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CHRIS HERON

Our two newest employees, Chris Heron and Joey DiGangi just completed their first month with us. Their situation is unique though—the two graduated this May from Juniata College and packed their bags to join our office in Tainan, Taiwan. We wanted to learn a share how their international business experience is going so far.

HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT TRAVELING SO FAR FROM HOME?

Chris- I knew that after college I wanted to make a change in my life and take a huge risk. I figured going to a place where I had never been before, I didn't know anybody, and didn't speak the language qualified for just that.

Joey- It was a blend of intimidating and exciting. Up until now, I had never left the country (besides a 2-day trip into Canada), so the idea of starting my adult life in a new place where I don't speak the language sounded tough. But I was probably more excited than worried because it was a new challenge to face and it was an opportunity to explore the world a bit.



WHAT WERE YOUR PERSONAL REASONS FOR COMING?

C- I had always been told by parents, and mentors that I look up to, that you should spend your early 20's traveling as much as possible to gain a deep understanding of various cultures in order to gain a better grasp on how the world works overall. I'm in love with the idea of running my own company and spreading my company's message throughout the world. I figured that the best way to let me do that in the future is to learn from a CEO first hand on how they are successfully doing that for themselves. Which is why I loved the idea to work for Kdan Mobile to help them grow their company.

J- I've never really traveled much, so right off the bat, I was excited to have a chance to see the world. Beyond that however, I was really motivated to travel because I recognized the value of starting my career off with international business experience at a great company where I'd have a job doing the things I love (like digital marketing; media relations; and above all else—being creative and solving problems).



HOW HAS YOUR FIRST MONTH DIFFERED FROM WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

C- My first month in Taiwan has been completely different than what I had expected. I knew that moving here would be very different from anything I had done before, but I didn't know how it would be different exactly. (Me & Joey have the joke about "pleasantly surprised") I didn't really have too many expectations before coming here, but with every assumption I had made, I ended up being pleasantly surprised.

J- Since traveling and everything was all so new to me, I tried my best not to set any expectations (good or bad) and keep an open mind to everything—the experiences, the culture, the food—everything like that. I wanted to let myself soak it up like a sponge so I tried not to go in thinking one way or another. With that being said, there have been a bunch of times where I thought I had an idea of what I was walking into and then have it completely exceed what I thought it would be like. Like Chris said—we are constantly getting "pleasantly surprised"!

HOW HAS YOUR COLLEGE EDUCATION HELPED YOU PREPARE?

C- My college education has helped prepare for this experience quite a bit. Similarly I chose to go to a college far from home, moving from Las Vegas to Pennsylvania, which helped me deal with the (not so) new idea of leaving my home city. Going to Juniata College, a private Liberal Arts school, I had been surrounded by people from many different countries. This helped me connect with individuals of all different cultural backgrounds. With the great study abroad that Juniata provides, I was able to travel to China to learn about the markets and businesses in Asia. This is actually where I connected with Wei-Chung Wang (VP of Global Marketing and Strategy at Kdan) who helped me earn my position now.

J- My education at Juniata exposed me to so many skills that helped me prepare for this career. I took advantage of two incredible on-campus employment opportunities where I worked in the marketing department and was mentored by experienced media professionals. These opportunities

refined my writing style and exposed me to marketing strategies. I use these skill sets on a daily basis to contribute here. I also had a chance to start a business through our campus' business incubator, where I got firsthand experience solving problems, organizing and executing projects, researching new markets, and many other skills that help me every day.



WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE PART?

C- My favorite part has definitely been the food. I thought I loved Asian food back in the U.S., but there is no comparison to how good it actually tastes here.

J- I love the food as well, but I think the only thing that tops the cuisine for me is the people we've met here. We started by taking an introductory Mandarin and Taiwanese culture course in Taipei, where met tons of amazing people from Taiwan and from other parts of the world. And then when we traveled to Tainan to begin working, I loved getting to meet all of our co-workers too. It's great because everyone in the office invites us to lunch and other events; and they also help us navigate the city by helping with translations and other things like that.



Both Joey and Chris bring entrepreneurial experience with them from their undergraduate careers. They started AssureTech LLC, and Chris started the 10K Run in their junior years.

CULTURE OF THE COMPANY?

