

CAREER JOURNAL

Published by the Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education
A Unit of the Office for Undergraduate Studies

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PHOTO ESSAY: Graduate Students Making a Difference

In this edition, we highlight graduate students at Western Carolina University who have connected their graduate course of study to clearly-defined, well-researched career goals and have demonstrated excellence both in the classroom and in experiential settings.

[PHOTO ESSAY Continued on page 6](#)

Fall & Spring Event Calendar

Wanting to improve your current résumé, learn proper rules of reception etiquette, or attend an upcoming career fair? Our Fall & Spring Event Calendar has plenty of opportunities for you. You definitely don't want to miss what we have planned!

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Dear Students,

This edition of the Career Journal traditionally focuses on our new graduates as they enter the job market. It offers some perspective, celebrates some accomplishments, and identifies some tools that will certainly benefit new alumni but also provide guidance for students at all levels.

First, Christie Osborne of our Mountain Heritage Center discusses her career path and how both graduate study and internships shaped her options and launched her career. Then, our photo essay this month focuses on the career development path of some of our graduate students and showcases how continuing education, career goals, and purposeful choices can lead to success. Also, we celebrate the recipient of our Co-op of the Year award, and we introduce a custom Perfect Interview created for students by a student, Bailey Woods who majors in nutrition and dietetics.

On page 4, look for new resources being created for students by our office with support from Undergraduate Studies and the Quality Enhancement Plan. We work hard to support your success and hope you enjoy this Career Journal!

Sincerely,

Career Services

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.

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

Email your résumé (cover letter, too!) to mdespeaux@email.wcu.edu or mashe@email.wcu.edu and make an appointment to discuss it!

Career Services Information

828-227-7133 | <http://careers.wcu.edu>

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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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Editor/Photographer: Whit A. France-Kelly*

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 <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 <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 18-20 [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.

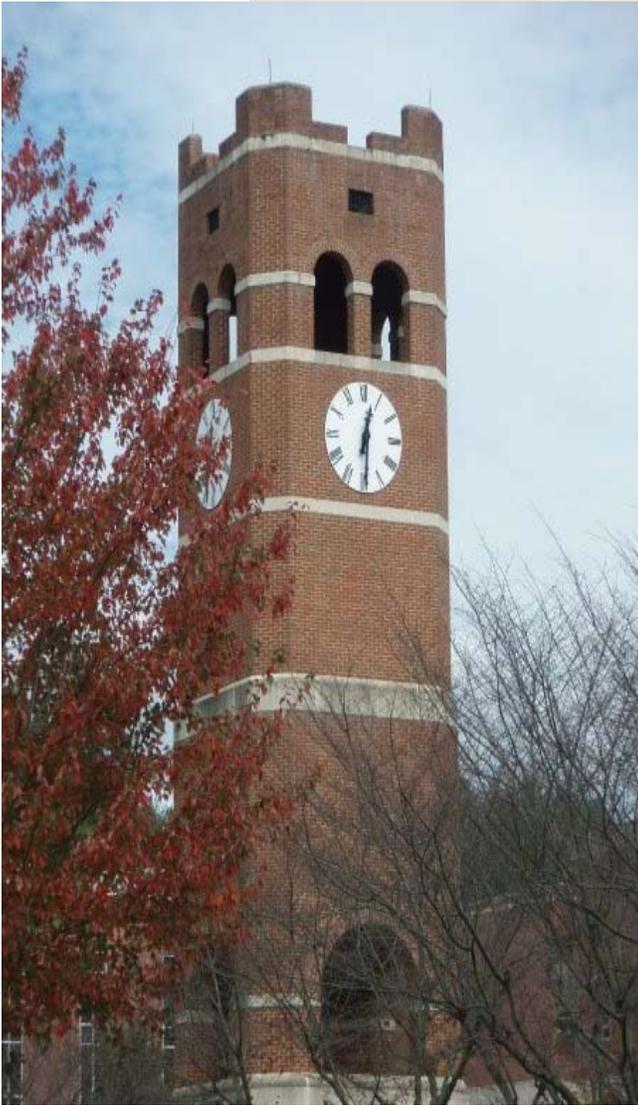
For more information regarding our 2010-2011 Career Mentor Program, please contact Mike Despeaux or Mardy Ashe in the office of Career Services.

