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## Job shadowing in Atlanta:

Read about a joint program created by Career Services, Development, and Alumni Affairs. Sixteen students will travel to Atlanta, shadow professional mentors, and bring their experience back to Western. Hear all about it on March 23 at 3PM in the UC Theater.

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## Event Calendar

Attend one or more of our career fairs to network, find a summer job or internship, or launch your career with a great company!

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## TIMELY AND UNIVERSAL ADVICE FOR JOB SEEKERS

*In this edition of the Career Journal, we bring you a well-written article from the Asheville Citizen-Times. In it, job seekers are directed to strategically target their searches, make the most out of networking opportunities and resources, and pay attention to the "little things." We in Career Services provide this advice to students every day. Applying this wisdom at Western Carolina, students can maximize their use of and benefit from career fairs, internships, job shadowing opportunities, résumé and cover letter assistance, and job-search support.*

## Asheville Job Seekers, Know Your Target, Say HR Experts

BY MARK BARRETT

Sending a simple thank-you note still helps. So does doing a little homework.

In a time when jobs can be scarce, researching a potential employer and coming across as someone who would be a good fit with co-workers might be the most important ways to get a leg up in a crowded field of applicants, area human resources professionals say.

But doing the little things like sending a thank-you note after a job interview still matters, the professionals say, and might matter even more when applicants are trying to set themselves apart from candidates with similar qualifications.

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# Career Services' Programs for Success

## Students and Alumni: Take advantage of the many services we offer!

### JobCat & Other Job Searching Services

Internet-based recruiting systems on our website that include jobs as well as opportunities to post a résumé and sign up for interviews.

### Career Counseling

If you have a career concern that you would like to discuss, call for an appointment with a career counselor.

### Career Testing

If you are having difficulty making a decision about a major or a career, we offer career testing and interpretation.

## Career Services INFORMATION

828-227-7133 | [careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu)

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### Cooperative Education

Co-op is a program that allows you to work in your career or major field and receive directly related experience and credit WHILE you are still in school.

### Résumé Critiquing Service

E-mail your résumé (cover letter, too!) to [mdespeaux@wcu.edu](mailto:mdespeaux@wcu.edu) or [mashe@wcu.edu](mailto:mashe@wcu.edu) and make an appointment to discuss it!

### Student Employment

Need some cash? The [student employment office](#) can help you find a part-time job. We offer listings for on-campus as well as off-campus employment. View them at [careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu).

### Career Services Website

Our website offers links, articles, event calendars, job search tools, directories, videos and DISCOVER, a computer-aided guidance program to help you in your career decision. Available at [careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu).

### Interviewing Skills Assistance

You can participate in a mock interview and improve your skills through our online [Perfect Interview program](#).

### Career Days and Recruitment Events

Career Services offers about 20 [recruitment events](#) every year, including the Career and Graduate School Expo; the Allied Health and Nurses' Career Day; Spring Job Fest; Summer Job Fair; Engineering, Math, and CS Fair; Construction Management Fair; Education Recruitment Day; and multiple etiquette-development events.

## ATTENTION PRIORITY ALERT

# WANTED

- Looking for a career mentor?
- Interested in becoming a mentor?
- Know someone who should be a mentor?

**Brought to you by WCU's Office of Alumni Affairs,  
Family Association, and Career Services.**

For more information regarding our 2010-2011 Career Mentor Program, please contact Mike Despeaux or Mardy Ashe in the office of Career Services.

# Seize Your Internship Opportunities

BY WHIT A. FRANCE-KELLY

It has been said that the true testament of a university is the caliber of student it produces.

Similarly, in the Disney movie, "The Newsies," newspaper salesmen chanted, "Open the gates and seize the day/Don't be afraid and don't delay/... Arise and seize the day." Besides attending classes, studying for tests, and preparing for projects and reports, you have opportunities to gain practical experiences in real-world settings and possibly get paid. These magical experiences are called internships.

With an increasingly competitive job market, companies are looking to hire individuals with educational knowledge and skills as well as practical experience. Internships not only make you more marketable after graduation, but also allow you to have deeper understanding of your major and possible career options available. These are great opportunities for you to stand out among other applicants and get your foot in the door. Connections made during these work experiences can help you land important and useful connections that can be used when job searching.

