

Campus CAREER COUNSELOR

The Eyes and Ears of the Career Services Profession

Student-Athletes See How Their Best Traits Translate into a Future Career

By Peter Vogt

Only about 3 percent of all college athletes make it to the professional level of their sport, according to the National Collegiate Athletic Association. And even those athletes who do turn pro tend to have brief careers.

“One of the jokes I hear is that the NFL (National Football League) stands for ‘Not For Long,’” says Kevin Nall, associate director of career services at Baylor University (TX).

What, then, becomes of the vast majority of college student-athletes who don’t wind up going pro? And what happens to the handful who do, but who then need to find other career paths once their playing days are over?

Too often, says Nall, the athletes themselves have little grasp of the many transferable skills they have to offer to prospective employers.

“We see these students in their sport and we think they have the world by the tail,” says Nall. “But when you challenge them in a career development area, they have the same insecurities as everyone else—maybe even to a higher degree.”

That’s why Baylor came up with its innovative **POSTgame** initiative—“**Providing Opportunities for Successful Transition**” where student-athletes are concerned. Its simple premise: To give student-athletes as much confidence in

their career planning and job seeking activities as they’ve already demonstrated in their athletic exploits.

A Four-Phase Game Plan

The aptly named **POSTgame** program—“Student-athletes are obviously familiar with the idea of ‘postgame’ activities,” Nall notes—is composed of four elements: individual career counseling, professional development, interaction with potential employers, and alumni/ae development.

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In the counseling phase, the student-athletes take both the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and the Strong Interest Inventory and discuss the results with a career counselor. Two additional counseling appointments focus on exploring various career paths, Nall says.

Once the students have completed their counseling meetings, they can begin attending the workshops that make up the

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IN THE NEWS

Students/Grads Take Closer Look at Public Service Jobs

College students and recent grads are increasingly exploring public service jobs, according to a recent Reuters article.

“Some grads might have seen two of their older siblings go through the dot-com crash—and the emptiness of that—and now the Wall Street crash, just chasing after the big bucks,” says John Challenger, CEO of Chicago outplacement firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas. “You may see a whole generation of ... students that decide to do public service rather than business.”

To some extent, recent grads’ motivations may be purely pragmatic. According to data from the U.S. Department of Labor, the Washington, D.C. area is one of the relatively few across the country where employment has risen over 2008.

“D.C. is the only place we can point to that is actually adding jobs right now, and we also know that the government is hiring thousands of people to oversee both the [economic] stimulus package and all the associated projects,” says Marisa Di Natale, senior economist for Moody’s Economy.com.

Interest in public service among continuing college students, meanwhile, is also on the rise, the Reuters article notes. At Morehouse College (GA), for instance, the number of students majoring in public policy is increasing, according to Douglas Cooper, director of career services for the college’s Division of Business and Economics.

“Clearly, students who have historically planned on making a beeline to Wall Street have rethought that or are rethinking that,” says Cooper.

Source: Reuters, June 11, 2009.

AmeriCorps Sees a Steep Rise in Online Applications

The AmeriCorps national service program has received more than twice as many online applications so far this year as it did

during the same time period in 2008, according to a recent article in *The Lawrence (KS) Journal-World*.

One of the main reasons boils down to finances—in two related respects.

For starters, the entry-level job market for new college graduates continues to be dicey. “Job placement is only in the teen percentage right now,” notes Tracie Howell, director of the Roger Hill Volunteer Center in Lawrence.

Perhaps as importantly, though, once someone has completed a year of service through AmeriCorps, he/she is eligible for either \$1,200 cash or an educational award of \$5,300—and that educational award in particular can be used not only for future studies, but also for repayment of one’s **existing** college debt.

“Education is vital right now, and not everybody can pay for it on their own,” says Alexandria Norman, an AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) staffer who works for the Department of Energy Management in Lawrence.

“To be able to pay off student loans is a great benefit that you just can’t get by doing anything else. It’s completely unique to the AmeriCorps experience.”

Between January and May of this year, AmeriCorps received more than 48,000 online applications—a 234 percent increase over the same five-month time period last year.

Source: *The Lawrence (KS) Journal-World*, May 27, 2009.

Despite Economy, Accounting Field Continues to Add Jobs

While the overall professional and business services sector of the American economy has lost more than a million jobs since May 2008, the accounting and book-keeping services subsector has **added** close to 50,000 jobs during that same time period, according to a recent article in *The New Haven (CT) Register*.

“Accounting’s not going anywhere,”

Unemployment Rate Among Young Grads Rises to 5.9 Percent

The latest unemployment numbers for young college graduates are the second worst on record, according to a new report from the Economic Policy Institute, a nonprofit think tank.

