Students Step Up to the Plate at Sports Career Fair

Contingent from UNH networks with industry professionals at Fenway Park event

Monday, April 15, 2024
A group of UNH students had the opportunity to network with industry professionals at the Sports & Entertainment Career Fair at Fenway Park on April 11. (Courtesy Photo)

Competition in sports isn’t just limited to those who play the games — trying to land a job in the sports industry can be a game within itself.

With this in mind, several UNH students interested in sports industry careers attended the Sports & Entertainment Career Fair at Fenway Park this spring, where they had the opportunity to meet face-to-face with representatives from the Boston Red Sox/Fenway Sports Management, Boston Celtics, Boston Bruins/TD Garden, Kraft Sports (New England Patriots and Revolution), Draft Kings, NESN and other local industry leaders.

The students took a bus to the event and stayed for that evening’s Red Sox game against the Baltimore Orioles. The opportunity was made possible thanks to a collaborative effort between Career and Professional Success (CaPS) at the Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics and the College of Health and Human Services (CCHS), the Center for Business Analytics and the Kinesiology Department at the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS).

“We immediately found ourselves in a high-energy environment. The room the career fair was held in was packed with people dressed in suits and tables,” says Collin Murphy, a senior majoring in business administration with concentrations in finance and information systems & business analytics. “Lines stretched from one end of the room to the other for each Boston sports team.”

Once students reached a table, they would give their resume to a recruiter and have time for a quick chat. Murphy says those who did their research and came to the career fair with a plan were able to make the best use of their time.

Jake MacInnis, a senior majoring in business administration with a concentration in information systems & business analytics, says the networking component of the career fair was valuable.
“I feel that connecting with someone on LinkedIn, especially there, was the best way of going about it,” MacInnis says. “I connected with people on LinkedIn from Boston Beer Company as well as DraftKings. This will allow me to reach out to them and not just throw my resume in the mix. If I go to apply for a job in the future, I can reach out to them beforehand for advice, an extra leg up on the competition.”

Carly Quill, a sophomore majoring in business administration with a concentration in marketing and a minor in sports management, was also grateful for the opportunity to network.

“I had insightful conversations with representatives from various organizations such as the Patriots, the Celtics and Samuel Adams, gaining valuable advice and insights into career paths within the sports and entertainment industries,” Quill says.

Quill says the conversations were a confidence booster as they reinforced her passion for pursuing a career in the sports industry and her focus on social media skills.

“One emerging trend in the sports and entertainment industry is the increasing importance of digital and social media skills,” Quill says. “With the rise of digital platforms and online content consumption, professionals who can create engaging digital content, manage social media campaigns, and analyze data insights are highly sought after. This skill set allows companies to connect with fans and audiences on a deeper level, driving brand engagement and revenue growth.”

Kate Sullivan, an inside sales manager for the Boston Celtics, says that even though career fairs can get hectic, with up to 500 students in one place, they are incredibly valuable.
“These events are a great way to bring resumes to life and start conversations with students, whether you’re currently hiring or planning to hire in the future,” Sullivan says.

Sullivan says her conversations with students are wide-ranging, from first- and second-year students looking for advice on how to position themselves for the future to upper-level students inquiring about specific internships or career opportunities.

“With technology and being online, it’s so easy to apply to anything via a click of the button, but having the opportunity for students to learn, build relationships and explore is huge for them,” Sullivan says. “If students can walk away with a couple of new takeaways or next steps, that’s a win.”

UNH offers multiple outlets for students interested in the sports industry, including the sport management and leadership major and sport management minor at CCHS, the Sport Careers Club and the UNH Sports Analytics Lab at Paul College.

Peter Zaimes, a decision sciences lecturer and instructor of the UNH Sports Analytics Lab, says that while sports industry jobs have always been in demand, the variety and availability of opportunities are expanding.

“It’s not just sports analytics; it’s sports management, entertainment, marketing and sales jobs. It’s across the board, every type of job you can imagine,” Zaimes says. "These jobs are competitive, but more of them are available. There’s a bigger pool of applicants, but also a bigger pool of jobs.”

Zaimes says events like the sports career fair allow students to put themselves front and center.

“These events involve a lot of luck, but at least students are getting exposed to these jobs and getting in front of these organizations," Zaimes says.

**WRITTEN BY:**
Aaron Sanborn | Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics | aaron.sanborn@unh.edu