



How Education Reimbursement Helped One Ahold Delhaize USA Associate Grow Her Career

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What does it look like when you turn a benefit into a breakthrough? For Competitive Intelligence Analyst Darcey Meus, it meant using Ahold Delhaize USA's education reimbursement policy to pursue her MBA and apply those lessons directly to her day-to-day work.

"Now felt like the right time because I had enough real-world experience to succeed in the classroom while also being able to immediately apply what I was learning to my role," she said.

In the Q&A below, Darcey shares what motivated her to make the leap, how she balanced her responsibilities through demanding stretches and how her MBA is shaping her next steps at Ahold Delhaize USA.

What inspired you to pursue your MBA, and why was "now" the right time?

I've always been motivated by growth and continuous learning. After joining Ahold Delhaize USA, I found myself wanting a deeper understanding of the relationships between finance, strategy, technology and leadership in driving strong outcomes. Now felt like the right time because I had enough real-world experience to succeed in the classroom, while also being able to immediately apply what I was learning to my role on the Location Research team. I knew that earning an MBA would help me grow personally and professionally, sharpening my skills so I could make a more meaningful impact.

How did Ahold Delhaize USA's education reimbursement policy influence your decision or make it possible to take that step?

It played a significant role in making this decision achievable. Our company invests in associate development, and the encouragement from my manager, Competitive Intelligence Manager Ed Crosby, and Location Research Director Christian Ormond, gave me the confidence to take on the challenge. Our policy made the decision financially possible for me, and I am so grateful.

Who helped you feel supported while you worked toward your MBA – at home and at work?

I have a great support system in my personal life and within Ahold Delhaize USA. My family and friends kept encouraging me as the program became increasingly difficult. My daughter was one of my biggest supporters because she saw me take on a challenge and cheered me on along the way. There were many long nights studying, doing homework and writing papers. At work, my department regularly checked in with me, and if I was stuck on a problem for class, they would always be available for bouncing ideas back and forth.

What opportunities or next steps does your degree open up for you, and how do you see it supporting your growth at Ahold Delhaize USA?

My MBA strengthens my ability to think more strategically, communicate with greater clarity and approach projects with a broader industry perspective. It opened doors for more responsibility and helped guide me in the leadership role of Vice Chair of Programming and Finance with the Caregiving, Parenting, Support EmPact Network last year. My MBA supports my growth into roles that require influencing across teams, driving data-informed decisions and helping lead initiatives that improve performance while keeping people and culture at the center. Ultimately, it enables me to add value at a higher level and continue building a long-term career with Ahold Delhaize USA.

You also used Ahold Delhaize USA's legal benefits for wills/estate planning – what prompted you to explore that benefit, and what would you tell other associates who might not realize how helpful it can be?

I was interested in the legal benefits as a proactive step in planning for the future and ensuring peace of mind for my family. The process was so simple and affordable thanks to the benefits through MetLife Legal, including providing me with a list of attorneys near me. Within two weeks, I had everything I needed. I saved thousands of dollars setting up a will and trust for my daughter with expert guidance from a top attorney in Charlotte. I would absolutely encourage other associates to look into it.

