

Karishma Tank
M&T Class of 2017
Internship: Gridless Power

This past summer, I interned at Gridless Power, which is a startup co-founded by M&T alum Jason Halpern. Gridless is located in southern New Jersey and specializes in producing powerful portable battery packs, called COREs, for off grid use. I first found out about the internship through an email sent out by Jaime that described the company and the positions/tasks open for the summer. I was interested in the internship both after reading the email and realizing that interning at a startup would be a completely new experience for me. I had never really known what it was like to be a part of a startup before and thought it would be awesome to take this summer to find out! After speaking with Jason about my potential role at Gridless for the summer, I applied for the M&T Fellowship Award for funding.

My internship primarily entailed financial analysis. A lot of the projects that I was a part of required a lot of market research. For example, the other M&T interns and I put together presentations and compiled information about competitors in different markets, such as within disaster relief, defense, humanitarian uses, etc. From analyzing these competitors and the products that they sell, we were then able to identify Gridless' most serious competitors. Another project the interns and I worked on was to create a simple financial model to help Gridless determine how to rent out the COREs since as of now, Gridless only has the option for customers to buy these units. This required us to analyze big rental companies throughout the US and determine if it made more sense for Gridless to rent the units on its own or lease some units to a rental company. This summer was also particularly exciting because Gridless was looking for another round of funding. Their previous round of funding was focused on R&D for developing the actual CORE. To help with finding funding and venture capital firms/investors that would be willing to invest in Gridless, I helped to put together a list of such investors, such as those that specialize in alternative energy or hardware focused startups.

The internship at Gridless really opened my eyes to what it was like to work at a startup. I was able to be a big part of really meaningful projects that shaped Gridless' strategy in both the short and long term. Even though I didn't work on some of the more coding focused projects, I was still able to get a chance to learn about the product development process and how Gridless is continually working on refining and creating products for their customers, which I found really interesting.