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9-21-2020

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### Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "College of Business News" (2020). *Business, College of - News*. 233.  
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## Parker College of Business connects students with potential employers during virtual Meet the Firms event

September 21, 2020

While her children napped, Georgia Southern University accounting student Mary Harrelson was meeting with potential employers from the comfort of her home with hopes of securing a job or internship.

Harrelson, along with nearly 80 of her peers from the Parker College of Business, met virtually with accounting firms looking to fill positions during the Meet the Firms event, the School of Accountancy's biggest recruiting event of the year.

"This was my first time attending any of the Meet the Firms events, and I was very nervous," she said. "I had never done this in person, so I wondered how I would be able to do it virtually. That went away almost immediately. As soon as I entered any of the chat rooms, someone was already there and talking to me either through text or a video call. The longer I talked the more comfortable I got with it."

Harrelson found the virtual format of the event a perfect fit for her busy lifestyle.

"Because I have kids, sometimes it can be hard to find time to do things, but because this Meet the Firms event was virtual, I was able to attend while my kids took their naps and still got to speak with all of the firms that I wanted," Harrelson said.

Meet the Firms allows students to meet with accounting firms and corporate recruiters to learn about internships, leadership programs and employment opportunities. Through working with accounting firms, the leaders in the School of Accountancy have found that the earlier the Meet the Firms event is held in the fall semester, the better it is for the firms and for accounting students.

Firms begin filling internship positions in the fall to ensure they have the help they need during tax season and often use their summer leadership programs, which are reserved for rising seniors during the summer before their final year, as a pipeline for the internship positions.

Harrelson, a junior, is ready for future opportunities.

"I was able to secure invitations to two different summer leadership programs with my top two firms," Harrelson said. "I know because of this, my future as an accountant is looking really good."

Meet the firms is just one of several recruiting and job fair events the Parker College of Business has moved to a virtual format since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The college also hosted a virtual Accounting Day career fair and a summer Meet the Firms event.



*Mary Harrelson*

“The best thing about the virtual Meet the Firms is that in spite of the pandemic, Georgia Southern University made it possible for us, students, and the firms to meet online and continue with the event,” said Emily Olsson, an accounting student set to graduate in December.

Olsson attended both Meet the Firms events hosted by the School of Accountancy and was able to land an internship for the spring and summer semesters.

“What made the biggest impact on me and my future career from the virtual Meet the Firms event was the invaluable experience at connecting with companies virtually, which will be vital once I am officially out of college and competing for employment in the job market,” Olsson said.

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September 21, 2020



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