



## **Things to Know When Relocating**

*by Jackie Reding, AFA Marketing and Communications Intern*

When it comes to relocation, young professionals often don't know where to start. Whether it be changing positions within your company, starting with a new company or relocating to try something new, there are countless uncertainties that make employees hesitant to relocate.

AFA had the opportunity to chat with two industry professionals — Miquel Del Toro and Sam Johnson — to ask about their relocation experiences. Del Toro is a Research and Development Food Scientist within Jimmy Dean Innovation at Tyson Foods. Throughout his career, Del Toro has relocated to Nebraska, Kansas, and Illinois. Currently, he is relocating to Arkansas for his current position.

Johnson is a University and Early Career Recruiter for Trimble, Inc. He recently relocated to Colorado from Minnesota, and will be returning to Minnesota for his current position. Johnson also travels around the United States in his current position.

Del Toro and Johnson share their personal relocation experiences, takeaways and tips, including how to cultivate new relationships, make the most of the experience and keeping an open mind.

## **Company Relocation Assistance**

Companies may offer housing or housing stipends, travel pay, vehicles or other assistance to employees who are relocating for positions. Some companies may even have staff employed specifically to help employees with their relocation.

Recently Tyson made the decision to consolidate corporate locations with the relocation of corporate employees from Chicago and Dakota Dunes, South Dakota, to the world headquarters in Springdale, Arkansas. Tyson is assisting anyone who is interested in the move, including helping employees find housing.

Trimble offered relocation assistance, including a relocation stipend, to Johnson, but the details of the move were open for Johnson to decide upon. Because of this, Johnson was allowed to make the move how he wanted and was able to find housing within his timeframe.

## **Make Connections**

It can be hard or intimidating to make friends and build a network after moving to a new place. Johnson didn't know anyone when he moved to Denver, but Trimble was integral in helping him meet and connect with young professionals.

“Trimble has a program that is directed to helping young professionals connect,” says Johnson. “And as crazy as this sounds, Bumble BFF was huge for me when it came to meeting people. I still have four great friends in Denver that I connected with on Bumble BFF.”

Del Toro admitted stepping into a new rhythm and making friends can be tough. He advises young professionals to ask questions in their roles and to remember that most people have good intentions and want to help newcomers, even if they are busy.

### **Take Risks**

Del Toro was not afraid to take the leap and move to Arkansas. He recognizes that approaching the unknown with an open mind is important to make the most out of your experience. Spreading your wings and trying something new can help you find new things you love and will help you grow through things you don't love as much.

“When it comes to relocation, do it,” says Del Toro. “You can always go back, and you don't want to wonder ‘what if’. Just go do it.”

Johnson went against the traditional norms of his career field and changed careers three times in three years. He admits it was a huge risk, but knows each position was influential to his career path. Johnson's second biggest risk was moving from Minnesota to Colorado. When reflecting on his decision, Johnson says he wishes he would have relocated sooner.

“After being in my career field for a while, it's harder to move because I had been in the same place developing relationships for years,” says Johnson. “It was harder to leave my community five years into my career as opposed to if I had ventured out after I graduated college.”

### **Do What's Best For You**

Johnson had to overcome the traditional boundaries that were in place, including the idea that he should stay at a job for three to five years before trying something new. Overcoming the job hopper ideology and focusing on what worked best for himself proved to be one of the most weighted factors in his decision.

“The hardest part about it was making the decision of what's best for me,” says Johnson

Del Toro also fell out of traditional boundaries and has no regrets in his decision. Prior to working in research and development, Del Toro worked in other areas of the food industry, which allowed him to bring valuable experience to his current role. Del Toro's perspective reminds us there is nothing wrong with changing your path a few times, changing majors or not pursuing a master's degree after graduation, and so on.

“What makes me valuable in my current position as a food scientist in research and development is my past experiences working in other areas of the food system,” says Del Toro. “When I have understandings of those roles and communicate them, I gain trust from other employees.”

### **Keep an Open Mind**

Del Toro stressed the importance of keeping a positive attitude while adjusting to the transition. Showing engagement and interest in his new position and location, asking questions and trying to connect with those around him allowed him to develop his own ideas and motivations in his daily work.

“The first few months are going to be hard, but once you get going, you will not regret it,” says Del Toro. “Engaging in good communication between you as a new person and experienced employees can create huge improvements in your personal and professional life.”

### **Find a Mentor**

Del Toro currently has four mentors he could call on both in and outside of Tyson Foods. He chooses mentors by finding those whose opinion he values because of their wisdom or strong work ethic, and asks them questions. Del Toro says mentors may not be your boss, and may not even be in your department, but can still give great insight and advice on your transition.

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