On Friday, September 29, 2017, two partner investors, two CEOs and one vice president spoke on a panel at the Huntsman Leadership Summit to conclude Business Week at Utah State University.

Tessa White, vice president of human capital at Vivint Solar and one of the five leaders on the panel, said they were all given a list of questions to think about before the summit. Many of the questions they received focused on what they've learned as leaders and how they got where they are now.

“This has made me think back to the pivotal moments in my own career and what set my trajectory and my path,” she said.

Along with White, Roger McOmber and Chris Barrow, both of whom run their own investment firms, Sam Malouf, CEO of Malouf, and Dave Jenkins, CEO of Conservice, headlined the Leadership Summit.

Carlos Rodriguez, a student majoring in management information systems, attended the summit specifically because of his connection to Malouf. Rodriguez has been working at the company in an MIS position for some time now and said the experience has been great.

“Sam is a really a good businessman and just a really good guy, in general. He really cares about you as an individual and your progression not only within his company but within your own life. I definitely look up to him as a leader,” Rodriguez said.

Throughout the summit, the leaders touched on topics ranging from inspirations that have led them to their current positions to creating an environment within your workplace where people respect you but are also not afraid to confront you.

Brynn Mortensen, development coordinator at the Huntsman School of Business and main organizer behind the Focused Friday events, reflected that the key messages she took away from the summit were things that she hadn't expected to hear.

“I was honestly just excited because every week when I go to Focused Friday, I come out with a new perspective on life and feel more motivated,” Mortensen said, “At this summit, they kept talking about if you’re arrogant, you’re not going to make it. They also said to never be a ‘yes man’ and to strive to create an environment of candor. There are so many things that I got from this summit and I think it was well worth it.”

Mortensen, along with students involved in Partners of Business and other coordinators in the Huntsman school, had put everything together for the event, weeks in advance. According to feedback from attending students and faculty, this specific event was very inspirational and people felt lucky to be able to hear from such successful leaders.

“There are students who haven't heard of Focused Fridays and once they go to one, they come to every single one after that,” Mortensen said.

Mortensen said that this Leadership Summit is expected to bring in more students for future Focused Friday events.

“Rubbing shoulders and meeting these executives...these are the things that can lead to internships and then to jobs,” she said.