documents, create marketing collateral, develop organizational and operational flow charts, form standard operating procedures, etc. All of the documents were submitted to Marriott (formerly Starwood) for their review and approval – which we received at the end of last year. This past January, we became the management team for the Element by Westin in Harrison, New Jersey. It took a lot of time and effort to establish the foundation of our team, but we are now up and running!

**How do you deal with stress at work?**

The best way for me to deal with stress at work is to start my day with a clean “to do” list that I can run through and cross reference throughout the day. I am then able to check the list at the end of the day and track my productivity and ensure that I prioritize efficiently for me and for my team. If that does not help, a quick chat with my office mate (who also happens to be my dog since I work from home) or a good glass of red wine can also help me destress after work!