

Stepping out of his comfort zone: ASU grad finds his path in human resources

After a job-shadowing experience changed his perspective, Caleb Lee aspires to start a role in talent acquisition

By Shay Moser, ASU News
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Editor's note: This story is part of a series of profiles of notable [spring 2026 graduates](#).

For [Caleb Lee](#), choosing Arizona State University and its Polytechnic campus meant more than selecting a college — it meant leaving behind the familiarity of California's Bay Area to build something new on his own.

Originally from San Jose and raised in San Ramon, Lee arrived at ASU ready for a change of pace and perspective. What he didn't expect was how much that decision would shape not only his career path, but also his confidence and outlook.

Lee, who is graduating this spring with a business degree in human resources from the W. P. Carey School of Business, began his college journey by pursuing a global business degree. But an early opportunity through ASU would soon point him in a different direction.

During the summer after his first year, Lee participated in a job-shadowing program with [Dexian](#), a recruiting firm partnered with ASU. There, he saw firsthand the role recruiters play in helping job seekers find opportunities — and how those connections can make a real difference in people's lives.

"That really stuck with me," he said. "Seeing how they connect talent with opportunities and make a direct impact on people's careers made me realize I wanted to go into human resources."

Since then, Lee has immersed himself in the field, completing multiple internships and gaining hands-on experience in recruiting and HR operations. From supporting full-cycle recruiting efforts at U-Haul to his current role as a recruiting intern with Leslie's Poolmart, he has built a strong foundation in talent acquisition — the area he hopes to pursue full-time after graduation.

Beyond the classroom and workplace, Lee credits his ASU experience with helping him grow personally. Moving out of state pushed him to adapt quickly, communicate effectively and step outside his comfort zone.

“Coming here exposed me to a new environment and different types of people,” he said. “It helped me grow personally and professionally.”

Now, as he prepares to graduate, Lee is focused on what comes next while carrying forward the lessons he has learned — especially the importance of taking initiative and being open to new opportunities.

Question: What’s something you learned at ASU that surprised you or changed your perspective?

Answer: I learned how important adaptability and communication are, both professionally and in everyday life. Coming from out of state, I had to adjust to a completely new environment and different perspectives. That pushed me to grow and step outside my comfort zone.

Q: Why did you choose ASU?

A: I wanted a change of setting from the Bay Area and a chance to experience something new. At the same time, ASU has a strong business program with W. P. Carey, so it made the decision pretty easy.

Q: Which professor taught you the most important lesson while at ASU?

A: Professor [Eric Knott](#). He emphasized self-accountability — doing what you say you’ll do and taking ownership of your actions. That mindset has stayed with me in and out of the classroom.

Q: What’s the best piece of advice you’d give to those still in school?

A: Don’t be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and try new things. Whether it’s moving away from home, applying for internships or getting involved on campus, those experiences help you grow. Don’t wait until you feel ready — just take the opportunity and figure things out as you go.

Q: What was your favorite spot on campus?

A: The Sun Devil Fitness Complex. I spent a lot of time there my freshman year. It’s a great place to work out, meet people and just hang out. I also liked the Hassayampa dorms because it was easy to connect with other students there.

Q: What are your plans after graduation?

A: I’m looking for a full-time role in human resources, ideally in recruiting or talent acquisition. I’m applying for positions in the Phoenix area and California.

Q: If someone gave you \$40 million to solve one problem, what would you tackle?

A: I would create a lottery for ASU students and give out the money to help them financially, like giving \$10 million each to a few students. It could really make a difference for people who need support.

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image



After a job-shadowing experience changed his perspective, Caleb Lee — graduating this spring with a business degree in human resources from the W. P. Carey School of Business — aspires to start a role in talent acquisition, where he hopes to help people connect with opportunities. Photo by Shelley Valdez/ASU