

WC Career Journal

March 2006, Vol. 3 Issue. 5

Published by the Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education

CONGRATULATIONS!

Employers predict 14.5 percent increase in new college graduate hiring in 2006

By Eric Newsom

Career Services Graduate Assistant

Good news: employers are looking to hire more new graduates in 2006 than last year, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers. In the 2006 Job Outlook, NACE reported that 60 percent of

employers plan to hire 14.5 percent more new graduates than last year.

For the third year in a row, NACE reports that the job outlook seems positive for new graduates. More than nine out of 10 employers surveyed consider the current job market as good or excellent. Due to an upswing in the national economy

and an aging work force whose retirements continually create new openings, demand for college-educated employees is constantly increasing and employers expect it to continue.

Employers are seeking job candi-

See **HIRING**, page 3.



Students stand with an employer at the spring Corporate Career Expo. Career fairs, as well other Career Services programs, are available to alumni.

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By Eric Newsom

Career Services Graduate Assistant

Somewhere in the midst of today's festivities—the visiting families, the flipping of tassels, the handshakes and smiles, the celebratory bullhorns, the proud and triumphant march into life as a college graduate—one might have just a little time to pause and wonder, “Now that I've finished college...what next?”

For many, the conferring of a degree means the beginning of the job search. But today's graduates shouldn't feel as though they've been completely kicked out of the nest—the Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education is here to help them in their quest for gainful employment.

JobCAT is a portal to job-recruitment through the Career Services website (<http://careers.wcu.edu>) with listings of potential jobs, internships, and career event related job

interviews. Through the online system, students and alumni can upload their resumes and cover letters, search for and receive alerts on the availability of open positions from regional companies, and schedule interviews with employers that visit WCU at career fairs.

Career Services hosts a number of specific field-related fairs and events that bring regional and national employers to WCU for the purpose of spreading information about their companies and interviewing students as potential employees. Majors and fields represented at fairs range from criminal justice to education to business to construction management. A full schedule of career events can be found on the website at the beginning of each semester. Interviews may be scheduled with participating employ-

See **SERVICES**, page 3.

Career Services programs for success



Students and Alumni: take advantage of our many services offered.

- ✓ **JobCat and MonsterTRAK** are internet - based recruiting systems on our website that include jobs as well as opportunities to post a resume 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
- ✓ **Cooperative Education** - Co-op is a program that allows you to work in your career / major field and receive directly related experience and credit WHILE you are still in school
- ✓ **Career Days and Recruitment Events** - Career Services offers 10-12 recruitment events every year including Career and Graduate School Expo, Allied Health and Nurses' Career Day, Spring Job Fest, Summer Job Fair, Creative Professions Career Day, Education Recruitment Day and multiple etiquette development events
- ✓ **Resume Critiquing Service** - Drop off your resume (cover letter too!) and it will be ready (suggestions and all) in 48 hours.
- ✓ **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. See them at <http://careers.wcu.edu>
- ✓ **Career Library** - Our Career Library offers books, directories, and videos to aid in your career decision, including DISCOVER, a computer-aided guidance program. Also available at <http://careers.wcu.edu>
- ✓ **Interviewing Skills Assistance** - You can participate in a mock interview and improve your interview skills.

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The Career Journal is a publication of the Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education at Western Carolina University.

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Want to get on the career path?

Use JobCat.

1. Log into JobCat at careers.wcu.edu
2. Complete a personal profile
3. Upload a resume
4. Submit your online application by the deadline.

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

Career Services / Cooperative Education



Hiring

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dates with communications skills, integrity, teamwork skills, strong work ethics, analytical skills and adaptability, according to the survey. Good communication as evident in job interviews and an overall sense of professionalism might set a potential employee ahead of the pack, as employers say that these are qualities often lacking in fresh graduates.

Employers also advise that potential employees do three things to help themselves:

1. Research the company. This shows potential bosses that you've taken initiative to find out more about the job you'll be doing. Use the Internet, business publications, and the Career Services office to find information about the company, what it does or produces, what department you'd like to work in, and any other information that might come in handy during the interview. This step is often neglected by job candidates who come in with little knowledge of the company they want to work for, so a little re-

search could mean taking the lead over another applicant.

2. Get work experience. If you've never done an internship or co-op to this point, now might be the time to seek a paid intern position where you can gain hands-on experience. Not only will this look good on a resume, it will also help you determine whether you can be happy in the career you've chosen.

3. Be prepared for interviews. Use mock and virtual interviews through Career Services to familiarize yourself with the job interview format. Be able to discuss your career objectives, and have a list of questions to ask the interviewer about the company and position. Dress appropriately, arrive on time or earlier, and above all, be confident in yourself.

Even more good news for 2006 grads comes later in the NACE report: 88 percent of employers are seeing increased competition for new college graduates and plan to increase their starting salary to combat their competition.

More information is available from NACE at their website: www.naceweb.org.

Employers rate the importance of 2006 graduate qualities/skills

Communication skills	4.7
Honesty/integrity	4.7
Teamwork skills	4.6
Strong work ethic	4.5
Analytical skills	4.4
Flexibility/adaptability	4.4
Interpersonal skills	4.4
Motivation/initiative	4.4
Computer skills	4.3
Detail-orientation	4.1
Organizational skills	4.1
Leadership skills	4.0
Self-confidence	4.0
Manners/politeness	3.9
Friendliness	3.8
Tactfulness	3.8
Creativity	3.6
GPA (3.0 or better)	3.5
Entrepreneurial skills	3.2
Sense of humor	3.2

(Ratings are based on a 5-point scale where 1 = Not Important at All, and 5 = Extremely Important.)

Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers

Services

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ers through JobCAT.

The career library, located in our office on the second floor of the Killian Annex, houses a number of current and relevant books, periodicals and other publications related to job searches, career trends, government jobs, directories of employers, graduate schools, and major-specific info.

Career Services offers help in fixing up resumes through a critique program. Counselors are available for consultation in person or through e-mail, and resumes dropped off in the box in

our office are usually returned with comments, corrections and suggestions within 24 hours. With help from a counselor, students and alumni can turn lackluster resumes into successful selling points that help secure jobs.

Those preparing for an interview should keep in mind two programs offered by Career Services. The Perfect Interview is a computer program that allows participants to take a virtual job interview. A video interviewer draws from a pool of 700 questions to simulate a realistic entry-level job interview. Users are provided with options that allow them to view examples of how best to answer, a coach that explains sub-

texts for each question and discusses what factors should be in the user's answer, and, in the end, the user records their answer via a digital video camera to see how well they did at communicating their response to their virtual potential employer.

Counselors are also available for mock interviews where they can provide firsthand commentary on the quality of responses, and provide advice and support for those who are about to go through the real thing.

So march proudly today, WCU graduates of 2006. And tomorrow, when the reality of finding a job sets in, give Career Services a call. (828)227-7133.

