

## Front Desk Clerk to Corporate Work

An Alumni Spotlight by Student Writer Colette Kuk

Just a short time ago Dane Ramirez was a student at ISU and working at Four Seasons gym. Day in and day out he checked people in at the front desk. It was not exactly a job he envisioned as a major career launch. But one fall day in 2007 Dane met Pam, a member at the gym, who asked him about the protocol for hanging up a flyer at the club. After Dane explained, she asked for his opinion of the flyer. Enter Mr. Marketing. "I told her the flyer was kind of boring and not very visually stimulating."

The next couple of times Pam came in she chatted with Dane about marketing. One day she asked, "Do you know who I am?" He was clueless. Ironically, Pam turned out to be Pam El, Vice President of Marketing at State Farm!

When Pam asked Dane what he was doing besides working at the gym and he told her he was interning at COUNTRY Financial. After learning he was working at a competing company Pam decided she needed Dane at State Farm, and told him to apply for an internship.

Not only does Dane have great people skills, he's also very creative. And it was the latter attribute than ultimately helped Dane make a memorable first impression at State Farm by putting his own unique twist on the traditional application process. Just imagine the response when HR received a box of athletic shoes, a resume and a cover letter with a note saying, "This is my foot in the door."

And no doubt Dane got an immediate offer right? Wrong. After a few weeks passed he learned there were no marketing internships available. Dane moved to "Plan B". It was clearly time to harness the power of networking. Dane shared his tale with Pam. She invited him to call her the next day, and presto – Dane had an internship at State Farm.

Fast forward- Dane now works full time at State Farm as a Marketing Analyst. "I really like this position because I love marketing and the fact that I use my education everyday at my job." Beyond his marketing coursework, Dane found the Leadership Teams and Team Development, course taught by Dale Fitzgibbons to be especially helpful. "That class changed my life. It taught me to step back and look from the outside in, and really put things in perspective."

Today Dane is applying his team development and marketing skills through his work on The 50 Million Pound Challenge, a national weight loss campaign supported by State Farm.

"The Challenge is about people coming together and looking out for each other as they work to take more control of their lives," he explained.



Dane Ramirez '08 (MKT) and fellow members of the State Farm team recently met NBA All-star and Olympic Athlete LeBron James - a celebrity spokesperson for the 50 Million Pound Challenge.



“It is about taking the time to reach out and lock hands as State Farm joins forces to fight the very real risk that being overweight poses to us, our families and our community.”

For more information about the 50 Million Pound Challenge visit: <http://www.50millionpounds.com/>.

Dane has now been working at State Farm for seven months and is enjoying his position. In the future he plans to earn an M.B.A. One day he aspires to own his own marketing consulting agency and become a savvy real estate investor.

“But, for right now I am enjoying the journey of life.”