For workers with a bachelor’s degree or higher who are under 27 years old, the unemployment rate currently stands at 5.9 percent. That’s just a bit lower than the record of 6.2 percent in 1983.

The EPI also notes that unemployment among today’s young grads is “higher relative to that of the general population.”

“Since 1979, this subgroup’s unemployment rate [has] averaged a little more than half of the total population’s unemployment rate,” the EPI report says. “In this recession, however, that ratio is now almost 70 percent.”

“Everyone is worse off in the current downturn, and young college grads are no exception.”

Source: “Economic Snapshot for June 10, 2009,” Economic Policy Institute.

IN THE NEWS

says Andy Ernst, regional vice president of Ajilon Professional Staffing.

Indeed, predicts Ernst, “there’s going to be a huge hole to fill” in the field in the years ahead as companies hire more accountants to monitor their fiscal practices and help them comply with stricter regulations and oversight.

David Reynolds—human resources principal for accounting firm Konowitz, Kahn & Company, P.C. in North Haven, Connecticut—says the dot-com bust earlier this decade, along with more-recent financial shenanigans, are motivating more college students to major in accounting.

“[Y]oung people are realizing that accounting has a hand in the future,” says Reynolds, a certified fraud examiner.

Source: *The New Haven (CT) Register*, June 6, 2009.

Farm Life Is Growing on More and More College Students

Farms across the United States are seeing a “new wave” of college students participating in agriculture-related internships this summer, according to a recent article in *The New York Times*.

“A few hope to run their own farms. Others plan to work on changing government food policy. Some are just looking for a break from the rigors of academia,” the article notes. “But whatever the reason, the interest in summer farm work among college students has never been as high...”

Case in point: the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, which began a formal apprenticeship program in 2003. Typically, coordinator Andrew Marshall gets about 75 applications for the program each year. This year, he’s received more than 200.

Similarly, the National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service—financed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture—reports that 1,400 American farms sought interns this year. That’s almost triple the number of two years ago.

“I’m not sure that I can affect how messed up poverty is in Africa or change politics in Washington, but on the farm I can see the fruits of my labor,” says Alex Liebman, a biology major from Macalester College (MN) who is spending an entire year at Full Belly Farm in California.

“By actually waking up every day and working in the field and putting my principles into action,” Liebman says, “I am making a conscious political decision.”

Source: *The New York Times*, May 24, 2009.

Nursing “Shortage” Has All but Disappeared—for Now

For the near term, at least, America’s decade-long shortage of nurses has essentially disappeared, according to a recent article in *The Wall Street Journal*.

Almost a quarter-million nurses entered the workforce in 2007 and 2008—an 18 percent increase that represents the largest two-year rise in at least three decades.

Meantime, the recession has compelled many nurses who had previously left the field to return to it, and others who had planned to retire to instead stay put.

“This surge of employment is basically knocking out the [nursing] shortage,” says Peter Buerhaus, a nursing professor at Vanderbilt University (TN).

It’s disappointing—and no doubt surprising—news for new and recent nursing-school grads, many of whom heard (and responded to) the call to go into nursing when they were exploring their educational and future-career paths a few years back.

Long-term estimates, however, still predict a continuing nursing shortage, especially once the economy improves.

Indeed, the shortage “could easily and quickly reignite,” Buerhaus says—particularly if the current situation ends up discouraging people from enrolling in college and university nursing programs.

Source: *The Wall Street Journal*, June 12, 2009.

Some New Grads See Tough Job Market as a Sort of “Reprieve”

Among some of this year’s new college graduates, the nation’s continuing economic difficulties—and the resulting entry-level job market woes—are being viewed with less apprehension than you might think.

“I said jokingly to my classes, ‘How many of you are secretly happy there’s a recession because the pressure is off?’ Many raised their hands,” says Kate Brooks, director of liberal arts career services at the University of Texas at Austin, and author of the new book *You Majored in What? Mapping Your Path from Chaos to Career* (Viking, 2009).

“I don’t know if [the students/grads] accept media reports at face value or it’s an excuse. You’d think they’d work even harder to get a job. But no, a large group of students view this as a reprieve.”

Perhaps that helps to explain why, by the end of April, only 41 percent of graduating seniors said they had begun looking for a job, according to a study by the National Association of Colleges and Employers.

Source: *Forbes.com*, May 27, 2009.

"Senior Capstone" Curriculum Embraces Career Development

As part of its Senior Capstone course curriculum, Belmont University (TN) offers a yearlong series of co-curricular programs that help the school's seniors move more smoothly from college to future career.

