



ANTHONY BRANCH is a Lead Intelligence & Risk Migration Analyst at WeWork. He graduated from Cal Poly in 2016 with a degree in Political Science.

Alumni Spotlight: Anthony Branch

By Isaias Diaz

Anthony Branch graduated from Cal Poly in 2016 with a degree in Political Science and Global Politics. Currently, Anthony works for a company called WeWork as a Lead Intelligence & Risk Mitigation Analyst. As an Intelligence Lead, he is tasked with maintaining global situational awareness of potential and developing risks capable of impacting the personnel and assets of WeWork. The Intelligence Lead position develops and leads the intelligence component within the WeWork Security Team to provide accurate, relevant, insightful and timely threat analysis and risk assessments in support of executive protection, business operations and enterprise risk. Anthony has been specifically assigned to the Asia-Pacific account, covering the interests and investments within that region.

Anthony transferred to Cal Poly from Santa Barba City College for political science in 2014. Anthony initially had planned on going to law school after earning his undergraduate degree, since he had worked at the public defender's office for some time and it seemed appealing to his interests. At the end of his career at Cal Poly, Anthony was at a crossroads of whether he should pursue law school or pursue international relations. After graduation Anthony took a year and a half off to do some soul searching, upon which he concluded that he would regret not pursuing international relations more than he would regret not being an attorney. After this decision,

Anthony attended NYU, where he studied and completed his master's degree in International Relations, with a focus on National Security.

He credits a mentorship he established with a faculty member at Cal Poly as helpful in guiding his interests towards the right career path. Anthony found professors to be a very valuable resource as they are more open to interacting with students due to the smaller class sizes and Cal Poly being more of a teaching, rather than research, institution. So far, Anthony is most proud of the international research he conducted and published during the summer of 2018 in Armenia as an International Fellow at CRRC.

Anthony's initial thoughts when considering his career path mainly pointed towards staying in academia, since developed a passion for researching. But nowadays, he finds himself more interested in making a direct impact, rather than writing and reading on subjects whose only audience is others in the same field as him. Anthony has had a lot of different and "weird" jobs throughout his career so far. The most notable two are working at the public defender's office, where he did investigations and clerical duties like writing motions. The other one was working at a company called Global Power Supply as a project manager, where he learned valuable skills on how to effectively lead a team.

At the moment, Anthony is also acting as a space policy counselor for the Space Games Federation. It is helpful to think of the Space Games Federation as being similar to FIFA or the Olympic committee, but instead an international governing body for zero or micro gravity sports. The idea is that it's not happening tomorrow, but in the next ten years there should be something constructively developed. Anthony's role as a space policy counselor focuses mainly on analyzing and assessing policy proposals to see how they would affect and interact with the international sports governing body as a whole.

There are three things Anthony learned during his time as a Cal Poly political science undergraduate that he claims have helped him get to where he is today:

- 1) Learning how to think, write, and read analytically at a higher level. It sounds simple, but those skills have been very useful in his career so far.
- 2) Learning research methods. At Cal Poly he took courses in research methods, which have been very helpful and applicable in his research

ambitions abroad at the Caucasus Research Resource Center (CRRC) in Armenia and at NYU.

3) The quantitative skills that are taught in the Cal Poly Political science curriculum. Anthony believes that experience with SPSS or excel can be very useful in certain jobs and gives you a leg up over competitors.

Anthony's advice to current Cal Poly political science students:

Due to the nature of industry these days it's a bit more difficult to find a job with solely a bachelor's degree. Anthony suggests grad school as a very good opportunity and advises using and optimizing all the resources available to you. Anthony's suggestion to Cal Poly political science students is to make sure to lock down at least two faculty members that can serve as a reference and/or write you a letter of recommendation. Most importantly, it will be more helpful and effective for employers to discuss with faculty members that are familiar with your work and interests. For current students, Anthony advises that it is very good to find a mentor, since it is very beneficial for you to develop a professional relationship with somebody who has many years of experience. They can give you a better outlook on where your career trajectory can go due to the wealth of knowledge and experience that their background carries.