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Briton Bennet Named Co-op/Intern Student of the Year

Bennet, a senior professional writing major, wins the 2012 award following an internship with the WCU Office for Public Relations.

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Sofia Lilly Named First Student Employee of the Year

Lilly, a senior English and biology double major, claims inaugural honor for her work as a chemistry tutor and WaLC ambassador.

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Jobcat: A User's Guide

Jobcat is a tool designed for WCU students to allow them to search for positions available nationwide. Combining your Jobcat and LinkedIn accounts will produce 50,000+ job postings.

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The Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education is a unit of the Office for Undergraduate Studies



TAKING ADVANTAGE OF A MISSED OPPORTUNITY: Contacting Past Career Fair Recruiters

BY SARAH ALSPA W

Didn't get a chance to make it to one of our career fairs this academic school year? Well, it is not too late to take advantage of that missed opportunity. All of the employers who have attended or were scheduled to attend this academic school year's career fairs are still listed on Jobcat. The website wcu.edu/6678.asp will lead you to a list of career fairs and etiquette events sponsored by our office this academic year. Just select the career fair that you'd like to search, and then click the link on the top of the page marked "registered organizations." This will produce a list of all the employers who were scheduled to attend the events, and when you click on a specific company, you will be given information about that organization and a website.

Remember, all of these organizations were actively pursuing Western Carolina University students and graduates, and they all had positions available that they were seeking to fill. If these organizations have not filled these positions, they may still be looking for qualified applicants like you! Don't hesitate to call and inquire!

Once you have gathered the contact information from their website, it is time to call the organization. "Hello, my name is ___ and I am a student at Western Carolina University. I understand that your organization attended the ___ career fair in an attempt to recruit students for positions with your company. I am calling to inquire if you have filled those positions, and, if not, I would like to get some information about how to apply." This is a good way to explain your intention as well as open the lines of communication between you and the company.

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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.edu/6663.asp

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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 DISCOVER, 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.

Peer Career Mentors for the 2012-2013 Academic Year Introduced

BY SARAH ALSPA W

Career Services and Cooperative Education would like to welcome the newest batch of peer career mentors, or PCMs. Our PCMs will work closely with their peers in a mentorship capacity to provide guidance and a positive example of professionalism.

Keep an eye out for these students. They can be seen staffing a traveling table with a bright yellow tablecloth, wearing purple polos with "Peer Career Mentor" printed across the back, and displaying welcoming smiles. These students will undergo training that will teach them the intricacies of résumé and cover letter writing, on-campus job searches, internships, co-ops, job search techniques, and career development resources. They will then take that knowledge and distribute it to greater campus community. The mobile mentor station travels to various academic buildings around campus as well as the Courtyard, UC, CRC, Hunter Library, and other high-traffic areas on campus. Our staff is more than happy to help anyone who stops by their table, and they even have information for faculty and staff members.

Our PCMs also give presentations to residence halls, registered student organizations, and other student groups around campus. If you would like our peers and graduate assistant to come speak with your student organization, fraternity or sorority, or residence hall, please call the graduate assistant at 828.227.7133.

Please stop by and ask our student staff members any question you may have. We are excited to begin a new year with our new batch of student employees.

**The peer career mentors can be
found around campus, Monday
through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Our dates and locations are posted at careers.wcu.edu, with dates and locations updated in August and January every year.

Meet the Mentors



Elizabeth Biele



Jerry Goodnight



Joe Gramley



Danielle Lacriox



Kelsea Martin



Sarah Stokes



Sandra Yankah



Briton Bennett Named 2012 “Co-op/Intern Student of the Year”

BY MARDY ASHE, DIRECTOR OF CAREER SERVICES

Each year, Career Services presents the Co-op/Intern Student of the Year Award to a deserving student. This award was established in 1984 through a local CPA firm looking to recognize excellent student performance in an internship or a co-op. The purpose of an internship/co-op is to gain experience in one’s major before graduating and hopefully find a career path to pursue. This year, eight students were nominated by their internship employers, and six made it to the final round. Each student was judged on the following four items:

- Exemplary work performance
- Contributions to the employer
- Student’s professional development
- Student’s personal growth

“Briton is an example of student employment gone right,” said Ingram. “His work habits were efficient, organized, diligent, and industrious.”

— Jill Ingram

The 2012 winner is senior professional writing major Briton Bennett, who interned in the fall semester 2011 with the WCU Office for Public Relations. Writer and editor Jill Ingram supervised Bennett and had good things to say about the experience. “Briton is an example of student employment gone right,” said Ingram. “His work habits were efficient, organized, diligent, and industrious. Briton effectively and professionally communicated with other public relations staff members ... and was professional in his communications with others from the campus community. Our office members not only benefited from Briton’s productivity, energy, and fresh insights, but we also truly enjoyed getting to know Briton and watching him develop as a student and young man.”

Briton also was very positive about his experience. Not knowing what he wanted to do with his major, he recognized this as an opportunity to “hone my skills and prepare for a career.” Through dedication, hard work, determination, and several contributions to various publications, Briton had found a source of passion through journalism.