Belmont & Beyond workshops feature information on lifelong career development activities; practical skills like resume writing and job interviewing; and social skills, according to Patricia Jacobs, director of career services at Belmont.

To launch the initiative, career services staffers collaborated with other student affairs professionals, the school's director of general education, and several Senior Capstone faculty members—all of whom make up the Belmont & Beyond Advisory Group.

"Students have written Senior Capstone reflective papers and provided positive feedback regarding the programs," Jacobs says. "The feedback affirmed that the programs were helping students prepare for the transition to life after Belmont."

Visits Connect Faculty with Co-op Students, Employers

The career center at Rochester Institute of Technology's (NY) National Technical Institute for the Deaf offers a **Co-Op Visitation Program** that gives faculty members from the school the chance to visit RIT co-op students—and their employers—across the United States.

"Often career centers and faculty act independently," says John Macko, director of the NTID Center on Employment. The Co-Op Visitation Program, he says, "is the one strategy used [by] the career center and faculty at RIT/NTID that leads to successful co-op and permanent employment for students and graduates."

The initiative offers several key benefits, Macko stresses:

Relationships between RIT/NTID faculty members and career center staff are established and/or strengthened.

Both faculty and staff learn about technical advances in business and industry, which keeps course curriculum current.

The co-op visits tend to boost relationships with company representatives, which in turn often leads to more co-op (and permanent employment) opportunities for RIT/NTID students.

The faculty members who participate in the program are chosen by their department chairs, while the co-op students who are visited are selected based on factors like geographic location and "the projected benefit of building and maintaining a relationship" with a given company/organization, according to Macko.

"Certificate" Offers Structure and Prestige to Internships

The **Certificate Internship Program** at the College of Charleston (SC) offers formal institutional recognition to the many students who, for a variety of reasons,

aren't able to pursue for-credit internships through their academic departments.

The program "allows for a student's internship to be formally supervised, recognized, and evaluated by the college," says Erin O'Dea, internship coordinator for the college's career center.

Students in the program must abide by about a half-dozen requirements. Among them: meeting with O'Dea at the beginning and end of their internships; completing and fulfilling a learning contract; submitting bi-weekly journal entries (to O'Dea); and developing a final portfolio for evaluation purposes.

Several factors contributed to the creation of the Certificate Internship Program. For starters, some departments at the school require their students "to meet certain guidelines" (e.g., junior or senior status, minimum GPA) before they can pursue for-credit internships, O'Dea says.

Another difficult issue for many students: the **cost** of doing a for-credit internship. Tuition for a single course at the college is "roughly \$1,000 for an in-state student and \$2,300 for an out-of-state student," O'Dea says.

"Tuition fees are high," she stresses, "and it's often difficult during this economic downturn for parents and students alike to justify paying thousands of dollars ... to participate in a non-paid internship."

Podcasts Introduce Students to Careers—and Professors

If students are constantly listening to their iPods anyway, why not give them a way to learn about career possibilities—directly from their very own professors?

That's the idea behind the "**Meet the Majors**" Podcast Series developed by the career counseling center at Baylor University (TX).

Each podcast in the series introduces students "to the academic features and vocational potential of various majors offered at Baylor," says Aaron Baggett, a

GOOD IDEAS

career counselor at the school and one of the coordinators of the initiative.

“A faculty representative(s) is interviewed and given an opportunity to speak broadly about course descriptions and requirements, common characteristics of current students in that major, the skills and experiences students can obtain, and even misconceptions about the major,” says Baggett.

Students who listen to the podcasts also gain insight into major-related career and internship options, Baggett stresses—all while they’re at least electronically introduced to various Baylor professors.

“Oftentimes students are hesitant to approach a seemingly preoccupied and intimidating professor with their questions,” says Baggett. “This program allows students to get the answers to some of their initial questions, which will hopefully lead them to learn important background information about the major and gain confidence to approach a professor with specific, more-distinct questions.”

Since the launch of the initiative last October, the web page hosting the podcasts has received nearly 900 views.

Take a look—and a listen—for yourself at: www.baylor.edu/careercounseling. (Click on “Meet the Majors Podcast.”)

“Centre Futures” Initiative Engages First-Year Students

When the career services office at Centre College (KY) launched its **Centre Futures** program a few years back, the goal was simple: To get Centre students engaged with the career services office from Day 1 instead of waiting until senior year ... or even beyond.

Mission accomplished, thanks to the program’s structure and the individual attention it offers.

Students sign up for the program either in the summer before or at the beginning of their freshman year, according to Deborah Jones, director of career services. Each

student is then assigned a specific career counselor to work with throughout their time at Centre.

Centre Futures students also get priority consideration for the career center’s externship program, as well as a *Centre Futures Notebook* to track their progress.