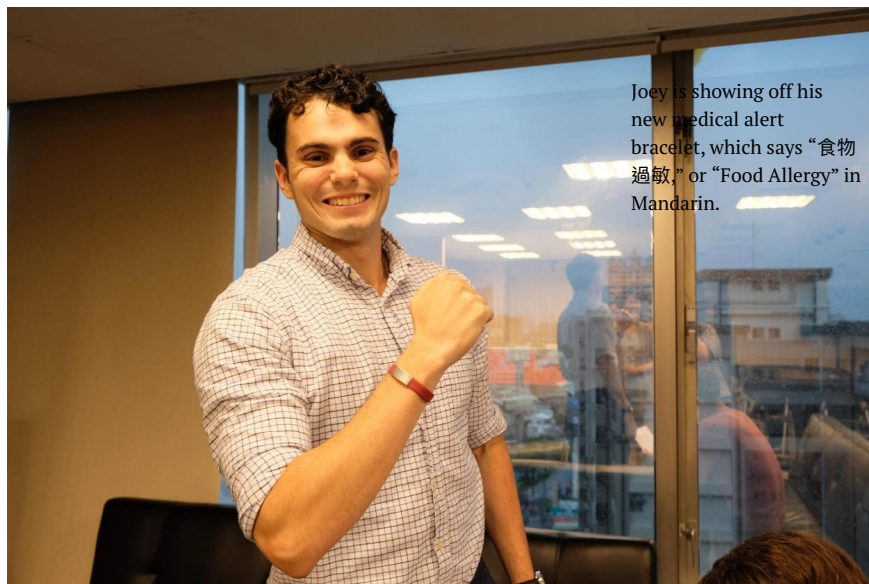
C- The culture of the company is something that was a huge surprise to me. There is so much caring and compassion for each other. The workers in the company really look after each other and care about the ideas and opinions of their coworkers. Working in a company like this not only makes it much easier to make the transition, but it also creates a culture of learning, because you know that you can ask questions to anyone and it will be taken seriously.

J- I love the culture of the company here. It's a very supportive environment where we get a chance to learn from each other at almost every meeting. There's a lot of collaboration and a true team environment. I also love that this doesn't stop when the workday ends. My co-workers set up activities throughout the week like basketball, bowling, swimming, and other things that keep us active and extends the friendships beyond the office.

HOW DID THE LANGUAGE BARRIER AFFECT YOU?

C- The language barrier can be a hindering factor, however so far it has not stopped us from doing anything we want to do. This has allowed us to develop communication skills other than language. Also constantly hearing mandarin has really helped us out in our process of learning a new language. We have learned so many more words and phrases than I could've imagined. Our company also has all of its meetings in English which is very helpful.

J- I have a peanut allergy, so the language barrier, and communicating my allergy to restaurants was one of the things that stressed me out the most. One of the things that really helps is being surrounded by co-workers who invite me to meals. They check the food for me, and they're teaching me how to make sure my food is safe in Mandarin. Besides the medical concerns with the language barrier, I've really enjoyed picking up little bits of Mandarin every so often. Living in a different culture is such a great way to learn a new language!



WHAT DO YOU LOOK FORWARD TO MOST ABOUT WORKING FOR KDAN?

C- I am eager to learn more about what goes into creating a company's brand image, and how to appropriately portray that image to your audience. I'm also excited to establish connections with other companies to create promotions

and collaborations that get both parties involved to solve a problem.

J- I love taking on new responsibilities and challenges as I get more familiar with the company. I'm also excited because after I work a few months here, I'll be returning to the United States to work with Wei-Chung to help expand Kdan's operations in the US.

Chris and Joey have eagerly worked to learn as much as possible about the people and culture here in Taiwan. So far, they have done a great job connecting with the Kdan team members. Follow their progress on our social media, where you can take a look at the *Life At Kdan*.

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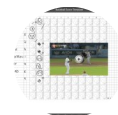
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Chris Heron

A recent graduate of Juniata College (2018), Chris majored in Economics with a minor in Communication while he was also a member of the school's men's volleyball team. Chris currently resides in Taiwan, where he is a Global

Marketing Specialist at Kdan. While in Taiwan, Chris is also working to implement his own brand into the asian market.

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