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Become a Peer mentor

Throughout the fall and spring semesters, Peer Career Mentors can be found all around campus at their Mobile Mentor Station. *Continued on page 3*

Peer Mentoring

The Peer Mentoring program is in its fourth year at Western Carolina. However, if you have attended classes here for even one semester, chances are that you have benefitted from a peer-mentoring program.

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Career Fairs

The greatest benefit of attending a Career Fair is to connect. *Continued on page 5*

Make the Most of LinkedIn

"Top Reasons to Link into LinkedIn," listed key benefits to having an account on the professional networking site. *Continued on page 6*

The Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education is a unit of the Office for Undergraduate Studies, "A Pathway to Intentional Learning for Undergraduate Students at Western Carolina University"



Student Employee of the Year Winner Named

BY CARRIE HACHADURIAN

Merab Mushfiq, a sophomore biology major from Lahore, Pakistan, and winner of the third annual Student Employee of the Year competition, wears many hats in the Writing and Learning Commons. She first became an academic skills consultant last spring before becoming the first-ever international student consultant in the center, and then later a chemistry tutor. It's during her time at the WaLC that she realized a need for peer-to-peer interaction, especially among the international student population.

"Being an international student, I realized some of the hurdles that international students face and proposed a support model implementation at the WaLC to help other incoming international students," she said. The initiative helps Western become a more diverse and global university.

With more than 120 student workers, Chesney Reich, director of the Writing and Learning Commons, said she would be hard-pressed to find another student tutor who is as dedicated to the success of other students.

"When I interviewed Merab, I was struck by her desire to serve as a role model to her fellow students. When she started classes at Western, she knew limited English and even less about the American University system; and yet, she excelled as a student. She is passionate about sharing her experience with other students and helping them navigate the rigors of college life," Reich said.

The Student Employee of the Year program, which serves to highlight the outstanding contributions student employees make to the university, is an annual competition. The award

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Looking For More Advice?



Previous issues of Career Journal can be found at our online archive. More advice and resources are just a click away.

WCU Career Journal

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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 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.

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 or 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.

Career Services Website

Our website offers links, articles, event calendars, job search tools, directories, videos and FOCUS-2, a computer-aided guidance program to help you in your career decision. Available at 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 [multiple recruitment events](#) every year, including Fall WCU Career Fair & Grad School Day, Health Services Career Fair, Etiquette Dinners, Summer Jobs and Internships Fair, WCU Career Fair, Etiquette Reception, & Education Recruitment Day.



Become a Peer Career Mentor

"I wanted to be a Peer Career Mentor to learn all of the [career building] skills and be able to pay it forward to fellow students. The skills taught are invaluable for any career in life and extend far beyond the classroom, and being able to teach someone else these things is a great honor."

[–Kyrle Carlson, *Peer Career Mentor*, 2010-12]

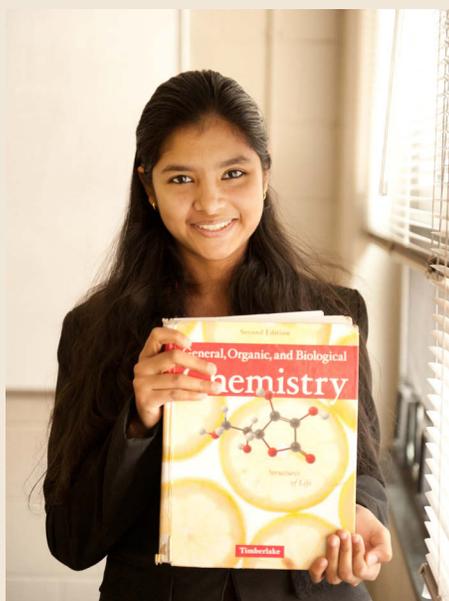
It's that time of year again! Right now the Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education is calling all campus and academic student leaders to apply to become a Peer Career Mentor for the 2014-15 academic year.

Throughout the fall and spring semesters, Peer Career Mentors can be found all around campus at their Mobile Mentor Station. Here, the mentors provide résumé advice, assistance with job search technology, and assistance with career exploration to students on a

peer-to-peer level. To prepare for the position as a career consultant, mentors are trained to present on a variety of career development topics, assist with student outreach, and promote the importance of early and continuous career planning and preparation.

