One of my favorite BCLC experiences so far has to be the field trip to Stanley Black & Decker. It was eye-opening, enlightening and unforgettable. It began like any field trip: getting on the bus, taking attendance, and sitting with my bus buddy, a process that is all too familiar from the start. It was, however, a nice change of pace to leave the Storrs campus, and to see the farm life and amber horizon in juxtaposition to the campus buildings. Field trips are not just the destination, but the process of exploration; to leave your usual life and see new things; to become immersed in the atmosphere. I am grateful for these opportunities that I receive as a member of the BCLC.

The bus dropped us off, and we were led to the waiting room. We entered a conference room, and were greeted with a strong, professional smile and handshake.

As we sat down, in front of us were sticky notes and a pen with the infamous Stanley Black & Decker logo upon them. I was impressed by their attention to detail and the marketing of their brand. As we sat down, in front of us were sticky notes and a pen with the infamous Stanley Black & Decker logo upon them. I was impressed by their attention to detail and the marketing of their brand. Our host introduced herself as a representative of the early career and leadership program and spoke on the opportunities this corporation offers to college students. She then showed us a video demonstrating that Stanley Black & Decker is everywhere. It was a black and white video, highlighting in yellow anything that was produced by Stanley Black & Decker. I learned that this company is more than just a manufacturer of tools, they also create...
auto parts, hospital wrist bands, and a variety of other commonly used items. Then, before the question and answer portion with Stanley Black & Decker business associates began, we were given an astonishing tour of their testing facilities. As we walked the sparkling, reflective black floors, a machine rolled past. The machine started pushing boxes left to right and I was fascinated by the intricacy and preciseness. The tour was designed to display Stanley Black & Decker innovations and to sneak a peek at their manufacturing facilities. The tour guide emphasized the different types of people they hire to innovate and create, and also told us that they hire a lot of business majors who understand management. At the end of the tour, we were led back to the conference room to eat lunch.

Once lunch ended, the Stanley Black & Decker professionals came in, including a UConn alumnus and two high-position leaders. I expected to feel intimidated. However, I was pleasantly surprised to meet very personable people whom I could see as role models. They shared the backstory of their personal lives, their past career experience, and their positions on the Stanley Black & Decker team. My biggest takeaway from the Q&A was never to feel as if you do not deserve to speak. The alumnus told us that he admired the courage it takes to speak up. This was life-changing. Going forward, I hope to be able to use that advice whenever I network and converse with business professionals. The last part of this event was the innovation seminar. It was taught by an individual who attended Dartmouth University. It began with images of both successful and failed innovations. The speaker told us that an invention must address a need, not just fulfill a luxury desire. The classic example was the Juicero, a luxury juice machine that was somewhat innovative, however both ineffective and overpriced at $400. When it came to the cost-benefit analysis the Juicero satisfied no real need on the part of an average consumer.

One of my fellow students then asked an interesting question regarding machinery replacing human jobs. Our host answered the question by stating that, statistically, people do not want the mundane jobs that machines are performing, which leaves more desirable work for humans. A fascinating perspective on the criticism of machinery advancement.

Our host then asked us about ways we could address global issues. In response, we wrote about the world issues we would like to fix. Then, some brave volunteers read their proposals, such as addressing systematic racism, misinformation, and educational inequality. Our host guided the students on solving global issues by starting with a big picture idea and working downwards to the microscopic issue. I found this method of problem-solving through innovation very unorthodox, however quite creative. I came away motivated to change the world.

As I sat back on the return bus ride to UConn, I contemplated taking away lifelong lessons. It was unforgettable to hear directly from business professionals, to see firsthand the
automation that Stanley Black & Decker has in place, and to be a part of a very unique innovation seminar. That Stanley Black & Decker has in place, and to be a part of a very unique innovation seminar. I felt I was able to take advantage fully of this field trip. I see things in a different light now: every time I walk into the UConn Recreation Center and see the infamous Stanley Black & Decker logo on the doors, I flashback to the irreplaceable experience I gained, thanks to the BCLC. It was truly life-changing.

--Jesse Lau