Founded in 1998, Capitala Investment Advisors is a junior capital provider to lower middle-market companies throughout the United States. Through its four funds, Capitala has closed over 100 investments and has provided financial guidance for its portfolio companies. Capitala provides a variety of financing structures ranging from subordinated debt, first and second lien loans, one-stop and uni-tranche structures, and equity co-investments. Each investment typically supports a sponsor-led buyout, management buyout, recapitalization, or growth financing. Following each investment, Capitala becomes involved in day-to-day operations of the companies – focusing on delivering positive results by generating strong cash flows and margins and creating a more established market position for each company. Most of Capitala’s operations take place in its Charlotte, NC headquarters, but the Company also has business development offices in Atlanta, GA; Ft. Lauderdale, FL; Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles, CA; Raleigh, NC; and New York City, NY. Through each of these offices across the United States, Capitala seeks to invest in companies with revenues in excess of $15MM and EBITDA in excess of $5MM.

This summer, I served as a Summer Analyst for Capitala. I worked alongside the underwriting team, and I was involved in several live deals that Capitala invested in – completing six during the duration of my internship. My responsibilities included screening potential transactions, drafting of financial models for both debt and equity transactions, and performing due diligence as deals were being executed.
While I worked with almost everyone within the Charlotte office, I worked closest with a former Sewanee graduate, Danny Speake. Danny graduated from Sewanee in 2012, and he is an Associate on the underwriting team at Capitala. Each week, I was involved in something new – be it early screening on potential investments or due diligence on a closing deal. In doing so, I was able to better understand how the deal process was completed from beginning to end. By assisting with each aspect of the deal process, I helped increase efficiency and developed a greater working knowledge of both finance and accounting.

Working at Capitala was a great summer experience that provided invaluable experience that I would have otherwise been unable to receive within a classroom setting. Each member of the Capitala team made themselves available to go over a range of topics from challenging aspects of certain projects to discussing future career paths. Furthermore, by working with the Capitala team in such an inclusive environment, the steep learning curve that I was so worried about in the beginning quickly eroded as each day went on. Along with the other interns, we were encouraged to work together and bounce ideas off one another – which equipped each one of us with a solid support system. Because of Capitala, I am walking away with business and social connections that will help open new doors for me in the future.

On the more technical side of the internship, I was able to develop a variety of skills that will be applicable in any career in the future. Coming into the internship, I had very limited experience with Microsoft Excel, and throughout the
summer, I continually worked to increase my proficiency. On top of Excel, both my financial skills and knowledge of accounting became much stronger. As I had taken accounting before, I had a fairly straightforward, class-oriented view; however, my internship with Capitala gave insight to the many different variations and ways that accounting can be viewed. As a result, I feel much more confident in my ability to look at a company’s three statements to assess its strengths and weaknesses.

Overall, my experience at Capitala helped me to better define my future career goals. Before the internship, I knew very little about private equity and investment banking, and this internship afforded me the opportunity to gain insight and knowledge that would not have otherwise been available to me. The relationships that I developed with the Capitala team and other interns will be valuable as I not only move on from the summer internship but also as I move on from Sewanee after my senior year. This experience has been one of the highlights of my Sewanee career, and it will remain with me as I continue to grow professionally.