How to Apply

- Complete the application found on the Career Services website
 - o On the Career Services' Homepage, look on the purple side bar to the left of the screen. Click on "Career Mentors". The application will be found on that page.
- Email a completed application with a current copy of your résumé to Colleen Davis at ckdavis@email.wcu.edu



Student Employee of the Year Winner Named CONTINUED FROM COVER

is \$500 and an engraved plaque presented at the winner's college award ceremony. The winner is also entered into the Southern Association of Student Employee Administrators regional competition, where the winner will receive additional cash prizes and will move on to the national level.

This year, 10 students, both in the Work Study and Non-Work Study programs, were nominated by their supervisors, representing the top one percent of WCU student employees. Among the nominated are Emily

College; Andrew Jensen, a guide for Base Camp Cullowhee; Emily Fleming, an office assistant with the Social Work department; Josh Jones, an office assistant with the College of Arts and Sciences; Kathryn Beaver, a recreation assistant at the Campus Recreation Center; Kayla Shipman, a student technology assistant at the Technology Commons; Sarah Cole, a program assistant with Education Outreach; Tisha Carver, a library assistant in Hunter Library; and Victoria Center, a student worker in the Office of the Provost.

Peer Mentoring: A Resource for Academic and Career Development

BY SARAH ALSPA W

By now, you have heard or read about our Peer Career Mentors. This program is in its fourth year at Western Carolina. However, if you have attended classes here for even one semester, chances are that you have benefitted from a peer-mentoring program. In Residential Living, among student tour guides, and including Orientation leaders, you can find motivated students who are here to help their peers transition and succeed. More and more peer-mentoring programs are springing up around campus, with several departments sharing with students the responsibility of helping out their fellow students in many different ways. The Writing and Learning Commons (WaLC) and the Academic Success Program (ASP) are two programs on campus that give students the opportunity to become mentors to their peers. While the Peer Career Mentors are helping you with career development, you may also have the chance to benefit academically through programs such as these.

Chesney Reich, the director of WaLC, explains her observations of the effect of student mentoring. Her many student employees serve as mentors in different capacities, including tutors, academic skills consultants, writing tutors, and writing fellows. She feels that student mentors have more credibility because they have succeeded in classes in which other students are struggling, making it easier to identify with them. The mentors can say,

“I have been in that class” or “I’ve also struggled with time management.” Students also seem to feel more comfortable talking to someone closer to their age. The mentor serves as a liaison between the student and the staff in WaLC, referring students to a professional if their situation is becoming too challenging. The tutor also can act as a springboard for students having difficulty, encouraging them to meet with their instructor if they are having real problems in the class. Michael McLamb, a senior majoring in finance and management with a minor in leadership and a tutor in WaLC, states, “Students gain confidence by working with a peer.” Tutors also can supplement classroom and office hours by offering help outside of the normal 9 to 5. McLamb says, “Professors are only available for a limited amount of time to help students. Coming to me in the WaLC gives them the ability to schedule appointments that better fit their needs.”

I also spoke to Janina DeHart, the program coordinator for the Academic Success Program. This program is designed to help conditionally admitted students succeed. They begin with a six-week summer program. If the students are successful, they can enroll in the fall. They also are given support through their first year at the university. Peer mentors guide between seven and 10 students apiece, for whom they help facilitate orientation, as well as maintain contact with them over the

summer and throughout the school year. If a student successfully passes his or her first year of college, he or she then becomes a mentor for the next class of students. Krysta Sexton, a junior majoring in entrepreneurship and a mentor in the ASP program, states, “Mentors assist students by providing information and guidance throughout their first year. The mentors and students are engaged through meetings and the Lead 141 class the students take.”

DeHart believes that students relate more easily with a peer. The mentor is a role model who has gone through the program and been successful, which sets a great positive example for the students. These students find it a lot easier to discuss personal topics with their mentors as well, if they are struggling socially or emotionally. Krysta Sexton also has noticed this, stating, “The ASP students are being rewarded more with working with an experienced student because the mentors can share their own experience and knowledge to help the students adjust to college.”

Peer mentoring can provide academic, personal, leadership and other kinds of assistance and support. To be successful in college and in your career, you should take advantage of this resource. Peer Career Mentors stand by to help you achieve your career goals. When students help students, more students succeed!