Participating students need only meet with their counselor at least once per term and follow through on their mutually agreed upon “career action plans.”

In the first year of the program, Jones says, career center staff saw more first-year students in individual appointments than they saw sophomores and juniors combined—and more first-year students than seniors as well.

Six-Week Workshop Series Teaches Presentation Skills

It’s one thing to learn how to present; it’s another to actually **do** some presenting, says Jodi Schneiderman, a career counselor at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

That’s the thinking that drove Schneiderman and colleague Cori Shaff this past semester as they developed two six-week **Presentation Skills Series** workshops—one open to any CU student, the other specifically for international students.

The program was modeled after the well-known Dale Carnegie seminars, “with the purpose to get participants comfortable with presenting,” says Schneiderman.

One week even focused on impromptu speaking.

“The participants just showed up, picked a random item out of a box—literally—and gave a two-minute presentation on creative uses for the item,” says Schneiderman.

“The students seemed to enjoy coming up with silly uses for the objects and demonstrated creativity on their feet.”

Over the six weeks, the students also developed a “strong bond,” Schneiderman adds, “as they gave each other feedback on ways to improve and demonstrated vulnerability with each other.”

“INvision” Program Helps Students Find Meaningful Careers

Anderson University’s (IN) **INvision AU** program is a multipronged initiative intended to help the school’s graduates find meaningful employment—particularly within the state of Indiana itself.

Established under a grant from the Lilly Endowment, **INvision AU** helps students land internships; connects students with AU alums; and offers students industry-focused career days on campus.

The program also features an industry networking component that gives students the chance to tour organizations’ facilities, visit with industry decision makers, and receive job search tips from organizations’ recruiters, according to Maryann Coty, director of Anderson’s Career Development Center.

— TOOLS & TECHNIQUES —

A 4-Step Way to Help Students Put Some Pizazz in Their Resume Bullets

Each month, we interview a career counselor about a tool or technique he/she uses to effectively address a career development issue. Consider adding this one to your own bag of tricks.



After completing her bachelor's degree at the University of Minnesota, Morris, Cindy Norberg was employed as a social worker in Madison, Wisconsin. Three years of hiring, training, and managing her human services staff allowed her to discover her true passion: developing strong employees.

Cindy recently completed her master's degree in counseling and student affairs, and she's looking forward to a career helping college students develop professional skills and present them effectively.

She's currently a career specialist for the Office of Career Services at Minnesota State University Moorhead.

www.mnstate.edu/career

Note: Normally, "Tools & Techniques" runs in question-and-answer format. But Cindy Norberg was kind enough to write this piece herself. Thanks, Cindy!

Peter Vogt, Editor

The Career Counselor: Cindy Norberg, Career Specialist, Career Services, Minnesota State University Moorhead.

The Tool/Technique: A thoughtful, step-by-step approach to making those potentially boring resume bullet points really stand out.

Many students come to my office with a bullet point on their resume that simply states a job duty. For instance:

- Answered phones.

I take the student through a four-step process to create a more detailed bullet point—one with more pizazz.

1) Skill

What did you get out of performing this duty? In this example, the answer might be "communication skills."

2) Structure

Put this result into a statement. For instance: "I learned _____ by doing/because/while _____" or "I learned [skills] by performing [duty]."

In our "answered phones" example, the student might say: "I learned communication skills while answering phones."

3) Verb

Replace "I learned" by starting the new statement with a compelling verb. For instance: "Developed communication skills while answering phones."

4) Clarify

Go back to the original duty you wrote down. Ask yourself who, what, where, when, why. In the answering phones case, the student might ask himself/herself: "Who was I talking to?" "What did we talk about?" Answers: "spoke to customers"; "billing at a call center."

So here's what the student who "answered phones" might end up with:

Original bullet point:

- Answered phones.

Revised bullet point:

- Developed excellent communication skills addressing customer billing concerns.

or:

- Developed excellent communication skills addressing customer billing concerns over the phone.

Interestingly enough, in the end, the bullet point doesn't have the phrase "answered phones" anywhere in it.

In workshops I often ask students—considering the first bullet point and the revised one: "If you were the employer, who would you hire?"

The great thing about this process is that any student can start with a list of job duties. From that list, he/she can expand each of them, one by one. In our office, we have pre-brainstormed lists of skills and verbs to help students get started.

This technique helps students get from "this is just a rough draft" to "I've really put some thought into this." Once that confidence emerges, it's a joy to work with them on the next draft.

EMPLOYER INSIGHTS

“I’m with the Band” Might Just Grab a Prospective Employer’s Attention

Each month, we interview an employer about a key career issue college students—and career services professionals—need to better understand ... from the employer’s perspective.