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!



Perspective & Advice: How internships and mentorship can help students set sail

by Christie Osborne, Digital Heritage Project Coordinator for the Mountain Heritage Center

My name is Christie Osborne, and I have my dream job. I work at the Mountain Heritage Center as the Digital Heritage Project Coordinator. Basically, I get to work in a history museum and run a digital media project. A typical day for me can include: editing video and audio, conducting historical research, developing websites, working on oral history projects, and meeting with faculty and their students who are working on Digital Heritage Projects. Four years ago, I would never have guessed I'd find the perfect job.

I came to Western as a graduate student in 2006 for one specific reason -- to study tourism history with Dr. Richard Starnes. My goals were simple. I wanted to get my MA here and go on to a Ph.D. program. Dr. Starnes was one of a handful of historians in the country studying what I wanted to study. Upon being accepted to the History graduate program, I packed up and moved cross-country with my now-husband and two dogs.

The move to a small public university in the Appalachian Mountains shocked some of my friends and family. But I assure you; many of Western's professors come from top-notch schools and are leaders in their fields. I had done my homework on Dr. Starnes and was confident he could help me achieve my goals.

Within my first year, my goals began to change. Dr. Starnes had been deployed to Iraq, and I ended up serving as a graduate assistant for the Mountain Heritage Center. What a great fit! I had previously served as the director of a small historical museum in Mammoth Lakes, CA before returning to school, and was more than happy to return to a museum environment. This was my first indication that people at Western were committed to making sure that my personal experience melded with my

[PERSPECTIVE & ADVICE Continued on page 4](#)

Co-op Student of the Year: Danielle Shaurette

by Mardy Ashe

Danielle Shaurette, a member of the Western Carolina University Women's Cross Country and Track and Field teams, and a 3.9 (GPA) senior Interior Design major, is this year's recipient of the Co-op Student of the Year award. Cooperative Education is a program which gives students the opportunity to work in their major and gain valuable experience BEFORE they graduate. Danielle co-oped with La Fenice, "an early-stage business engaged in the design, fabrication and marketing of ornamental iron doors and fixtures for interior applications" located in Atlanta, GA. June Ray, Danielle's supervisor, had this to say about Danielle's work experience:

"Precisely punctual, beautifully attired and groomed, entering with excitement and enthusiasm, she sits down and -- like a wizard -- flies through each assignment with self motivation and perfection. What is amazing is that even 5 minutes 'til 6pm, she was working with the same diligence and speed and eagerness. Never was a request made that was not instantaneously executed -- again with excellence, flair and precision."

The Co-op of the Year Award recognizes a student who demonstrates exemplary work performance, professional and personal development and contributions to the co-op employer. Danielle Shaurette's professionalism and outstanding performance on her co-op job definitely makes her a worthy recipient of this fine award.

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

2010-2011 PEERS



Career Mentor Programs

by Michael Despeaux

Starting in August 2010, Western Carolina University will launch two mentor programs designed to provide an additional resource for students as they develop their career goals, build skills and experience, connect classroom knowledge to real-world settings, and create a network.

Professional Career Mentors will be searched for and contacted through Western's on-line program, JobCat. Alumni, employers, and friends of the University represent a large number of fields and a wide range of experience, from bright, young professionals to senior leaders. Students will be able to contact Professional Career Mentors in many fields to gain resume tips, seek advice about starting their careers, shadow them on the job, or even secure internship or co-op opportunities.

The *Peer Career Mentors* will provide career exploration assistance to students on a peer-to-peer level. They will provide resume advice, teach students how to use job search technology, give advice regarding career event opportunities, offer group presentations, and serve as liaisons between Career Services and the classroom. Peer Career Mentors will also staff a mobile mentoring station, which will provide visibility and availability of help "on the spot" by rotating its location among the colleges and major academic areas.

(Left to right - top to bottom row) Meredith Oakley, Tiffany Wenerd, Ashton Gunsley, Alex Frye, Ashley VandenHeuvel, Kelsie Bryant, Caitlin Yencha, Kyrie Carlson, and Sarah Alspaw.

