

FROM HOGG TO HOME - The Lafayette Parents' Career Connection

Lafayette College
Office of Career
Services
April 2009

Welcome!

Career Services is pleased to provide you with our electronic newsletter created just for Lafayette parents and families. FROM HOGG TO HOME is produced three times a year to keep you "in the loop" about the extensive career-related programs, events, and services we offer to students throughout the year. We welcome your suggestions for article and feature ideas.

In this issue...

- Spring Dates to Remember
- Career Exploration during Summer Vacation
- Lafayette Alumni: An Invaluable Network for the Career Search
- Careers for the Common Good
- STUDENTSPEAK

Career Exploration during Summer Vacation



With only a few weeks left in the semester, students are busy solidifying plans for the summer break from Lafayette.

Career Services has been working with students since the fall semester on developing ideas and plans for enriching summer experiences. Summer experiences can vary greatly, depending on the student's major, career interests, and class year but for all it is certain that each summer can be a stepping stone to later opportunities. Each experience can help to set goals for the following summer, which may ultimately determine plans for after graduation.

First Years: Career Services helps students to develop a plan for the four years before graduation and each summer

Spring Dates to Remember

April 18 - Lafapalooza - Lafayette's National Day of Service

May 28 - New Jersey Collegiate Career Fair at Rutgers University

May 23 - Commencement

Quick Links...

[Lafayette Housing Share Internship Housing Board](#)

[InterviewStream - Mock interviews available from the comfort of your student's computer](#)

[Career Services Parent Webpage](#)

[Job and Graduate School Fairs](#)

[Services for your Student](#)

Join our mailing list!

can involve different experiences that build in intensity and focus. For first year students, the first summer after college can be a time to go back to things that are comfortable and known, especially after a year of adjustment and drastic changes. It is perfectly acceptable for students to work in a job that they had prior to coming to college for example. Although students may not have an internship, there are ways to be involved in career exploration during this time. Students can think about the professions of family and friends and reach out to them to participate in job shadows or informational interviews. Observing a professional in his or her work setting can teach the student about environments they may like. Students could also conduct informational interviews over the phone with professionals. Counselors in Career Services can work with students to develop a list of Lafayette alumni who might be helpful in this career exploration.

Sophomores: The summer after sophomore year has increasingly become a popular time for students to apply for internships related to their career interests. Some students will work a summer job in addition to finding a part-time or volunteer internship for career exploration. Students need to begin early to apply for and find internship opportunities as many of the deadlines have passed by May.

Juniors: After completing their junior year, students normally are involved in the most focused and career oriented experiences. This is a very important summer that can teach students about what they want to do after graduation. Furthermore, many employers look to fill full time positions from the students who served as their interns during their junior summer. Students will be gathering information, building important skills, and making decisions about what they like and don't like. During an internship, students should be setting goals, taking notes, and reflecting on experiences. If a student is interested in graduate school directly after Lafayette, research experiences may be more appropriate.

Seniors: Some seniors do not have firm plans by graduation and the summer can still serve as a time for internships or other short-term service opportunities. These experiences can be valuable and can help to define the plans for an unsure student. Career Services is here to educate students about the resources available to identify opportunities and to help in the search process, no matter what stage they are in their career exploration.

Lafayette Alumni: An Invaluable Network for the Career Search

The bond that ties alumni and alumnae to Lafayette is one that is distinctively strong. Lafayette graduates are passionate about their alma mater and seek out opportunities to give back to the campus that gave them their academic foundation. Each year, Career Services runs a diverse mix of programs that leverage the generosity of Lafayette alumni and gather graduates from a variety of educational and career



backgrounds. Examples of such programs from this Spring include the **Philadelphia and New York Networking Nights** held in January, the **Young Alumni Dinner Panel** held in February, as well as the **Arts, Entertainment, Media, & Communications Night and D.C. Careers Alumni Dinner Panel** both held in March. Additionally, Lafayette alumni are heavily involved in the **Externship and Internship** programs. The enthusiastic participation of alumni at each of these Career Services programs clearly depicts their commitment to the College as well as their desire to help current students. In fact, alumni often travel several hours and take time from their busy work schedules to attend events on-campus or other locations. Career Services helps to facilitate the invaluable connections between alumni and current students by not only organizing these events, but also provide transportation for students to attend off-campus events with alumni.

In this challenging economy and job market, it is critical that students employ every resource available to them during their career search. Lafayette alumni are a priceless resource available to students through Career Services, as well as across the college through academic departments, athletics, and campus organizations. Alumni are ideal contacts for students to utilize to expand their network since this group looks forward to meeting with current students and sharing their experiences, knowledge, and advice. They are anxious to provide students with answers to their questions about industries, organizations, specific roles, and other career-related inquiries. Although an alumnus might not be able to offer a position directly, they may have information to help the student navigate the

organization or industry in which they are interested. Additionally, alumni are likely to connect students with individuals from their own network if they foresee this connection as helpful to the student.

The pride exuded by Lafayette graduates is a long-standing, infectious tradition. Current alumni set an exceptional example of what it means to "give back" to their alma mater in a meaningful way that directly benefits Lafayette students. As the Class of 2009 embarks on their life after Lafayette, these soon-to-be graduates are asked to continue this tradition of generosity as they transition from students to alumni.

Careers for the Common Good



Commencement for the Class of 2009 is quickly approaching. Family and friends alike are asking seniors, "are you planning on getting a job or going to

graduate school after graduation?" For many students, the answer is, "neither." An increasing number of Lafayette students are choosing to engage in a term of service opportunity after graduation. The term "gap year" has also been used for this type of experience. From life-changing volunteer projects spanning the globe to paid jobs abroad, gap years are all about gaining life experience. Besides helping to meet the world's needs, service also gives students real world experience - what so many employers and graduate schools are looking for. Lafayette students participate in a variety of volunteer programs through organizations such as the Landis Community Outreach Center or Engineers Without Borders. This commitment to serving others does not end with one's college career. These students graduate with a continued sense of commitment to the world around them. It seems only logical that they look for opportunities within this theme.

The reality is that most college graduates are undecided about the exact path they would like their careers to take. Career interests don't solidify until about the age of 25 so one's early twenties are a perfect time to take a risk, explore a passion, take on new challenges, and embrace uncertainty. There are many more term of service options available to students today than ten or fifteen years ago.

Students can engage in opportunities in the United States or abroad that last from 3 months to 2 years. Compensation may include stipends, living costs, housing, transportation, food, tuition assistance for graduate school, or loan forgiveness. Some of the most well known programs are Teach for America, Americorps, and the Peace Corps, but there are so many more opportunities available. Students can find programs in the areas of education, public safety, the environment, and other human needs.

It is important for parents to understand that these kinds of programs are truly viable options for seniors, and in many cases, can provide the kinds of experiences that help young adults make concrete decisions about careers. These gap year programs are also wonderful resume builders and provide substantial material for discussion in an interview. Year of service experiences aren't for students looking to avoid the real world and should not be viewed as such by either students or those who support them. Career Services has many resources available to students looking at the gap year option, and can also put students in touch with alumni who have completed such programs. We encourage parents to discuss the idea of a year of service with students. Your suggestion may be what allows your student to feel comfortable pursuing a non-traditional option after graduation.

STUDENTSPEAK

"I have found the Externship program to be an extremely valuable tool over the past 3 years. It has allowed me to gain early exposure to a variety of careers in my field of interest and has introduced me to very nice, informative people who have been critical in helping shape my career path."

Anonymous senior

email: moellerr@lafayette.edu

phone: 610-330-5115

web: <http://ww2.lafayette.edu/~careers/>