The Employer: Maurice Fernandes, Sourcing for Ceridian Canada.

The Issue: The skills students gain from hobbies and other non-work activities could—perhaps surprisingly—help them land a post-graduation job.

A recent “Resume Builders” article in Maclean’s OnCampus magazine highlighted the following observation you made regarding the college student’s/graduate’s job search and previous activities that are (at first glance) unrelated to the position the student/grad is pursuing:

While Fernandes does look for activities related to the position he is hiring for, he says that unrelated activities can also show desirable characteristics. Even hobbies can be valuable on a resume.

*Will you please elaborate a bit on what you mean by this (especially since students/grads are sometimes advised **not** to list unrelated activities on their resumes)?*

The knock on Gen Y is that they show very little commitment. Besides demonstrating to a potential employer commitment to a specific activity, a student’s unrelated activities and hobbies are a great way of highlighting time management and organizational skills.

I do agree, of course, that not all activities should be included in a CV (resume). Captain of your beer pong team should remain a hidden talent.

Can you offer a specific example of how unrelated activities and/or hobbies listed on a student’s/grad’s resume have played a key role (or could play a key role) in help-

ing that student/grad land an interview and, ultimately, an actual job?

Take playing in a band, for example. Even though you may not be the next Pearl Jam, being in a band can show prospective employers several positive characteristics: dedication, commitment, creativity, time management skills, teamwork, and even presentation skills.

These are all valuable attributes to an employer—ones that aren’t always apparent on a resume.

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“Even though you may not be the next Pearl Jam, being in a band can show prospective employers several positive characteristics: dedication, commitment, creativity, time management skills, teamwork, and even presentation skills.”

*What can Campus Career Counselor readers **do** to address with their students/grads the issues you’ve raised here?*

Know what specific soft skills employers are looking for in potential employees. Help students connect their extracurricular activities to their development of these particular skills.

Finally, help your students/grads develop a really well-written cover letter highlighting these skills—because, again, they don’t always show up on a resume or in interview situations.



Maurice Fernandes is an AIRS-certified recruitment professional with more than 12 years of recruitment and recruitment management experience.

He began his career with a boutique information technology search firm in Toronto and joined Ceridian’s Recruitment Process Outsourcing division in 2005.

Maurice has recruited across Canada and the United States for a variety of clients across different business verticals. He specializes in sourcing, building relationships, recruitment technologies, recruitment marketing, and social media strategies.

When he’s not looking for the hard to find, Maurice enjoys perfecting his ice cream recipes, building championship fantasy football teams, and bocce ball with his wife and Austin (the cat).

www.ceridian.ca/en/hr solutions/recruitment.html

www.linkedin.com/in/moefernandes

RESOURCE REVIEWS



StrengthsQuest strengths identification and development program for college students.

www.strengthsquest.com



Dr. Lisa Severy is the Director of Career Services at the University of Colorado at Boulder. She has been working as a career counselor since 1996, including seven years at the University of Florida.

Lisa has co-authored two books: *Making Career Decisions That Count* (Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009), with Darrell Luzzo; and *Turning Points: Managing Career Transitions with Meaning & Purpose* (AuthorHouse, 2008), with Jack and Phoebe Ballard. She's contributed to the *Encyclopedia of Counseling* and *A Counselor's Guide to Career Assessment Instruments*. She's also been published in *Career Development Quarterly* and the *Journal of College Student Development*.

In 2008, Lisa was honored at the National Career Development Association conference with a Presidential Recognition Award and a 2008 Merit Award.

careerservices.colorado.edu

StrengthsQuest

Review by Lisa Severy

"If human beings are perceived as potentials rather than problems, as possessing strengths instead of weaknesses, then they thrive and grow to their capabilities."

~ Bob Conklin

Let's face it: We live in a deficit-minded culture. When we stare at a report card, we skip past the A and fixate on the C. When we get our annual reviews, we jump to the "areas for improvement" section first.

Instead of focusing on our weaknesses and hoping to move from poor to mediocre, what would happen if we were to use that energy to grow our natural gifts from good to exceptional?

That's what StrengthsQuest is all about.

StrengthsQuest helps students identify, understand, and maximize their own unique strengths. Supported by over 30 years of research by the Gallup organization, StrengthsQuest identifies 34 distinct strengths that people can have.

Students who use the program receive a report listing their top five strengths in rank order. These five strengths, alone or in combination, provide the foundation for helping the student build a strengths-based approach to both college and a future professional career.

A Comprehensive System

StrengthsQuest is composed of publications; an online assessment instrument; and a comprehensive, strengths-based web site. As career counselors, we can purchase subscription codes for the system (prices range from \$10 to \$15 for each student user, based on volume), or students can use a code that comes with the StrengthsQuest book if they choose to buy it.