PERSPECTIVE & ADVICE Continued from page 3

educational goals. In my case, Dr. Scott Philyaw, Director of the Mountain Heritage Center, took into consideration my previous museum experience and used it to support The Center's mission as well as my personal goals.

One of my early assignments was a history grad student's dream. It entailed conducting primary research of the Waynesville watershed and presenting my findings to the community. I had an opportunity to refine my archival research skills, conduct oral histories, and sharpen my public presentation skills -- all these skills being crucial to the professional historian. I was well on my way to gaining the meaningful experience that would take me to the next step: a Ph.D. program.

Something happened along the way. While piecing together my PowerPoint presentation, I met Neil Torda, Sue Grider and other members of the Coulter Faculty Center. It was there that a love of digital media and educational technology began to flourish. I started hanging out at the Coulter Faculty Center to learn, well, everything I could: InDesign, Photoshop, Audacity, Soundtrack Pro, iMovie, Final Cut, and a bit of HTML and CSS.

And then serendipity happened, which is not all that uncommon here at Western. My supervisor, Dr. Scott Philyaw, called me into his office to ask me about my professional goals. I confessed my growing interest in digital media and explained that I wanted to somehow combine my love of history with my growing interest in digital media and educational technology. Rather than trying to talk me out of it, Dr. Philyaw embraced my new interest and began assigning me technology intensive projects. For my first task, I learned about web development for a nascent Digital Heritage Project.

My goals, while unconventional for a historian, were well-received in the History Department. In a field that is known for its techno-phobia and conservatism, it is not insignificant that our History professors were open to my modified goals. But that is the culture here at Western, where student-centered learning is promoted.

Numerous History faculty encouraged and supported my interests. Drs. McRae and



Photo courtesy of Mark Haskett.

Christie Osborne working with Horace Kephart artifacts at the Mountain Heritage Center.

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PERSPECTIVE & ADVICE

Continued from page 4

Starnes would ask me about my projects and give me positive feedback. Drs. Cruz and Denson actually

had me offer technical support to their undergraduate student digital media projects. And of course, Dr. Philyaw continued to encourage my professional development and training by giving me challenging and meaningful work.

By the time I graduated from Western in 2008, I felt I could go anywhere and do anything. I had museum experience. Writing a thesis gave me classic academic training in research and writing. The best part was I had computer skills that set me apart from many classically trained humanities academics.

Luckily for me, on the eve of my graduation, funding was secured for the Digital Heritage Project, and the Mountain Heritage Center began conducting a job search for a coordinator. Of course, I applied. While I was not a “shoe in,” the skills I had gained while in graduate school made me highly competitive for this position.

Without the support and encouragement of Western’s History Department and the Mountain Heritage Center, I would not be where I am today. Dr. Philyaw was instrumental in ensuring my success on my newly-chosen path. He tailored projects to meet my new career goals, supported additional training, and always treated me as a professional rather than a lowly student. The History Department was also highly supportive of my endeavors, helping me to hold on to my original love of historical research while pursuing new interests in educational technology and digital media.

While Western faculty and staff are largely willing to support student career goals and enthusiastic about providing meaningful internship experiences that will translate to life after college, you have to take a certain amount of responsibility too. Here are a few suggestions to get you started:



Photo courtesy of Mark Haskett.

Christie’s advice:

1. Get involved and stay informed with campus on-goings. You never know when a department or support unit will need something like a promotional video, marketing plan, or heritage garden planted.
2. Talk to everyone you meet about your interests and plans. You have to be your own evangelist. People cannot help you if they don’t know what you want. Similarly, folks won’t necessarily know where your talents and interests lay, or how your experience can help them if you don’t talk to them about it.
3. If you change your mind or your goals change, speak up. As you gain experience and exposure to new things your goals and interests may change. This is a natural part of the educational process. Don’t feel obliged to stay on a path that no longer interests you. Instead go to your advisor and talk about it. Be sure to ask for new internship opportunities that would better suit your new interests.
4. See yourself as a professional rather than a student. Internships are like apprenticeships. You are expected to conduct yourself as part of the staff. Embrace this and treat your internship as you would your career. Don’t routinely call in sick or show up late. Dress relatively professionally. Take responsibility for solving problems on the job. Don’t expect to do your homework on the job. Don’t expect special scheduling consideration during mid-terms, finals or other crunch times. The more you can blend into the rest of the staff, the better. You never know what career doors will open up because of your stellar performance during that internship.
5. Stay current in your chosen field. Now is the time to start reading journals and attending a few conferences in your field. This will do several things. Conferences especially increase the size your network, and give you a first-hand look at what your field is really like. Staying current in your field will help you anticipate future trends and allow you to better problem solve. Showing this level of interest as an undergraduate also sends a clear message that you take yourself seriously and so should others.