Amelia Holmes awarded 2014 Student Intern of the Year



The office of Career Services has been presenting the Student Intern of the Year Award for 30 years! In 1984 the award was created by a local CPA firm wanting to recognize excellence in experiential education and performance. The 2014 winner is Amelia Holmes.

Holmes graduated this past December with a degree in English and Studio Art. Last summer she interned with Hunter Library’s Special Collections Department. Here is what her supervisor, George Frizzell, said about her work performance:

“Amelia brings the perspective that will lead to a great career in a special collections department, if she so chooses. She recognizes the importance of various disciplines to appreciate our cultural and

historical heritage – history, English, the arts, crafts. She not only recognizes the multi-faceted nature of collecting the past and present now in order to make it accessible to the future, she also knows that new technologies will allow us to make it more accessible. I have no doubt that in coming years we will all be proud to say we knew her when her career began – in whatever field she chooses.”

This fall, Amelia will enter UNC – Chapel Hill’s School of Information and Library Science. She will be working as a Carolina Academic Library Associate in Special Collections Technical Services. She believes that she received this opportunity at least in part as a result of her internship experience.

Given each year by the Career Services Office, the WCU Student Intern of the Year Award consists of an engraved WCU wall plaque and \$500. Congratulations to our 2014 winner, Amelia Holmes!



Career Fairs: Opportunities to Make Advantageous Connections

BY COLLEEN DAVIS

The greatest benefit of attending a Career Fair is to connect. As Career Fairs place attendants in a room filled with numerous companies and organizations, these events provide an opportunity to efficiently explore the market through the conversations shared with company representatives and fellow attendants. Fortunately, WCU Career Services hosted three Career Fairs recently where students from all majors could connect with company representatives and gain useful information while pursuing a career.

Efficiently Explore Multiple Organizations

The Summer Jobs and Internships Fair, Spring Career Day, and the Education Recruitment Day bring numerous employers to Western's campus. Having a variety of employers together in one room lets attendants efficiently consider their possibilities with different companies. After speaking with a representative from one organization, a student only needs to walk a step further to have an equally enlightening conversation with a representative from another company. At a Career Fair, one has the potential to successfully accumulate resources more efficiently than through online queries or traveling to each company individually.

Practice Professional Communication

Having a conversation with a representative at a Career Fair will help anyone develop professionally. If nothing else, meeting with others in this setting can improve one's professional demeanor. With a single conversation, one can gain confidence in their professional communication and grow to be comfortable in a professional setting. After interacting with others in a career fair, the experience of dressing in business professional attire and engaging in "small-talk" is less intimidating or awkward, and this familiarity will be beneficial in the future event of an interview or meeting.

Learn About New Opportunities

An attendant can also learn more about how to proceed with their career path by learning about positions that a company offers or gathering advice from someone who currently has that job. After sharing your goals and interests, and learning about what companies and their representatives have to offer, one may become aware of either a new career path or additional opportunities that could bring them great satisfaction. After having these purposeful conversations with company representatives, attendants can follow up with their new contacts and expand their network.

Connect with Your Peers

The whole point of a career fair is to interact –to speak with others and exchange information. In addition to company representatives, fellow attendants can also provide meaningful information. A fellow job seeker could mention internships or volunteer experiences that they found useful or could point you in the direction of booths that might appeal to your objectives.

Affirm Your Career Goals

Speaking with others about material pertaining to a specific field or career aspiration is most beneficial as it provides momentum. After Career Fair participants have spoken about their goals and considered their position with different organizations, they have affirmed their career objective, thought critically about the various avenues they could pursue, and made connections with people who currently work in their field of choice or who aspire to work in a similar field. After using these events to expand their networks, and then later taking care to nurture those connections, students can gain valuable advice, opportunity notifications, and hopefully, a position.

How the WCU Community Can Make the Most of LinkedIn

BY COLLEEN DAVIS

In the June 2012 issue of Career Journal, the article, "Top Reasons to Link into LinkedIn," listed key benefits to having an account on the professional networking site. Yes, LinkedIn allows members to market themselves. However, the website also offers additional outlets that the WCU community may use to increase their forum participation in posts and discussions. By taking advantage of these opportunities to further engage in professional discussions, WCU students and alumni can take full advantage of LinkedIn's ability to give a person the confidence and tools they will need in their future job search.

