

The Charger

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THE CHARGER BLOG

Accounting Majors Gain Immersive Experience at Local Accounting Firm

Three accounting majors took part in the Marcum Summer Leadership Program, learning more about the field of accounting and networking with local professionals and leaders in the field.

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By Charlotte Bassett '25, Alex Opplinger '23, and Giselle Rau '24



Left to right: Alex Opplinger '23, Charlotte Bassett '25, and Giselle Rau '24 at Marcum.

As part of [Marcum LLP's Summer Leadership Program](#), three University of New Haven [accounting majors](#) took part in an entrepreneurial curriculum focused on leadership, personal development, and team building. The program, which includes students from top-rated schools from across the region, featured a hands-on introduction to the field and a potential career opportunity at Marcum.

One of the largest independent accounting and advisory firms in the nation, Marcum is a generous supporter of the University's accounting program. Anthony Scillia '79 regional managing partner of the New England region at Marcum, serves as chair of the University's Accounting Task Force and is also a member of the University's [Board of Governors](#).

Throughout the two-day Summer Leadership Program, students learned about the history of Marcum while exploring the field of public accounting. They interacted with Marcum associates, breaking into teams and making presentations to a team of judges that included Marcum staff from all levels of the firm.

"Marcum's Summer Leadership Program is a great way for students to be introduced into the world of public accounting before graduation," said Dawn Meeker '92, a CPA and partner in Marcum's Advisory and Counseling Practice who took part in the program's partner and judging panels. "The University of New Haven students were well prepared and showed great enthusiasm for our program. We're looking forward to our future Summer Leadership Programs with University of New Haven students."

Below, the student participants reflect on their experience in the program.

Charlotte Bassett '25

The Marcum Summer Leadership Program was an amazing experience and a glimpse into the world of accounting. We got to interact with all sorts of staff, from new employees to directors to the partners of the firm. We went into

great depth about the values and history of Marcum, specifically, as well as the process of transitioning from college to the workforce.

On the second day, we got to enjoy ourselves with a scavenger hunt throughout the city of New Haven with a current employee leading each group. Afterward, we continued the work on our presentations from the first day, which were aimed at the core values of Marcum and what we learned.

What I enjoyed about the exposure to a real-life accounting firm was actually speaking and connecting with the leaders, which is what I hope to be one day. Getting to know them as quite amiable people was eye opening, and it was comforting to know that there are people out there who want to help you succeed.

The main thing I learned from the summer leadership program was that if you put yourself out there and try to connect with possible companies in the accounting field, only good can come from it. Meeting new people in the industry and getting a head start provided a good basis of knowledge into what I hope to do one day.

Marcum showed me this “independent” profession, and although it requires hard-core studying for the CPA exam and dedicated hours in the first years of employment, it has a great support system within the company to help you.

Alex Oppliger '23

I thoroughly enjoyed the experience that Marcum provided, as it was incredibly informative and gave us an inside look at the accounting field. We learned about the history of Marcum and the core values they believe in, as well as the work they do to better the community. I loved learning about the community service work they do and the programs they created to support their community, such as [The Marcum Foundation](#).



Left to right: Charlotte Bassett '25, Giselle Rau '24, and Alex Opplinger '23 are accounting majors at the University.

The first day of the program was very informational, allowing us to ask all the questions that we had. All the staff were extremely personable and did a terrific job in welcoming the students in the leadership program.

Staff answered all questions insightfully and diligently, ensuring that information was accurate and that they withheld their biases. If there was something about the career that the staff didn't enjoy (such as, possibly, long hours during their busy season, or preparing for the CPA exam), they didn't withhold that information. They were honest and communicated to us truthfully, which is something that I really appreciated.

The second day was more people-oriented and allowed the students to meet more of the staff on a personal level. We walked through New Haven doing a scavenger hunt, and we ended by having lunch with all students in the leadership program. This was a team-building exercise to help us meet not only the employees at Marcum, but the other students as well.

I enjoyed the entire program, and I do not regret a second of attending!

Giselle Rau '24

Marcum's Summer Leadership Program at the New Haven office was a great experience. During this two-day event, we were able to network and socialize with so many employees and partners who could give us one-on-one advice. It was nice to get to know people in the office and have a "normal" conversation without being intimidated or overwhelmed.

The second day was an "out of office" day where we spent all day taking part in a scavenger hunt and playing kickball, which was a lot of fun. It was a welcoming environment in which everyone genuinely wanted to know more about us, even outside of academics.

I had an amazing time learning more about myself and the company. We took the Birkman Method assessment, which tells you about your personality. We also learned about the firm's nine core values. With these values, we made presentations to the firm's partners. This presentation allowed us to show how much we have learned and how we were thankful for the opportunity. They made this interesting by making it a competition and giving out prizes.

Overall, this was an awesome experience, and I would absolutely recommend this to any accounting or [finance major](#). This two-day event was so much fun, and it definitely impacted me in a great way.

Charlotte Bassett '25, Alex Oppliger '23, and Giselle Rau '24 are accounting majors at the University of New Haven.