The Co-op/Intern Student of the Year Award winner receives an engraved WCU wall plaque and \$500. Congratulations to the 2012 winner, Briton Bennett!



Top Reasons to Link into LinkedIn

BY SARAH ALSPA W

1. There are apps available on LinkedIn that allow you to upload presentations, creative multimedia projects, portfolios, or other items that will allow future employers to see your work firsthand. Make sure any document or presentation that you upload has been thoroughly proofread and is a polished final copy.
 - a. Events will provide you with events other people in your industry are attending including professional development workshops and networking events.
 - b. SlideShare will allow you to upload class projects or research presentations onto your LinkedIn page.
 - c. Reading List by Amazon allows you to search for books other people in your industry are reading.
 - d. Portfolio display allows for you to showcase multimedia presentations.
2. Articles appearing on your site can be specialized for the types of industries or topics in which you are interested, providing you with a constant source of new information.
3. Share stories on your status updates to share with your professional contacts. For example, you can say "I am currently searching for a summer internship. Would anyone have any suggestions to begin my search?" or "I am looking for a professional conference to attend in North Carolina in the Higher Education Industry, does anyone have any suggestions?" or "I am attending the NCCPA conference next month, will any of you be attending?"
4. You can go to a specific company's page and see if any of your contacts work there or know anyone who works there. If you do know someone who knows someone, your contact can introduce or recommend you to their contact at that company to create a connection.
5. Companies post jobs, news, and links, so if you are looking for a job at a specific company, this is a great place to start your research.
6. Optimize your URL to increase the chance that your profile will land higher on a Google search. Future employers may – and probably will – Google, Yahoo, or Bing your name to see what comes up. More than likely your Facebook will be the first result, so make sure you keep it clean and free of distracting or unprofessional photos, statuses, or events. LinkedIn will be one of the higher websites shown, giving your employer the chance to look at your professional page over one of your unprofessional or social pages.
7. You can join groups related to your industry, sometimes even if you are not a part of the professional organization. There are hundreds of groups designed specifically for your industry, and by exploring those sites, you can find out what types of trends people in the industry are facing, meet other professionals, or even see job postings.
8. Add any professional contact that you meet at professional conferences or social networking events. Unlike Facebook, LinkedIn gives you the opportunity to connect with these people on a more professional level.
9. Research someone who currently holds your dream job. See what experience and skills that that person has and try to replicate it. This will give you some insight as to the steps that you need to take to eventually end up in your dream job.
10. You can upload your résumé, and it will fill in your profile in for you.
11. You can add your coursework to give employers a clearer picture as to what academic preparation you have achieved.
12. If you are applying for a job, you can see a list of everyone who has searched for your profile. If one of the people who interviewed you has looked at your profile, you know you are in a good running for that position.
13. Combining your LinkedIn account with your WCU Jobcat account will produce more than 50,000 available positions.
14. The service is free.

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!



Sofia Lilly named First Student Employee of the Year

BY JESSICA ROSS

Sofia Lilly has been named WCU's first Student Employee of the Year. Lilly, a senior English and biology double major from Tryon, has worked as a chemistry tutor in the Writing and Learning Commons (WaLC) since June 2010 and as a WaLC ambassador since January 2011.

Under the direction of WaLC director Chesney Reich, Lilly conducts group tutoring sessions, promotes the WaLC and its services, regularly communicates with faculty and staff, and assists in the training of new tutors. "[Sofia] is more than an employee; in fact, she is more than a tutor," said Reich. "No matter what role she is playing in any given moment – whether student, peer, tutor,

“Sofia is the epitome of what we hope to see in all of our students: a self-actualized, dedicated learner whose professional identity is quickly emerging as one that any employer would be lucky to have.”

— Chesney Reich

or employee – Sofia is always advocating for the best interest of students. ... Sofia is the epitome of what we hope to see in all of our students: a self-actualized, dedicated learner whose professional identity is quickly emerging as one that any employer would be lucky to have.”

Reflecting on her student employment experience, Lilly writes, “Through tutoring and tutor training class, I have come to understand who I am as a student, employee, and person. ... What I thought was just going to be a job turned out being the next stepping-stone in my life.” After she graduates this month, Lilly will attend graduate school and pursue a career in surgical oncology.

The Student Employee of the Year program will be an annual competition. The award is \$500, an engraved plaque presented at the winner's college award ceremony, and a feature in the Career Journal. For more information about the program, visit the website wcu.edu/30035.asp or contact Jessica Ross at 828.227.3888 or jcross@wcu.edu.

Jessica Ross is the Career Services non-work-study student employment specialist.

