

Students find ample opportunities with help from **Career Management Center**

BY KELLY K. SERRANO

There's no question that Colorado State University College of Business students graduate with skills, knowledge, and experience attractive to employers.

But having easy access to the college's Career Management Center (CMC), with five counselors dedicated to ensuring students' success, doesn't hurt their chances of finding a job after graduation – and sometimes before – either. From helping with resumes and identifying potential jobs and employers to the interview itself, the CMC counselors often play a big role in jump-starting graduates' careers.

Susan Schell, director, believes the efforts of the CMC's counselors helped boost the number of the college's December 2015 graduates who received a job offer within 90 days of graduation to 92 percent.

"I think we do a huge service here," she says. "We keep working on making it better."

The college has had its own career services counselor for many years, but the expanded CMC started Jan. 1, 2012, thanks to the efforts of former Dean Ajay Menon. According to Schell, Menon believed that the implicit agreement we make is that students will be employed, which attracts parents, students, and donors.

Business students are introduced to the CMC in Business 100, where they learn about careers in business, drop-in hours, the Professional Development Fund, the job-search software, and networking and career fairs, among other events and services, Schell says. "Two or three assignments are around career, so we hook them right away."

The CMC Professional Development Fund, supported by donations, ensures students have the appropriate attire in which to attend career fairs as well as interviews.

"We give them the resources to purchase interview-appropriate attire they would not otherwise be able to afford," Schell says, noting the office has mannequins wearing today's acceptable business styles on display so students know what to buy. Doing so "levels the playing field. If they offend the employers, they're not going to get the job. If they're in casual attire, they're going home to get dressed."

But the college's graduates wouldn't have so much success finding jobs if it weren't for the education and skills they receive at CSU and if they weren't willing to work for it, she says.

By the time they graduate, many students have done community service, worked on multiple teams, started their own businesses, participated in athletics, shined in national competitions, and were members of various clubs, Schell says.

"They are just ready," she says. "I love looking at the resumes because I'm impressed with our students. They can put people to shame to see how much they have done by age 21."

Working to find work

Megan Baumhover, who graduated in May 2015 with a bachelor's degree in business administration with concentrations in real estate and finance, is one of those who wasn't going to graduate without a job. She says she visited the CMC even before she learned about it in class her freshman year.

"I was pretty proactive," she says. "I knew what I wanted to do; I wanted to leave with a full-time job and have a bunch of internships while I was at CSU. I hit the ground running."

Besides helping her build her resume and encouraging her to attend career fairs and networking events, Baumhover's counselor advised her to interview people in the careers she was interested in. After doing that and two internships, she says she realized a career in marketing wasn't for her.

Through the same process Baumhover discovered she enjoyed working in real estate and, while going in to learn about commercial real estate at Chrisland Real Estate Cos. in Fort Collins, discovered she was actually interviewing for a job. Chrisland hired Baumhover the spring semester of her junior year.

"Chrisland could tell I was driven and was someone who not only wanted to pick their brains about real estate, but also wanted to learn more about the industry and further my future career in real estate," she explains.

Today she is the company's business manager, overseeing a few employees and performing a variety of duties including bookkeeping and financials, operations, investor relations, and corporate branding.

"I don't think I could have found this job without (the CMC) – or at least made that connection to find the job," Baumhover says.



SHELL



BAUMHOVER