

Forging a Path in Finance

When Anne Ritts, senior finance major, first came to Kent State, she was planning to teach math. But her grandfather's passion for the stock market quickly inspired her own—and she changed her major to finance in the College of Business Administration. There, she immersed herself in academics and joined several finance organizations.

“Being in finance and being the only girl many times, it felt like I was always walking into a room of guys,” Ritts says. “Because of these experiences at Kent State, I’m more confident.”

One of the organizations she joined was Golden Flash Asset Management Group (GFAM), led by Steven Dennis, PhD, Firestone Chair of Corporate Finance at Kent State. GFAM tasks students with managing real money—currently more than \$1 million in investments. They create portfolios of investments, which they can enter into competition.

Ritts’ involvement in GFAM provided unique learning experiences, including the Certified Financial Analyst (CFA) research challenge and a visit to the New York Stock Exchange. In 2019, she and the GFAM team took first place with their Fixed Income portfolio at the nation’s largest student finance competition, the Quinnipiac Global Asset Management Education Forum.

“Going to New York City and getting to represent Golden Flash Asset Management was something I’ll always remember,” Ritts says. Her accomplishments have inspired other women to participate in GFAM, as well.

“Anne was one of the early people in the fund, and she’s attracted more women into it,” Dennis says. “Most of our senior officers now are women, and a lot of that had to do with Anne’s leadership.”

She also found time to study abroad—twice. She took a winter break trip with GFAM to the Cayman Islands to study tax

“If you’re willing to put in the work and put yourself out there, people want to help you.”

havens and money laundering. And she spent a semester in Switzerland, studying finance and interning with a venture capital firm researching agriculture technology.

Ritts completed an internship in private wealth management with PNC Bank this past summer. PNC offered her a full-time position following graduation, and she accepted. After she leaves Kent State in May 2021, she will head to Charlotte, North Carolina, to begin her career in private wealth management.

—Adapted from an article by Katie Null, BS '21, that first appeared in Kent State Today, Oct. 5, 2020



Anne Ritts poses with her team’s first-place trophy at the Quinnipiac G.A.M.E Forum.



Members of GFAM had the opportunity to visit the New York Stock Exchange during their trip to New York City for the Quinnipiac G.A.M.E Forum.