Besides gaining a great opportunity to perfect skills you have already obtained in class or through student organizations and leadership roles, internships allow you to polish the office communication skills of networking, public speaking, collaborating with peers, addressing everyday problems, and making valuable connections with colleagues. Using this time to also advance your knowledge of how offices work makes you a stronger student and future employee.

During your internship, you can also network with individuals in your desired field. It gives you the perfect environment to find a mentor. Mentors are great sources of information, with their personal stories of successes, professional connections, and ability to provide guidance as you progress along your career path. Allow them to assist you in your journey as you develop into a paraprofessional. These individuals also can serve as future references on job applications, so be aware that internships are doubly important and should not be treated lightly. Remember while working at your internship site to remain professional and treat it as you would a future, professional job.



If you are looking to "seize the day" and participate in an internship, there are many available options in your course of study. Your faculty and career counselors are two great resources available on campus to assist you in your search and in writing/editing your resume and cover letter. They are knowledgeable about internships opportunities and are willing to search with you!

Want to get on the career path?

USE JobCat

1. Log in to JobCat at [careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu).
2. Complete a personal profile.
3. Upload a résumé.
4. Submit your online application by the deadline.

JobCat is updated with new jobs almost every day, so check for updates regularly!

# ASHEVILLE JOB SEEKERS, KNOW YOUR TARGET, SAY HR EXPERTS, *Continued from cover*

BY MARK BARRETT

Hiring managers in Western North Carolina usually have plenty of qualified applicants, with unemployment in the Asheville metropolitan area at 8.1 percent in November and more than 10 percent in many more rural counties.

So, how can an applicant stand out? Here's what people involved in hiring decisions at several area employers said:

## CHOOSE YOUR TARGET

Sending a resume and cover letter to as many employers as possible might seem like covering all the bases. But HR experts say that is not as effective as identifying the specific jobs you are seeking and who might have some to fill and spending more time pursuing those.

The more the materials applicants send to an employer are targeted toward the specific company and a specific job or type of job, the better. A generic cover letter, for example, is not as likely to get a response as one that is tailored to a specific target.

"An employer would want to know this person is interested in this job for this reason, rather than just being interested in any job," said Scott McLean, hiring services manager at the Biltmore Co.

## KEYWORD SEARCH

Some employers use specialized software to scan resumes for keywords, noted Sharon Craig, district manager for staffing company Kelly Services.

Take a look at the advertisement for a position and be sure some of the key terms appear in your resume, she advises.

Employers are often looking more for evidence of specific skills and accomplishments rather than simply a list of jobs applicants have held, said Carol Rovello, president of local consulting firm Strategic Workplace Solutions.

## YOU CAN LOOK IT UP

Learning who is hiring is not enough, HR experts say. Job seekers need to spend some time before even applying, learning about a prospective employer: What they make or sell, changes they have made recently, what's going on at their competitors and what working there might be like.

The Internet, of course, is a good resource, as is the library and copies of the local newspaper.

Carol Nguyen, a human resources analyst with the city of Asheville, also advocates what she calls "informational interviewing."

She suggests contacting people in your field and asking to meet for a cup of coffee or have a short telephone conversation.

Job seekers can learn more about employers in a less pressurized situation and make contacts that can pay off later, she said.

"In a tight market, you have to be proactive and motivated," Nguyen said.

Research helps job seekers target jobs where they would be the best fit and demonstrate their level of interest to employers.

It also prepares them to both field and ask questions about a company during an interview.

"The employer's going to want to know the level of interest by an applicant, and one way to gauge that is the number of questions coming back" from the prospective employee, McLean said.

Keep in mind that employers can look up applicants, too.

Early on, job seekers should Google themselves and check their Facebook pages to see if there is any material that casts them in a bad light, Craig said.

## 'I'LL FIT IN'

There are bookshelves full of advice about how to handle a job interview. One idea local experts came back to repeatedly was to conduct yourself as if you would fit in well with your prospective employer.

That means demonstrating some confidence in yourself without becoming a braggart.

*Continued on page 5*





#### ASHEVILLE JOB SEEKERS, Continued from page 4

“By the time somebody gets in the door in the interview, they’ve already got the qualifications,” Nguyen said. “What we’re really looking for ... is seeing if that person fits the job, is going to fit the team.”