Perhaps the most exceptional part of the StrengthsQuest system is the number and variety of online tools available to both our students and to us as counselors. Once a

student completes the StrengthsQuest assessment, for example, he/she has access to a plethora of helpful development resources, including Theme Reports, Student Action Items, Professional Action Items, and the *Strengths Discovery and Action-Planning Guide*.

On the career counselor's side, there's a complete library of offerings and activities that you can use with either individuals or small groups.

Training Available

Our career center here at the University of Colorado at Boulder signed up for StrengthsQuest back in February by paying a StrengthsQuest representative to come—in person—and provide two days of intensive training for our entire group. Not only did we get a thorough understanding of the system, but we also learned a great deal about each others' strengths—a nice bonus for our own strategic planning and staffing purposes.

We use the StrengthsQuest system with individual clients, and we are being inundated with requests to lead workshops for all kinds of student and staff groups on campus. It's been a remarkable opportunity to create a buzz about our office.

The Bottom Line

The StrengthsQuest system is pretty extensive, so it may not be suitable for students who are at the beginning of the career exploration and development process; they might be overwhelmed by the amount of information on the system's web site.

Overall, though, StrengthsQuest is an empowering, fun tool to use with students, alums, faculty, and staff. Compared with other instruments, it's also very reasonably priced, especially considering the number of resources it offers.

I can easily see StrengthsQuest becoming one of our career center's most popular—and most encouraging—career development tools.

RESOURCES

WITHIN REASON

Each month, we highlight several low- or no-cost resources you can use yourself, pass along to the students or recent graduates you work with, or both. Enjoy!

Article Highlights the Basics of Pursuing a Federal Job

While a federal government job is increasingly attractive to today's college students, navigating the often involved federal hiring **process** isn't so appealing.

A recent article in *The Wall Street Journal* will help.

"Land a Federal Job" describes where to look for government job openings and how to apply for them.

The piece doesn't offer the detail one might find in a book about federal government jobs, but it's ideal for the student or recent grad who wants a quick overview of what's involved.

Read the article at: online.wsj.com/article/SB124433814488491757.html.

Economic Stimulus Package Offers Potential Opportunity

A recent Monster.com article describes where recent college graduates can pursue one of the jobs potentially growing out of the federal government's economic stimulus package.

"Stimulus Jobs for New College Grads" focuses on six "main areas of investment" within the package: healthcare, alternative and renewable energy, education, roadways and bridge infrastructure, small businesses, and government.

Visit: career-advice.monster.com/job-search/company-industry-research/stimulus-jobs-entry-level-grads/article.aspx.

"Blind Spots" Can Diminish the Counseling Relationship

The job search for international students in the United States "is challenging at the outset," writes Princeton University (NJ) career counselor Satomi Yaji Chudasama

in a recently published NCDCA *Career Convergence* article.

Add to that the potential for cultural misunderstandings and it's possible that career services professionals and international students just won't click as well as they'd like in the counseling relationship.

That's the key takeaway in the article Chudasama has written: "Cultural Blind Spots in Career Counseling with International Students." In the piece, she describes seven such "blind spots" and offers tips to help career services professionals better help international students.

The piece is available at: associationdatabase.com/aws/NCDA/pt/sd/news_article/12550/_PARENT/layout_details/false.

Article's Details Illuminate Behavioral Interviewing

What are the most compelling types of stories for students to tell in the *behavioral* interviews they have for jobs or internship/co-op positions?

A recent article on the InternshipRatings.com web site offers a wonderfully detailed answer to that critical question—complete with detailed examples.

"Behavioral-Based Interviewing: Tips from an Expert" features the knowledgeable insights of Scott Weighart, senior coordinator of cooperative education at Northeastern University (MA).

Visit: www.internshipratings.com/take_note/?p=261.

Web Site Highlights Career Possibilities in Construction

The Home Builder's Institute's "Make It Happen" web site features detailed information on more than 100 career opportunities in the construction field.

Visit: www.buildingcareers.org/career.

Oceanography Offers Students a Sea of Career Possibilities

The U.S. Navy's Office of Naval Research devotes a substantial portion of its web site to describing oceanography and similar marine-related careers.

The site's Career Information Center features links like "A Sea of Possible Career Options," "An Ocean of Employment Opportunities," and "Education Is Key."

Especially eye-opening is a "Meet Working Oceanographers & Marine Scientists" page that features brief profiles of real professionals in the field.

Visit the site at: www.onr.navy.mil/careers/ocean_marine.

