

Syracuse University Center for Career Services

SURVEY OF 2002 GRADUATES

Executive Summary

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

This report is based upon 976 responses from December 2001, May, June and August 2002 bachelor's degree recipients. The total number of graduates surveyed was 2,231.

The Center for Career Services is pleased to present the results of the *Survey of Recent Graduates for Syracuse University's Class of 2002*. The following provides information on the post-graduate activities of bachelor's degree recipients from December 2001 and May, June, and August 2002. This report is based on responses from 975 out of a total of 2,231 bachelor degree recipients, which represents 44% of the graduating class.

The majority of information in this report was received in response to two mailings done in November and December of 2002. Most of the mailings were a collaborative effort between the Center for Career Services and individual schools and colleges. We greatly appreciate the assistance that we received from the Deans or their representatives who co-signed the letter that accompanied each survey. We would also like to thank all of our colleagues in the Career Services Network who contributed information to this year's report: **Connie Caldwell** from the School of Architecture; **Teresa DiMagno** from the College of Arts and Sciences; **Michele Felice** from the School of Education; **Debra Eischen** from the School of Information Studies; **Karen Kenty** from the College of Engineering and Computer Sciences, **Ed Pulaski** from the School of Management; **Karen McGee** from the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications; and **Felicia Otero-Haskins** from the College of Human Services and Health Professions.

The Class of 2002 faced unprecedented challenges as they prepared to enter the job market. Among other factors, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and the ensuing recession early in 2002 had a profound negative impact on college recruiting. At Syracuse University, the number of companies conducting on-campus interviews fell by 28%, a trend that was reflected throughout the country. According to *Recruiting Trends 2001-2002*, an annual report by the College Employment Research Institute at Michigan State University, employers were expected to hire 40% fewer bachelor graduates from the classes of 2001 and 2002. In light of such dismal projections, the outcome for the Syracuse University Class of 2002 was quite positive. Though salaries were stagnant and the means by which they obtained positions changed somewhat from previous years, graduates were still finding meaningful employment. Following are the highlights from this year's report.

- **The placement rate** (full-time employment plus graduate school attendance) for the Class of 2002 was **90.5%**, virtually identical to the 90% for 2001, and a slight decline from 94% in 2000.
- The number of graduates reporting **full-time employment** remained steady at **74.5%** in 2002, after slipping to 74% in 2001 from highs of 80% in 2000, and 82% in 1999.
- The perceived quality of employment for our graduates who responded still remains high. For 2002, **91% of those employed indicated that their position was related to their career goals**. This compares favorably to the 88% in 2001, 92% in 2000, and 90% in 1999.
- Perhaps one of the biggest surprises from this survey was that graduate school attendance did not increase. Typically in a tight job market more students will opt to continue their education in hopes of finding a better job market in a couple of years. That trend does not appear in this report. For both 2002 and 2001 graduates, **16%** reported that they **are continuing their studies** ending a slight but steady increase from 14% in 2000, 13% in 1999,

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- The soft job market continues to have a significant impact on starting salaries. The **average salary** for Syracuse University graduates in 2002 was **\$34,705** compared to \$34,851 in 2001. Though small, it represents the first decrease in average salary in more than 10 years. In fact, with a \$34,814 starting salary for the Class of 2000 we have experienced virtually no movement for 2 years. This follows steady increases of 8% from 1999-2000, 5% from 1998-1999, and 6% from 1997-1998.
- As we experience fewer employers visiting campus to recruit students, fewer graduates naturally report receiving employment through on-campus recruiting. Overall for 2002, **13% of respondents reported that they obtained their positions through on-campus recruiting**, compared to 21% in 2001, 23% in 2000, and 21% in 1999. and 18% in both 1998 and 1997. Graduates from Engineering and Computer Science (29%), and Information Studies (26%), and Management (23.5%) continue to experience the greatest benefit from on-campus recruiting.
- The vast majority of graduates still find positions by developing their own employment leads. **Forty-four percent** of all respondents report that their position was obtained by either networking or applying directly to an organization. This is especially true of Arts and Sciences (65%), Public Communication (57%), and Visual and Performing Arts (51%), graduates. This result emphasizes the importance of one of the main services of the Career Services Network - to help students become more effective in networking and pursuing non-advertising job leads.
- Students are finding that **internships** are becoming more effective ways of securing full-time employment as **16%** indicate that they obtained their position as a result of an internship or previous position with their employer. This doubles the 8% reported in 2001 and mirrors a growing trend among employers. The National Association of Colleges and Employers recently reported that, for the second consecutive year, employers rated their internship programs as the most effective method they have to recruit new college graduates.
- There are also some interesting patterns in our graduates who are continuing their education. Of all graduates who reported that they are attending graduate school full-time from the Class of 2002, **39%** are enrolled at Syracuse University compared to 29% in 2001. In spite of the recent increase in law school applications, **16%** of graduates who report that they are attending graduate school full-time are in **law school** down from 33% in 2001.
- The geographic profile of our graduates showed no surprises. As in the past, most of our graduates stay in this region. For 2002, **49%** of respondents who are employed full-time are working in **New York State**. Another 22% report working in one of the states adjoining New York (MA, CT, NJ or PA). **Fifty-eight percent** of respondents attending graduate school full-time are doing so in New York State with another 14% in adjoining states. In 2001, the percentage of respondents reporting full-time employment in New York State was 47%, attending graduate school full-time was 58%.

While we have seen better years for our graduates, the Class of 2002 still fared quite well in their post-graduate pursuits. This should be encouraging to the Class of 2003 as they prepare to enter an equally competitive job and gradu-

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Again, we greatly appreciate the help we have received from our colleagues in compiling this year's placement data. We also welcome comments and suggestions from the Syracuse University community regarding future improvements to our survey process or reporting format. Please feel free to contact us directly with your questions or thoughts. Thank You!

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Director

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