GRADUATE STUDENTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE: A LESSON FOR ALL

Photos and Essay by Whit A. France-Kelly

Western Carolina University enrolls approximately 2,000 graduate students and offers 50 masters and doctoral programs in Cullowhee, at the University of North Carolina – Asheville, and via distance and online courses. In this photo essay, we highlight graduate students who were nominated by a faculty member for demonstrating excellence both in the classroom and in experiential settings, pursuing beyond-the-classroom opportunities, and connecting their graduate course of study to clearly-defined, well-researched career goals.

Jim Grubbs, Project Management



Jim preparing for an upcoming assignment.

NEXT PHOTO

Jim Grubbs, December 2010 candidate and Director of Process Engineering for Tyco Electronics, leads project managers responsible for delivering manufacturing processes for new automotive products. Jim's professor Dr. Vittal Anantatmula stated that his "project experience has made him a significant contributor to the educational experience of his teammates at WCU. Having effectively deployed on the job many of the tools encountered at WCU MPM program, Jim is currently leading a study group to prepare his project managers for the PMP certification."

With his experience, Jim looks to "develop a basic engineering or project management curriculum" that would assist students in receiving practical instruction, exposure to the field, and would help students accrue the knowledge necessary.

Jim states: "Theory is necessary, but it's only a tool to be used to accomplish the practical objectives of the career. I encourage undergraduate students to remain humbly self-aware; weaknesses are opportunities for growth and should therefore be recognized and explored, not argued away."

Nicole McRight, Communication Sciences and Disorders



Nicole McRight, spring 2010 candidate, has made numerous valuable contributions to her educational studies here at WCU and has participated in editing the program's newsletter. Nicole has also volunteered locally for individuals with autism and has assisted in many projects and events including organizing a 5k for Full Spectrum Farms, a local organization that serves adults with autism in Western North Carolina. Dr. Billy Ogletree stated, "Her work is exemplary in all classes, and she is one of seven students who completed additional graduate training from our program (18 credit hours) in the area of severe disabilities and autism by means of a federal grant project. Nicole has also been a part of student presentations at our national association meeting (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association) and the WCU Graduate Research Forum." Nicole wants to continue working with both children and adults with severe disabilities and aspires to obtain her PhD.

Nicole stated: "Attitude is a big part of success in life especially career-wise. I have found that at many times when I didn't have the best attitude, I wasn't as successful. I feel that by having a positive attitude it can go a long way. Also, I see the importance in taking advantage of every opportunity inside and outside of the classroom."

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GRADUATE STUDENTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE: A LESSON FOR ALL

Carol Kubic, Special Education



Photos courtesy of Carol Kubic



Carol Kubic, December 2011 candidate, works in Guilford County as an Exceptional Children's Teacher of K-5 students and serves as a member of the Council for Exceptional Children. Carol has "successfully incorporated her WCU graduate studies in Special Education into her classroom and school leadership roles and has shared current educational trends, theories and practices learned in her graduate studies with her colleagues," stated Dr. Dale Carpenter. Along with advocating for special need students, Carol aspires to continue in her efforts of educating herself and others and has plans to obtain her National Board Certification in Special Education and within 5 years teach at the collegiate level.

Carol states: "I think it is important to inspire others to enter this rewarding field along with providing them with the tools they will need to enter this profession prepared. I believe it would be a disservice to my students and their parents if I did not keep abreast of current laws, research, and teaching methodologies. I feel the education I continue to receive at Western Carolina provides me with the tools I need to be a leader in my school and in our district's department of Exceptional Children's Services."