“It’s kind of a balance because you want to really demonstrate your confidence,” Rovello said. But people making hiring decisions “don’t want to see a big ego.”

It is natural in this job market for applicants to have low self-confidence and come across as desperate.

Job seekers should fight those feelings as best they can, HR experts said.

“You want someone who really wants to work at your company and to be a part of your organization ... instead of just, ‘Wow, I really need a job right now,’” Craig said.

Hiring managers look at people who are desperate for any job whatsoever as at risk for leaving once the economy improves, McLean said.

#### THE LITTLE THINGS

Using good spelling, penmanship and grammar on an application won’t get you a job, experts said, but it will keep you from having a disadvantage from the beginning.

They had similar advice about what to wear on the search or to an interview. Hiring managers do not expect applicants for jobs involving manual labor — or many other jobs, for that matter — to show up in a suit and tie, but, “as a default, certainly neat and clean wins the day,” McLean said.

Nguyen suggests wearing clothing to an interview that is about as dressy or casual as the supervisor for the job might wear.

Job seekers should ask about the hiring timeline and find out the appropriate way to check on their status at the end of an interview, experts said. The answers are good guidance for deciding how to follow up.

Generally, it’s best to check in as suggested by the interviewer. Too many repeated contacts after an interviewer can come across as badgering, Rovello said.

Each expert interviewed for this article said sending a thank-you note after an interview is a welcome touch — and a small advantage, since the majority of applicants don’t bother.

“It really sets folks apart. It tells me those folks are following up. They’ve got an eye for detail. They’re interested,” McLean said.

*This article ran Jan. 30 and is reprinted with permission from the Asheville Citizen-Times. [www.citizen-times.com/article/20110130/NEWS/301300057/Asheville-job-seekers-know-your-target-say-HR-experts](http://www.citizen-times.com/article/20110130/NEWS/301300057/Asheville-job-seekers-know-your-target-say-HR-experts)*

# Job Shadowing: An Opportunity and Strategy for Success

MICHAEL DESPEAUX

Want to learn more about a field or occupation? Career Services can help students research and access information by meeting with a career counselor and going to our website. We also strongly recommend that students take advantage of opportunities such as internships, co-ops and related service learning. In between, however, there is an important strategy that can reap huge benefits for proactive students – they can network, seek mentorship and meet professionals in their fields by job shadowing and informational interviews. Students can meet employers at career fairs well in advance of graduation. They can call a professional and ask him or her for perspective and advice about entering the field. Career Services can help students make these connections. Here's one example.

In an effort to build higher levels of interest and involvement by alumni and friends in the Atlanta area, the offices of Development, Alumni Affairs, and Career Services are partnering to offer a unique opportunity for students. A committee of WCU alumni met June 1 and recommended an alumni networking day when current WCU students would have the opportunity to shadow WCU alumni on the job. We planned this day to conclude with an alumni career panel

and then a dinner discussion hosted by the WCU Foundation. On March 10, we will hold a pilot program involving 15-18 students. A QEP committee grant designed to support the integration of learning and other outcomes is providing the cost of the students' transportation and participation.

To participate, students were nominated by a faculty member and will be selected by a committee. Students must have earned at least 30 hours of course credit prior to January so that they will be prepared to observe how classroom knowledge is applied in a real-world setting.

Students will be hosted at Kicks 101.5-FM, W. Paul Mason, Genuine Parts, EIS, Peachtree City Physical Therapy, Probation Services Inc., Coca-Cola, EIS, Ray Engineering, Conditioned Air Systems- Gainesville, Riverside Academy- Gainesville, Merrill Lynch, Horizon Theater, and Access Computers.

Come meet our participating students and hear about their experiences in the UC Theater at 3PM on March 23, and contact our office for help arranging your own shadowing opportunity!



# Career Services Offers Career Success Workshop Series

BY CHAZ GLENN, GRADUATE INTERN

The Career Success Workshop Series is a new initiative by Career Services to further educate students on what they need to know to prepare for the job market. The events will be held at 3 p.m. Mondays weekly throughout March and April in 121 McKee.

