

MARIE LEFEBVRE

Featured Alumna

Current location: San Francisco, CA

*Dialogue Role: External Relations & Development Coordinator,
July 2015 - July 2016*



What is your occupation or most recent work experience?

I am currently an investigator at Facebook on the Developer Operations Team, where I investigate third party apps for potential user data misuse; my team was created after the Cambridge Analytica scandal in 2018.

What has surprised you most about your career?

My first job out of college was a sales role at Google. I actually left that role to work at the Dialogue thinking I had left tech for good and would eventually transition into public service. I ended up coming back to the West Coast for my Master's in Latin American Studies, and I ultimately transitioned back to the tech industry, which I was ambivalent about at first. However, last year I was fortunate to find a new role at Facebook that bridged my interests in research and social impact, as my team is mission-driven with the goal of protecting user data. What especially surprised me was how I was able to pivot and adapt to a more technical role, despite my background which previously leaned more on soft skills and qualitative research.

What advice would you give to a young professional?

My number one piece of advice would be to leverage your network, including weaker connections, even if it may feel awkward at first. I can't overestimate how much a personal connection who already has their foot in the door at a company/organization can influence the hiring process through a referral or even just putting a good word in. Also, in my experience having a growth mindset is essential to professional success.

What was your most impactful Dialogue moment/experience?

For me there are two: 1) For the 2015 Gala since we exceeded fundraising goals significantly. This was partially thanks to a platinum donor for which I felt a particular sense of accomplishment as they had never supported the Dialogue before. We sent them a letter out of the blue, unsure if they would reply. However, through online research I was able to make the connection that a Dialogue employee at the time was a former colleague of one of the company's decision-makers. I asked him if he would reach out and speak to his former colleague about the work the Dialogue does, which he graciously agreed to do. It was a decisive factor in securing the donation!

2) In the summer of 2016, Dialogue president emeritus Peter Hakim invited me as his plus one to attend a reception at the Brazilian embassy in honor of the Rio Olympics, which included an exhibit on Olympic torches over the years. There was delicious Brazilian barbeque, caipirinhas, and I even got to meet the Brazilian ambassador - as a Brazilianist it was such a special experience and a dream come true!