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# UNH Grads Face Better Job Prospects Than Last Year

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DURHAM, N.H. – More than 2,500 University of New Hampshire seniors will graduate this week and, according to national statistics, they have a better chance of finding a job than their peers a year ago.

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), employers expect to hire 11 percent more graduating college seniors than they hired last year. That projection rings true with Bethany Cooper, manager of employer relations and recruiting at the University Advising and Career Center.

At its April Career Fair, Cooper reports 65 employers attended this year, compared to 27 companies last year. At least 23 internships were offered to UNH students, and more than 31 students have been offered jobs. In addition, the UACC posted more than 120 jobs available to students after graduation and provided those employers with interview space on campus. Of the 65 employers taking part in the job fair, 25 reported that they regularly hire UNH graduating seniors.

“Employers we surveyed say the University of New Hampshire has a proven track record with providing their workforce with highly trained students who also are steeped in the tradition of a broad liberal arts education,” Cooper says.

From informal research, the top occupations appear to be sales, engineering, health care, entry level finance and service learning organizations, such as City Year. According to Cooper, the UACC offers students “soup to nuts” during their undergraduate career, from early major selection to the final job search during the senior year.

She explains the UACC works with hundreds of employers, many of whom are located in New Hampshire. The center hosts four career and internship fairs annually.

“Some are specific to certain industries, such as an Engineering and Sciences Career Fair, while others are campus-wide events,” Cooper says. “We carefully watch industry and job hiring trends and tailor our efforts to those. For example, this past year, the fall Business and Engineering Career Fair was added to serve the employers who do their hiring early in the year. Next year, we will combine the engineering fair with life sciences and agriculture to provide a full blown engineering and sciences fair for industries such as biotechnology, medical devices and pharmaceutical.”

The center also offered this year a diversity networking luncheon series, co-hosted by the

Alumni Organization, the Whittemore School placement office and the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, that connected UNH students of diverse backgrounds and cultures with employers from various industries. Students of color attended networking workshops via the UACC in advance of the event to hone their job search networking skills.

“The success of this event was so great that we plan to host four throughout the academic year beginning the fall,” Cooper says. The UACC also added a weekly walk-in career counseling hour in OMSA.

The UACC continues to develop a key relationship with the Alumni Association. UNH Alumni play an integral role in the job search process from acting as mentors to actually recruiting UNH students, according to Cooper.

“We tell our students that 80 percent of jobs are acquired via networking and our alumni base is a natural place to start,” she explains. “The Alumni Association joined the UACC at our career fairs and seminars to promote the value of that network as a resource and to keep future alumni connected with UNH.”

Bethany Cooper can be reached at 862-2064.