RESEARCH BRIEFS

Bachelor's Degree Holders Earn About \$26K More Per Year

Americans with bachelor's degrees earn about \$26,000 more per year, on average, than workers with high school diplomas, according to the latest data from the United States Census Bureau.

In 2007, the data reveal, workers with bachelor's degrees earned an average of \$57,181 a year. In contrast, Americans with only high school diplomas earned an average of just \$31,286 a year.

The numbers come from the *Current Population Surveys* annual "Social and Economic Supplement," which is conducted in February, March, and April at about 100,000 addresses nationwide.

Sources: *Educational Attainment in the United States: 2008*, U.S. Census Bureau, April 27, 2009; U.S. Census Bureau news release, April 27, 2009.

Few Federal Interns Receive Offers for Full-Time Positions

Some 60,000 college students will land internships with the federal government this year—but only a relative handful of them are likely to parlay those opportunities into full-time, permanent government jobs, according to a recent analysis by the nonprofit Partnership for Public Service.

According to the organization's research, of the nearly 60,000 students who interned with federal agencies in 2007, only about 3,900—or 7 percent—were ultimately offered full-time, permanent jobs with the government after their internships ended.

"This record contrasts sharply with the private sector," notes a Partnership news release, "which converts more than 50 percent of its student interns into permanent positions."

"The federal government needs to do a much better job of evaluating its interns and inviting top performers to stay," says Max Stier, president and CEO of the Partnership. "Right now, student interns are simply overlooked as a source of talent."

The Partnership report blames the low intern-to-employee figure on two key factors. For starters, most government interns are hired under programs that are not set up to lead to permanent government employment.

Moreover, the Partnership news release argues, "Federal internship programs are decentralized, fractured, and difficult for student internship seekers to navigate."

Sources: *Leaving Talent on the Table: The Need to Capitalize on High-Performing Student Interns*, Partnership for Public Service, April 7, 2009; Partnership for Public Service news release, April 7, 2009.

U.S. Hiring Is "Still Sluggish," but May Be Stabilizing a Bit

Employers in the U.S. plan to keep their staffing levels "relatively stable" during the third quarter of 2009 (July through

September), according to a recent Manpower survey of 28,000 American firms.

Fifteen percent of the employers in the study said they plan to increase hiring in the third quarter, while 13 percent said they plan to decrease it.

Meantime, two-thirds of the employers said they expect no change in their third-quarter hiring plans, while 5 percent said they're still determining their plans.

"While the numbers may not be as optimistic as we would like, it is positive to see no further deterioration," says Jeffrey Joerres, Manpower's chairman and CEO.

"The data [show] continued hesitancy among employers," adds Jonas Prising, president of the Americas for Manpower. "They are treading slowly and watching with guarded optimism, hoping a few quarters of stability will be the precursor to recovery."

Source: Manpower news release, June 9, 2009.

The Interviewer's Assistant Can Make—or Break—You

If you're like most career services professionals, you're already telling your students/grads to be gracious to **everyone** they encounter during job interviews—especially the influential assistant(s) who, in many offices, runs the day-to-day show.

The results of a recent OfficeTeam survey will give you some solid evidence you can use to back that advice up.

In the study, 150 senior executives from large companies were asked one question: "How important is your assistant's opinion about the job candidates you interview for positions at all levels?"

Twenty-one percent of the execs answered "very important," while another 40 percent answered "somewhat important."

"As soon as they enter the parking lot, job seekers should be on their best behavior. Everyone they encounter—from the person in the elevator to the receptionist—is someone who could potentially weigh

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in on the hiring decision,” says Robert Hosking, executive director of OfficeTeam.

“Administrative professionals know their boss’s management style and understand the work environment, which makes them adept at identifying people who are a good fit—and [which] is why executives value their opinions.”

Source: OfficeTeam news release, March 19, 2009.

Future Students (and Their Parents) Look at Career Fit

When it comes to picking a college, career-related concerns are near the top of the priority list for both prospective college students and their parents this year, according to Princeton Review’s *2009 College Hopes & Worries Survey*.

The study questioned 12,715 college applicants and 3,007 parents of applicants. When the respondents were asked which college they (or their child) would “most likely” choose, 37 percent of the students and 35 percent of the parents said they’d select the “college with [the] best program for my (my child’s) career interests.”

Only one other response scored higher overall; 46 percent of the students and 51 percent of the parents said they’d pick the “college that will be the best overall fit.”

Sources: *2009 College Hopes & Worries Survey*, Princeton Review, March 25, 2009; Princeton Review news release, March 25, 2009.

New York Is Top Destination for Job-Seeking Graduates

New York City is the most popular job-hunting destination for new college graduates this year, according to a recent study of college career centers conducted by CareerCast.com and Going Global.