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Eric Pitts, Community Counseling



Eric Pitts, fall 2010 candidate, is focusing his education on Clinical Medical Health and is interning at Eliada Homes in Asheville, a facility for at-risk adolescents, and has worked with Stone Mountain School as a Lead Field Instructor leading at-risk teenage groups on four-day long therapeutic wilderness trips. Dr. Lisen Roberts stated, "He has gone above and beyond classroom opportunities and experiences to pursue large-scale ideas in ethics and morality, as applied to both the counseling and education professions. As a Graduate Assistant in Educational Leadership, he has collaborated with Dr. Frederick Buskey, as well as with Dr. Valerie Schwiebert in Counseling, on a number of professional presentations and journal manuscripts." Eric has focused his research on education at both the collegiate and public school levels and wishes to continue in his efforts by obtaining a PhD.

Eric stated, "I would encourage other students to not think about graduation. Think beyond your current standing and look into the future and along the way make connections from the classroom to what you see yourself doing one day as a potential career. I would also stress for students to contact and seek out professors with whom they have a common interest. In doing so, they may be able to work with them on future research and further their education and career goals."



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Tracy Kirchmann, Fine Arts



Tracy shows her students how to shape glass in the Jackson County Green Energy Park studio.

Photo courtesy of Jackson County Green Energy Park

Tracy Kirchmann has been momentous in incorporating glass making into the curriculum at WCU. Dr. Joan Byrd stated, "As a graduate assistant, Tracy has been assigned to the Green Energy Park for three years. During this period she has helped establish an important partnership between the university and the town of Dillsboro and the GEP and has brought the GEP to national attention for its work in the arts. In 2009, the glass studio at the Green Energy Park became a reality. Tracy is now working in this studio both to create her own glass sculptures for her MFA thesis/exhibition this summer and to pass on her skills at manipulating hot glass to other students in the School of Art & Design."

Tracy stated, "In the process of creating this program, I have learned a lot about myself, and from working with the Green Energy Park, I have been able to speak and present at multiple conferences. These experiences have opened up a world of opportunities and for that I am thankful. I have really enjoyed teaching glass to students this semester, and I wish to continue to spread my knowledge of glass to others."

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Michael Lomuscio, Mathematics



Michael Lomuscio, spring 2010 candidate, aspires to work toward a PhD in Mathematics and looks to work for the government or for an educational system. Dr. Erin McNelis stated, "Michael has always been very self-motivated. Michael sought out summer opportunities on his own, asked one of our faculty members for an idea for a question that could lead to a presentation at the regional Mathematical Association of America conference last spring (which Michael completed and presented), and requested the opportunity to start teaching for us in Summer 2009. I have never had to prod Michael to work on his thesis project, and at times he has come to me for suggestions on how to best use his time while he's waiting for his landscape data to process. Michael has made a point to take courses that will expose him to new applications and types of mathematics. In 2009, Michael applied to and was selected to participate in NC State's Industrial Mathematical & Statistical Modeling Summer Workshop, which proved to be a valuable experience for him."

Michael stated, "I attribute my success at WCU to the ample opportunities I have had to present at the University symposium and at multiple math conferences. The professors here have been more than willing to assist me in my interests and career goals for the future."



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GRADUATE STUDENTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE: A LESSON FOR ALL

Rainy Brake, English - TESOL



Rainy Brake, spring 2011 candidate, is working towards a Master's in English with a focus on TESOL and is also enrolled in the Cherokee Studies Interdisciplinary Graduate Certificate program. Dr. Jane Eastman stated, "She has developed a proficiency in the Cherokee Language while attending graduate school and spent a semester during her first year of graduate school helping to develop curriculum materials for the Kituhwa Academy Cherokee language immersion school on the Qualla Boundary. She received the Graduate School's highest research award in 2009 for her work on Cherokee language preservation. Beginning in the fall of 2009, she became the kindergarten teacher for the Academy and is working full time as she completes her master's degree and certificate."

