

GUY MENTEL

Featured Alumnus

Current location: Arlington, Virginia

Dialogue Role: Writing Intern, Summer 2017



What is your occupation or most recent work experience?

I am currently the Executive Director of Global Americans, a US-Latin America relations think tank in Washington, DC.

What has surprised you most about your career?

How serendipitous many of my biggest career transitions have been. My career path has hardly been linear. I feel extremely privileged to have had the opportunity to make multiple professional stops along the way, with each stop providing more insight into the type of work that I'm most interested in and best suited for. When I started this work, I never would have anticipated that my career would take me to Colombia or to Capitol Hill—or to law school for that matter. I was fortunate to have friends and mentors wiser than me at each fork in the road—many of them affiliated with the Dialogue in some way—who encouraged me and pushed me to pursue new and exciting opportunities. I've found that if you work hard at being a good colleague and surround yourself with people you admire, your career will surprise you in many ways.

What advice would you give to a young professional?

I would encourage young professionals, if they do draw up some sort of master career plan, to allow for sufficient flexibility to zig and zag along the way. I would urge those starting their careers not to fear the path less traveled. I cannot speak more highly of the benefit of "on the ground" work experience and the way in which these experiences can both shape your perspective on issues and your outlook on your work. I would encourage young professionals to be open to those opportunities if they arise and more broadly, to be open to less conventional paths, so long as those paths provide opportunities for learning and growth.

What was your most impactful Dialogue moment/experience?

The opportunity to work with and write alongside Michael Camilleri and Ben Raderstorf. I was with the Dialogue for a short period of time before law school. I feel extremely privileged to have had the opportunity to work within the Rule of Law program and to learn from both Ben and Michael. It was Michael's example and wisdom in particular that informed so many of my professional choices while in law school. Even after leaving the Dialogue, I feel so grateful that the team continued to involve me in the organization's work through events and other initiatives. The relationships and friendships I developed from my time at the Dialogue have meant so much to me as I've moved along in my career.