“New York has always been a popular job-hunting location, but this study shows that it reigns supreme as the top city for college students to start their careers in this

tough economy,” says Tony Lee, publisher of CareerCast.com.

Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles; Boston; and San Francisco rounded out the list of the top five American cities this year’s grads will hit to look for jobs.

“What all of the top cities have in common,” Lee stresses, “are high numbers of job opportunities, diversity, and a vibrant social scene.”

The study also found that international students who graduated from American colleges/universities this year tend to favor working in the United Kingdom or China over the third-ranked United States.

“Foreign students ... are likely to migrate after graduation rather than stay [in the U.S.],” says Mary Anne Thompson, president of Going Global.

Source: CareerCast.com/Going Global joint news release, May 5, 2009.

Most Students Prefer “Job I Like” Over Health Coverage

Today’s college students seem to understand the importance of post-graduation health insurance. But most say that, if forced to choose, they’d rather have a job they enjoy than have health coverage through their employment, according to a recent study by eHealthInsurance and Kelton Research.

In the study, which questioned a nationally representative sample of 532 undergraduates, 68 percent of the students said they’d rather “take a job I like, even if it doesn’t provide healthcare benefits”—versus 32 percent who said they’d opt to “take a job I don’t like that does provide healthcare benefits.”

In a perhaps related finding: 63 percent of the students said they’d like to buy their own health insurance and keep it regardless of where they work, instead of switching health plans every time they change jobs.

Sources: eHealthInsurance *College Students Survey*, May 2009; eHealthInsurance news release, June 9, 2009.

Survey Respondents to New Grads: Stick with Your Passions

Despite the flagging economy—and the dicey job market for this year’s new college graduates—most college-educated adults in the U.S. say the new grads should “stick to their goals and aim for career fulfillment” above all else, according to Adecco Group North America’s latest *American Workplace Insights Survey*.

Some 71 percent of the college graduates in the study advise this year’s new grads to follow their passion first and foremost. Conversely, just 13 percent say this year’s new grads should pick a career path based solely on earnings potential, while only 18 percent say new grads should take any job they can get.

The study questioned 2,495 American adults, including 917 who hold a college degree.

Source: Adecco news release, April 23, 2009.

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**“Student-Athletes”
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professional development aspect of the program. Topics range from resume creation and networking to interviewing and working a job fair.

The centerpiece of POSTgame's employer interaction phase is the Spring POSTgame Job Fair, which is open to juniors and seniors and represents an assortment of industries—including, but not limited to, sports.

This past year, Nall and his colleagues have focused heavily on the alumni/ae development piece of POSTgame, bringing former student-athletes back to campus to share their stories about life after sports and even working with them to develop “mini-internships” and “virtual mentoring” arrangements for current student-athletes.

Career Confidence

While it's difficult to quantify the difference POSTgame is making so far in the lives of Baylor's student-athletes, Nall says the **qualitative** evidence is plain to see.

Once the athletes complete their individual career counseling and participate in some of the career workshops, for example, they begin to see how traits like dedication to one's sport and the ability to compete well under intense pressure are characteristics most employers crave.

“You see a huge difference in the way [the student-athletes] present themselves,” says Nall. “They don't walk into a room apologetically saying [to an employer], ‘I know I don't have a marketing degree, but’ Instead, they walk in ready to explain how their athletic experience has prepared them to make a positive impact with the [employer's] company.”

From a big-picture perspective, meanwhile, Nall says the athletes in POSTgame are taking a more-structured, deliberate approach to their future careers.

“They aren't finishing their eligibility, graduating, and then trying to figure out where to turn next,” says Nall. “They know what career path they want to pursue. Not only that, they know how to pursue it—and what it takes to achieve it.”

PETE'S COLUMN

Career Wisdom from a 20-Month-Old

By Peter Vogt



So I jokingly asked my 20-month-old daughter, Katie, to write my column for me this month.

I just got onto my computer and discovered that she's gone ahead and done just that—with an assist from Mom.

I give you ... Katie's Career Wisdom:

- Do whatever you see first.*
- It's OK to change your mind many times.*
- Keep everyone on their toes.*
- Use your charm to get what you want.*
- It's OK to like something one day and hate it the next.*
- Always have an emergency Nuk.*

Naps are great, but don't let my mom and dad know I said that.

It's OK to ask “What's this?” 8 million times a day.

It's OK to explore many things in one day.

Sometimes you still have to try it even if your parents tell you not to.

You learn something new every day.

Books are cool.

Stop and sing “Twinkle Twinkle, Little Star” each day.

Here's one more for you, Katie—from dear old Dad:

Be sure to collect payment whenever your writing is published.