Rainy stated, "WCU has offered me an unmatched education. I would encourage students that if you know what you want to ultimately do, go after it. The university has many great tools and opportunities that students can take part in so I would encourage other students to take every chance to learn something new."

Rainy and her classroom translated the popular Dr. Seuss book, "One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish," into Cherokee.



[PREVIOUS PHOTO](#) | [NEXT PHOTO](#)

Tonya Carroll, History

Tonya Carroll, May 2009 alumni, graduated with a masters in History with an emphasis on Public History. Tonya currently serves as the Outreach Coordinator for Qualla Arts and Craft Mutual, Inc. in Cherokee, North Carolina. Tonya's professor, Dr. Alexander Macaulay, stated that while enrolled in the program at WCU she "excelled inside the classroom and out. She served as an intern at the Mountain Heritage Center, worked as an historic interpreter at the Oconaluftee Indian Village in Cherokee, and conducted oral interviews with Vietnam veterans for the Play for Peace program in the Fall of 2009. In the Summer of 2009, she was accepted into and completed the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA) program in Winston-Salem." By participating in such initiatives, Tonya gained career-specific knowledge firsthand and gained more in-depth comprehension.

Tonya states: "I would encourage anyone considering entering the field of education to work in a classroom as early in their degree as possible. This is the most rewarding and valuable learning experience anyone will have and will answer any questions one might have or doubts concerning entering the specialized field of education."



Photo courtesy of Tonya Carroll

PREVIOUS PHOTO

2010-2011 Event Calendar

September

- 28th** **Etiquette Dinner**
6:00 - 8:00pm, UC Grandroom
This event is intended to teach students the rules of proper dining and conversation in a formal setting. Attire is business casual. Tickets can be purchased at Career Services in 205 Killian Annex. \$

October

- 6th** **Construction Management Career Fair**
9:00 am - 12:00 pm, UC Grandroom
- 26th** **Graduate and Professional School Day**
9:00 am - 12:00 pm, UC Grandroom
- 27th** **Engineering, Computer Science, and Math Fair**
9:00 am - 12:00 pm, UC Grandroom
- 28th** **Criminal Justice Fair**
9:00 am - 12:00 pm, UC Grandroom

November

- 8th** **Allied Health and Nurses Day**
3:30 - 4:30 pm, UC Catamount Room

February

- 15th** **Physical Therapy and Speech Pathology Fair**
11:00 am - 2:00 pm, UC Grandroom
- 23rd** **Construction Management Career Fair**
11:00 am - 2:00 pm, UC Grandroom

March

- 9th** **Teaching Opportunities for Non-Teaching Majors**
11:00 am - 2:00 pm, UC Grandroom
- 15th** **Summer Jobs and Internships Fair**
4:00 - 6:00 pm, UC Theater
- Etiquette Reception**
5:30 - 7:30 pm, UC Grandroom
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. \$
- 16th** **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Career Fair**
Details TBD
- 17th** **Corporation, Non-profit, and Government Career Expo**
Details TBD
- 22th** **Education Recruitment Day**
9:00 am - 6:00 pm, UC Theater

Student Writes & Acts in First WCU Customized Mock-Interview

by Whit A. France-Kelly

Bailey Woods, senior Nutrition and Dietetics student under the leadership of Sherry Robison, wrote and acted in WCU's first customized Perfect Interview mock-interview. Bailey combined her sophisticated knowledge and strong professional writing skills to use the online tool to assist other Nutrition and Dietetic students in practicing and developing personal interview skills.

Perfect Interview, the popular online mock interview software system, simulates the interviewing process by means of sample video questions from professional interviewers. By the use of a webcam, students are recorded and able to playback their answers to gain insight on facial expressions and hand movement. This free service is designed as practice for students in preparation for their first interview.

To view other interviews or to learn more about Perfect Interview at WCU, please visit <http://www.perfectinterview.com/wcu>.



Screenshot of Bailey Woods' customized Perfect Interview for Nutrition and Dietetics.

For all events

Business casual to professional attire is required. Students and alumni are encouraged to bring several copies of your latest résumé. We also suggest uploading a résumé into JobCat. If you need assistance with developing a résumé, please visit <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 <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.