- March 7 . . . . . Career Development Resources
- March 14 . . . . . Major & Career Testing
- March 21 . . . . . Résumé & Cover Letters
- March 28 . . . . . Interviewing Skills & Preparation
- April 4 . . . . . Internships
- April 11 . . . . . Social Media & Career Development
- April 18 . . . . . Résumé & Cover Letter
- April 25 . . . . . Interviewing Skills & Preparation



Find us on  
**Facebook**

Facebook is a registered trademark of Facebook, Inc.



WCU Career Services has a Facebook page!

Become a fan, and we can send you updates on Career Services and Co-op Event happenings.

Find us online by searching keywords: "WCU Career Services" on Facebook.

## BECOME A PEER CAREER MENTOR



Want to build strong work experience while helping other students?

Want to work in a supportive environment and team?

Want to get paid for a major leadership opportunity?

Career Services and Cooperative Education is looking for peer career mentors for the 2011-12 academic year. Peer career mentors provide résumé advice, teach students how to use job search technology, give advice regarding career event opportunities, and serve as liaisons for Career Services. We are looking for highly motivated students with excellent communication and interpersonal skills to assist in promoting the importance of early and continuous career development.

► Applications and résumés are due to [mdespeaux@wcu.edu](mailto:mdespeaux@wcu.edu) by 5 p.m. Friday, March 11.  
Visit [www.wcu.edu/26695.asp](http://www.wcu.edu/26695.asp) or call 227.7133 to learn more about becoming a peer career mentor.

## BROADEN YOUR CAREER OPTIONS:

# Think Globally!

BY DR. NIALL MICHELSEN

The new international studies undergraduate degree requires that students also major in another discipline – any other discipline. This combination of a strong disciplinary focus with an interdisciplinary understanding of the global system, including a demonstrated competency in a foreign language, will serve to expand a graduate's marketability significantly. In today's world virtually every conceivable career will have important international dimensions. A recent survey of employers revealed that 67 percent of employers surveyed wanted colleges to place greater emphasis on global issues. A partial list of specific career opportunities can be found at [www.wcu.edu/28094.asp](http://www.wcu.edu/28094.asp). Clearly the BA in international studies will open up a world of potential career paths.



## 2011 Event Calendar

### March

- 9<sup>th</sup>** Teaching Opportunities for Non-Teaching Majors  
3:30-4:30 p.m., UC Catamount Room
- 15<sup>th</sup>** Summer Jobs and Internships Fair  
11 a.m.-2 p.m., Blue Ridge Multipurpose Room
- Etiquette Reception**  
5:30-7:30 p.m., UC Multipurpose Room – This event is intended to teach students proper networking at its best. Attire is business casual. If you are interested in participating, please visit Career Services or call 828.227.7133. \$
- 16<sup>th</sup>** Career Fair: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)  
11 a.m.-2 p.m., Blue Ridge Multipurpose Room
- 17<sup>th</sup>** Career Fair: Government, Nonprofit, Criminal Justice & Social Work  
1- 4 p.m., Blue Ridge Multipurpose Room
- 22<sup>th</sup>** Education Recruitment Day  
9 a.m.-12 p.m., Blue Ridge Multipurpose Room

### For all events

Business casual to professional attire is required for all events. Students and alumni are encouraged to bring several copies of their latest résumé. We also suggest uploading a résumé into JobCat. If you need assistance with developing a résumé, please visit [www.wcu.edu/6685.asp](http://www.wcu.edu/6685.asp) or schedule an appointment with a career counselor at 828.227.7133. Lists of attending organizations and details about career events will be available at [careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu) and on JobCat. Lists will be updated as registrations are received.

\$ = There will be a fee for this event; cash, check, CatCard/student meal plan accepted.



## CAREER RESOURCES: Job Choices Magazine

Are you looking for a quality magazine designed to help you learn more about your individual field of study? If so, we have the perfect gift for you. Job Choices 2011 is a series of publications by the National Association of Colleges and Employers that provides students with current job market hiring trends and is a great resource. The best part is, it's free! The Business & Liberal Arts and the Science, Engineering & Technology editions are both available for your reading pleasure. They are packed full of great informative articles that showcase how to create and edit your resume, improve interview skills, job search tactics, articulate a professional thank-you note, and find the right graduate school for your career path. Stop by the Career Services and Cooperative Education office and pick up your copy today!