GUIDE TO MAKING ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

Duke alumni can be your biggest champions in the internship or job search – you only need to know where to find them and follow some networking best practices.

DUKE RESOURCES

- ✓ Start with the Duke Alumni Directory, which includes thousands of members who work in financial services. You can filter by location, current employer, job title, class year, and more. View instructions for how to use the directory, and watch this two-minute how to network video.

- ✓ Jumpstart your networking with Ask a Blue Devil. Submit a question to have it fielded by expert alumni, who will follow up with you personally. Learn more about this tool, and read this brief guide.

- ✓ Explore Duke Alumni Groups, networks that center on particular industries, geographical regions, identities, student group affiliations, etc. Check out the DFE Group and the Finance Industry Group.

- ✓ Attend events with alumni. A great place to start is the DFE Lunch & Learn program, in which alumni discuss their career paths over lunch with 18-25 students. Lunch & Learns take place several times a semester and feature alumni from diverse backgrounds and areas of finance. Make sure you are on the DFE Email List to receive notifications about upcoming sessions. Registration fills up fast!

  Alumni events take place worldwide and year-round, so pay attention to the Duke Alumni Events Calendar for upcoming networking opportunities. You may be surprised to see an event that takes place when and where you are studying away or living for the summer.

- ✓ Ask other students about how they have connected to alumni. Your peers are excellent resources, especially those who have been through the finance recruiting process and have had internships. Check out DFE's Student to Student page for advice about networking, seeking out mentors, and more.

OTHER TOOLS

- ✓ LinkedIn: Read this guide from the Career Center to ensure you have a strong LinkedIn profile. Connect with people you know and join the Duke University Alumni Network group. Watch this video on using LinkedIn for networking with alumni.

- ✓ ChatGPT: Read this article on how the chat bot can be helpful—with limitations—to career exploration. Regarding networking, you might use it to generate ideas about questions to ask professionals or get a general sense of job roles.

FINAL TIPS

- ✓ **Use your emotional intelligence**: respect alums' time and thank them for offering it. A brief thank-you email is typically an appropriate follow-up.
- ✓ **Be strategic**: only reach out to people you would like to ask substantive questions; don't just connect for the sake of connecting. It's better to have two or three conversations that are meaningful than trying to speak to dozens of people at the same firm and asking them all the same questions.
- ✓ **Prepare ahead of time when possible**: know something about their firm or specific division going into a conversation.
- ✓ **Follow up judiciously:** If you don't get a response from someone you've emailed, wait at least a week before reaching out again. If they don't respond after the second email, chalk it up to them being very busy and move on.
- ✓ **Be you!** Don't worry about what you don't know. This is an exploratory process—no one expects you to be an expert. Alumni remember what it is like to be in your shoes. Bring authenticity and curiosity to your networking conversations.