

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY



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Dear Roger,

I am both honored and daunted by the task of reflecting upon my experiences with the Southwestern Company: Honored to remain in contact with such a stellar organization; daunted by the challenge of condensing such an experience into a few paragraphs.

New Caney, Texas. May 22nd, 1998. Hottest summer in 40 years. A 19-year-old kid, shell-shocked, tears mixed with sweat, a bag of books slung over his shoulder, an eternal row of houses with doors that keep closing. Thirteen and a half hours. No sales. A call to Roger at 10 pm. "You're just fine. Just stick to the basics." The kid sticks to the basics and makes it through the next day, the next week, and a full two summers on the book field. No other experience has sharpened and toughened him more. Since then he can deal with just about anything. That kid was me.

Most alumni letters speak of transferable book field skills such as organization, communication, goal-setting, relationship building, etc. No doubt these skills are important. However, being a bookman taught me, above all, that anything is possible. If I can walk out of a stranger's house after fifteen minutes with a three hundred dollar check, I can do anything, career and otherwise: Write a novel; visit all seven continents; shoot par; help a friend out of poverty; earn a doctorate degree. Without those two summers selling books I would not have such an outlook.

As an academic advisor at the largest catholic university in the country, I work with college students all day. In each of them I see two common traits: fear and potential. If they all were to spend one summer on the book field, they could tackle their greatest fears and reach their fullest potential. Where else can a college student have such an opportunity to grow, and be paid handsomely for it? Roger, thanks again for affording me that opportunity. May this letter encourage more college students to seize theirs.

Sincerely,

Rory Hughes
Advisor, DePaul University-Barat Campus