

Interview with SEO Intern Naomi Fritz



Background: Naomi is a rising senior at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio where she is pursuing a BS in Business Administration with a Finance major and a Marketing minor. She serves as president for the student Multicultural Business Association and is a member of the Business Student Advisory Council, the University Honors Program, the Business Honors Program, the President's List, and was selected as one of five student associates in the Dean's Suite. In 2020, she was selected as a participant in the UPenn/Notre Dame Girls Who Invest summer intensive program. Prior to her internship with Clarion, Naomi served as an investment intern at Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, and as an office services assistant for the law firm of Hall, Render, Killian, Heath & Lyman.

Q: *What would you like your Clarion colleagues to know about you that they wouldn't find on your resume?*

NF: I have always loved the arts and enjoy creative expression. I spent my youth training 15-30 hrs/week in performing arts such as acting and dancing. However, an injury sidelined my dancing, so I pivoted and redirected my energies to the visual arts. I began taking jewelry-making classes and 3D art classes, focused on learning illustration and taught myself Adobe so that I could express my creativity in new mediums. I even use my graphics skills now to create the prototypes for school-related client projects. My experience taught me how to take a challenge and turn it into a new path and how to be adaptive and flexible. I've used those skills to enhance both my professional and academic performance.

Q: *What first sparked your interest in commercial real estate?*

NF: I first learned about commercial real estate in high school. I was involved in several pre-college programs, and in one of them we visited One WTC in lower Manhattan and met with Cushman Wakefield professionals to talk about the building, financing, etc. As I looked at this beautiful building, and its design, then started thinking more about the buildings that surround us, and their histories and architecture and impact, I immediately knew it was an industry I might like to pursue. Later in college, I learned through the Girls Who Invest program about the many paths available in investing, including CRE. That helped seal the deal – I knew from there I would pursue a career in CRE. It provides the ideal way for me to combine my creative passion with investing and finance.

Q: *What projects have you been involved in during your internship with Clarion?*

NF: I feel like I have learned so much in such a short period of time. I spent the first five weeks with the Acquisitions team working closely with Jane, Daniel and Max where I assisted with reports, data collection, and more. I gained exposure to multifamily underwriting and I helped build a database of sales comps. I also conducted a SWOT analysis on New Hyde Park Plaza, a 129,000-square-foot retail center on Long Island. I've recently transitioned to the Asset Management team where one of my first projects was assisting with a Retail Deep Dive research presentation. It was educational to see how the Research and Asset Management teams worked together to build this incredible presentation and to learn how to pull the data. I also worked on my first leasing recommendation!

Q: *What has surprised you the most about commercial real estate during your internship so far?*

NF: I'm very interested in fintech and data, and how it drives CRE decisions. It has been fascinating to hear from both Dave Gilbert during our Master Classes and from the Retail Deep Dive about the new forms of data collection technology available to inform investment decisions. I'm excited to learn more about what tools and sources of data are out there to inform investment strategies and marketing approaches. I could see it possibly being an area of focus for me in the future.

Q: Speaking of which, where do you see yourself in ten years?

NF: I definitely see myself in commercial real estate in ten years. This internship has helped solidify that decision for me. In the beginning, I would expect to focus on gathering different types of experience and being part of a wide range of teams so that I can further build both my industry knowledge and network. I am flexible as to market – if the opportunity arises, I could work in new and innovative markets outside of the NYC area. We'll see where it goes.

But one thing I know for sure – I would like to be in a position to mentor young talent entering the world of CRE. I have witnessed first-hand the power of having people around you who are willing to share their experiences and help guide your career. From Girls Who Invest, to the SEO program, to the internship here at Clarion where everyone has been so helpful, I want to give back in the same way people have shared their time and knowledge with me.