Link JobCat with your LinkedIn Account

Students are most familiar with JobCat as a website to find employment on campus. Although the website features all the on-campus and local jobs posted by our student employment office, it also helps its members find jobs nationwide, and even internationally.

Once you have set up both your JobCat and LinkedIn accounts, you can sync those two accounts. Combining these two accounts becomes most beneficial when one finds a job on JobCat with a company that they are not familiar with. If that company has also posted the position on its LinkedIn website, one can learn more about the position and the company by visiting it.

How to Link your LinkedIn and Job Cat Accounts:

1. Log into JobCat
2. Place the mouse cursor over the "Profile" tab at the top of the JobCat page
3. Click on "LinkedIn Connection"
4. Follow the provided instructions to sync the JobCat and LinkedIn accounts.

Join the WCU Alumni Group

Out of the millions who have LinkedIn accounts, 3,968 (and growing!) of them know what it is like to live as a student in Cullowhee and don the purple and gold. All who have graduated or are even currently enrolled at Western should join this group because it instantly puts you in touch with a large group of people who can already identify, and somewhat relate to, your similar educational background. Also, Western's Career Services posts announcements about Job Fairs and networking events as well.

Join the LinkedIn Students and Recent Grads Group

Students need to spend time observing the job climate and begin searching for positions that might appeal to them once they graduate. Doing this research on LinkedIn is beneficial because one has more tools to research that position instead of simply identifying the job requirements.

By researching a position on LinkedIn, one can find others who currently have that job, and contact them to ask for advice related to that field. Having direct access to the résumés of those people is also beneficial because then you can get an idea of experiences or connections that enabled them to land that position. A job searcher may also investigate the company that is offering the position, and learn about their mission and culture.

The LinkedIn Students and Recent Grads group has a discussion board that will enable you to engage in conversation with professionals and other members in your position about professional topics like how to further develop your personal brand or the roles that your major may position you to fill in any career. In addition to the discussions that are continually being started, one can find job postings in the "Jobs" tab where members post openings.

The Coffee Mug



To give the gift of warmth, our Peer Career Mentors are giving away Career Services coffee mugs! A few mugs have been won so far this semester by lucky students, faculty, and staff who visited the Mobile Mentor Station, but there are more left to be won!

Want to win a free mug? Here's how:

1. Visit a Peer Career Mentor at the Career Service's Mobile Mentor Station.
2. Take a photo posing with a Career Services mug or props provided at the table.
3. Leave your name and contact information with a Peer Career Mentor.
4. Like Career Services on Facebook and tag your photo.

Drawings will happen once every three weeks. Selected winners will be contacted via the email address they provide. We hope to see you out there this semester!

Report Showcases Importance of Preparing for Careers During College

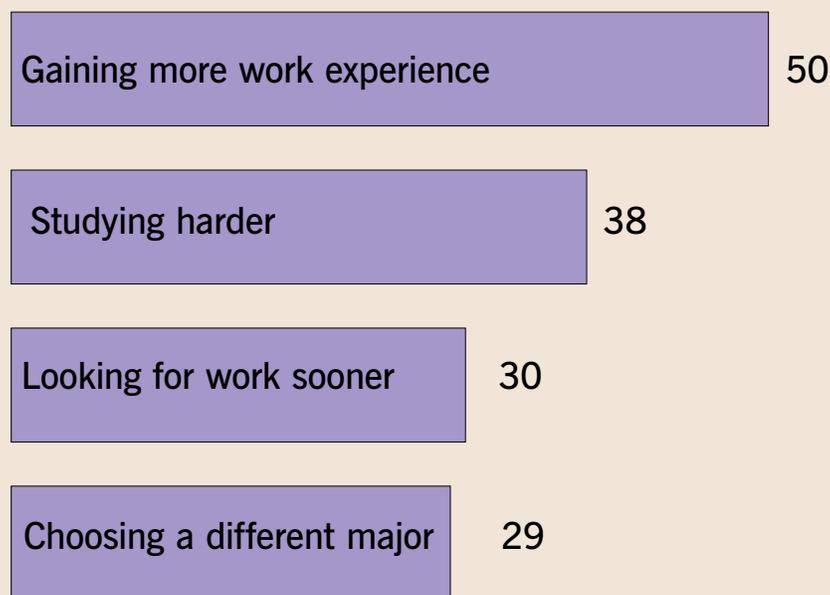
The Pew Research Center just published some enlightening data on “The Rising Costs of NOT Going to College.” Please read this report to see what outcomes and efforts might deserve more of our energy:

www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2014/02/SDT-higher-education-FINAL-02-11-2014.pdf

