

Narrative: Greg Burnop, Leasing Consultant, CMG Leasing

Blacksburg, Virginia

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I'm a leasing consultant for CMG Leasing and I just started working here in May. I'm 27 so I'm still pretty young, and I live with some roommates in Blacksburg. I grew up here with my parents and two sisters. I went to elementary, middle and high school here so I just decided to stay here for college. It's a pretty nice town [*laughs*]. One of my sisters went to Tech and the other went to Roanoke College and played volleyball there. Now they both work in Roanoke, one works for a marketing company and the other works for the VA, Veterans Affairs.

I heard about my job in the paper and saw that they were hiring, so I called human resources and filled out an application and turned in a resume. It stays pretty busy because the phone rings pretty good and people come in a lot. I work about 40 to 43 hours a week and the duties are pretty spread out between me and all my co-workers.

I would say that the best thing about this job is that you get to deal with a lot of different people and a lot of different situations. The worst about the job is that it gets really, really busy sometimes and really hectic. The whole summer is extremely busy and this job involves really being able to communicate with residents. Sometimes my co-workers can be hard to deal with just 'cause we don't always understand each other. The only way to really make my job easier is by paying me more! That's my dream! But honestly, my dream job has always involved me working from home majority of the time and making enough money to be able to save a nice portion of it.

Luckily real estate in Blacksburg is a great market. If it wasn't for Virginia Tech I wouldn't have a job! [*Laughs*] Most of our residents are students. The difference between Blacksburg and Radford is that in Radford they are pretty packed in tight but they definitely have less students there. The only thing about dealing with students is dealing with their parents. It was probably a couple days ago and a father of someone living here came in here and he had gotten towed and he was threatening everybody and being very aggressive and it was an extremely uncomfortable situation for about 20 minutes. Situations like these help though because I always have stories to tell my family. It helps my family life with communication 'cause I have a lot of stories and situations that are interesting to talk about, I guess on the other hand I'm tired a lot so that affects my family life too.

As far as how my job effects my finances, since everything is pretty close in Blacksburg I don't fill my tank often and I go to Radford only a few times a week and we dress pretty casual here so I shop at places like TJ Maxx. I also think that I get paid a pretty reasonable amount for the amount of work I do 'cause I think it balances itself out. It's really busy during certain times but during other times it's not that busy, so I think they both compensate for each other, and it's not a one man show so it's pretty level pay, everyone contributes something. If I had kids I would want them to work wherever they want to work but I think this is a good job, too. Oh and with our insurance, Anthem Insurance, I don't pay that much out of pocket. I really just got my health package since I'm pretty new here but I went to the doctor once and paid about 60 bucks and about 20 to 30 dollars for meds.

My co-workers and I get along pretty well 'cause we have to deal with the same stuff and same stressful situations, it's kind of like a team environment. It's more of an office relationship so we eat lunch together but when I first started I had a lot of work to do. It feels good to know that we can help people with a necessity because we help people live, shelter is very important. In order to have this job you need to have a good attitude and to not let the hectic part of it get you down. I think this is like a transition period for me to move up, but not to management because I wouldn't want to manage other people. I do want to make more money and have more responsibilities, though, and staying with this company is a good possibility.

I have been thinking about starting my own leasing company, though. It's definitely something I've thought about doing especially now since I'm experiencing working in the field, ya know, it's something that's definitely crossed my mind. In some aspect I've always liked to interact with people. I like talking on the phone better then I like interacting in person but other times it's more interesting to interact in person instead of the phone, so it depends. I talked to a few people about the real estate industry and I am really interested in getting into it. I don't think it's that difficult and I might not have to work that much. My parents were good role models for me. They introduced me to real estate and how it is a good industry. I really think it's just always going to be around because people always need a home and it's a great investment.

I think the American dream is just being free and independent and being a positive member of society and contributing to society in a positive way. I think I'm definitely in the right direction to live it even more.

To read the complete conversation, please see the transcript.