Jobcat: A User's Guide

BY SARAH ALSPA W

JobCat is an Internet-based recruiting system that acts as the primary resource for jobs and internships, on-campus recruiting events and other career-related events and information. It gives WCU students the ability to:

- Display resumes and cover letters online
- Search for summer, part-time or temporary jobs; internships; and/or full-time employment
- Have a resume distributed to interested employers
- Schedule interviews with companies recruiting on campus

If users combine LinkedIn with a Jobcat account, 50,000 or more positions become available. Like most search websites, there is an option of limiting search parameters to produce specific types of jobs in specific areas and in specific fields.

Not only does Jobcat allow for job searching, but it allows students to search for internship and co-op opportunities as well. When you limit the search parameters to only internships, there are hundreds of results, many of them posted specifically by WCU.

You can upload resumes and cover letters or add other documents to create an electronic portfolio to use to apply for jobs listed on Jobcat.

One advantageous feature allows users to limit searches to only the jobs that Career Services has posted. This allows users to see only the employers who are specifically looking for WCU graduates. These employers understand the quality education that WCU provides and are looking for students from all majors in addition to specific programs. Many of these employers are WCU alumni, so an instant connection can be made between them and an applicant.

Jobcat is unlike any other online job-search database because the employers listed on our site have taken the time to specifically seek out graduates and students from Western Carolina University. Take advantage of this resource by starting an account and uploading a resume today.



Find us on
Facebook

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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 at www.facebook.com/WCUCareerServices.



Contacting Past Career Fair Recruiters *continued from cover*

Make sure that you introduce yourself and explain that you are a student at WCU, and mention which career fair they attended. Practice exactly what you are going to say to feel more prepared and to come across as confident and collected to the employer.

From there, if they are interested, they may request a copy of your résumé, references, and possibly a cover letter. Hopefully, you already have those items prepared and are able to send that information immediately. We recommend that you write a specialized cover letter for each job for which you apply, and that you customize your résumé as well.

If you need help preparing any of these items, information can be found on our website. There, you can find valuable outlines and tips for writing an eye-catching résumé or cover letter.

In addition to preparing for the phone call, we recommend creating and practicing a “30 second elevator pitch” to deliver when the employer asks you to describe yourself. What is a “30 second elevator pitch,” you may ask? It is a practiced introduction describing yourself in about 30 seconds, explaining who you are, what degree(s) you are pursuing/have received, and your immediate career goals. Your practiced introduction can be used in social networking events, interviews, and even career fairs.

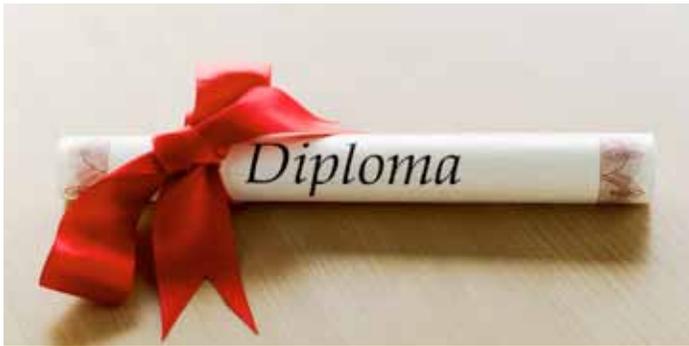
Finding a job takes persistence and dedication. It takes confidence and tenacity to make a cold call to a potential employer, and this might be what sets you apart from the hundreds of thousands of students who will graduate this year and enter the job market.

FOCUS to Give Students Good Direction with Career and Education

This fall, we will be replacing our online Discover program with the FOCUS 2 Online Career Planning and Major Exploration System. Customized with the majors offered at WCU, students' assessment results can be matched to career options and majors/programs. FOCUS 2 will provide Career Services with another tool to help guide our students through a reliable career and education decision-making model and help them choose their majors and make informed decisions about their careers.

- **Career readiness:** FOCUS 2 assesses students' involvement and introduces activities that support career and education decision-making.
- **Self-assessments:** These provide reliable and research-based assessments of students' work interests (Holland Code), personality, values, skills, and leisure interests. Students' assessment results are matched to occupations and supporting majors at WCU.
- **Career exploration:** Detailed, current descriptions of more than 1,200 occupations and featuring more than 600 videos. Tools include a job board, occupation search, and suggestions for majors matching student interests.

- **Online career portfolio:** Summarizes students' assessment results with their preferred majors and careers and personal comments/rankings, goals, and achievements.
- **Action planner:** Students plan career-relevant experiences including their courses, internships, study abroad, and volunteering.
- **Counselor reports:** The FOCUS 2 website will provide complete access to students' results.



Did You Know?

Did you know that people without a degree have a higher unemployment rate than individuals who do have a degree? Unemployment rates are lower for recent bachelor's degree recipients than both recent high school graduates and recent high school dropouts. Many students enter graduate school to avoid the prospect of unemployment, which may prove to be an effective method. Unemployment rates are lower for individuals with graduate degrees than bachelor's degrees. It's still important to research options and develop career goals for any degree, so visit Career Services for assistance!

Source:
http://chronicle.com/article/Unemployment-Varies-by-College/130212/?sid=cc&utm_source=cc&utm_medium=en



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