Here is one table from the report, underscoring the importance of all things experiential (internships, co-ops, service learning, and Catamount Externships):

College Days, Reconsidered

% who say doing each of the following while they were undergraduates would have better prepared them to get the job they wanted



Note: Based on those with at least bachelor's degree (n=790). Voluntary responses of “Maybe” not included. PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Career Services Hosted these Spring 2014 Career Events!

Spring Etiquette Dinner

Tuesday, Feb. 18
UC Grandroom, 6-8pm
https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf_details?fhnd=6288

Summer Jobs and Internships Fair

Tuesday, Mar. 18
UC Grandroom, 1-4pm
To find a list of employers who registered, click on “Student Details” for this event under the “Related Information” section.
<http://www.wcu.edu/academics/campus-academic-resources/career-services-and-cooperative-education/>

Etiquette Reception & How to Network

Tuesday, Mar. 18
Ramsey Center Hospitality Room
https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf_details?fhnd=6289

WCU Spring Career Fair

Wednesday, Mar. 19
UC Grandroom, 10-4pm
Please visit the following website for a list of registered employers who attended.
https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf_details?fhnd=6290

Education Recruitment Day

Tuesday, Mar. 25
UC Grandroom, 4-6pm
To find a list of employers who registered, click on “Student Details” for this event under the “Related Information” section.
<http://www.wcu.edu/academics/campus-academic-resources/career-services-and-cooperative-education/>

Conversation Starters for Networking Events

Career Services hosted an Etiquette Reception on Tuesday, March 18th to prepare students for interviews conducted in a reception-type atmosphere. As receptions are opportunities for a person to expand their network, it is important to be able to start a conversation. Here is a typical introduction; practice your own!

Adapted from “Thirty Brilliant Networking Conversation Starters” published September 4, 2013

TheDailyMuse.com

“Hi, I don’t know too many people here, so I wanted to introduce myself. I’m [name] and I work at [company].”

“What a beautiful venue. Have you been here before?”

“As we’re both over here at the (buffet, bar, waiting room), I feel I should introduce myself. I’m [name] from [company].”

“How’s your day going?”

“Any chance you read the news about WCU today? I missed it, and I’m wondering what’s happening with [insert news topic here].”

Compliment others on their clothes and accessories.

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 2014-2015 Career Mentor Program,
please contact [Mike Despeaux](#) or [Mardy Ashe](#) in the Office of Career Services.



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.

Want to get on the career path?

USE **JobCat**

1. Log in to JobCat at 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!

The Career Services office is currently offering the following presentations for any student organization on campus, free of charge, to help develop the students professionally.

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE

Learn to identify the context in which business casual or business professional is required. Guidelines for men and women are both featured.

JOB SEARCHING

Explore job search resources available at Career Services while briefly reviewing how to write resumes and cover letters.

RÉSUMÉ & COVER LETTER WORKSHOP

Methods of how to craft a resume based upon the needs of the audience:

- Creating your first resume, and how to use it later as a repository for future activities
- Modifying a pre-existing resume to focus on strategy and answering more job-specific questions

NETWORKING AT EVENTS AND THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Learn how to professionally and methodically grow a beneficial network by finding networking arenas, pursuing contacts and maintaining correspondence.

INTERVIEW SKILLS & PREPARATION

Provide students with a space to prepare and practice for an interview. The Perfect Interview program will be demonstrated as a resource.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES AT WCU

This presentation describes the ideal chronological progression of career development for students while providing an overview of services within our office. Actual resources will be described or demonstrated, including career counseling, FOCUS 2, resume assistance, job search tools like JobCat, and Perfect Interview.

If you are interested in booking a presentation for your student organization, please contact Career Services at careers.wcu.edu at least two weeks prior to the potential date of the event.