



# ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014

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Office of Career Services  
Tennessee Tech University

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# Executive Summary

The Office of Career Services has had a productive and record breaking year. The university's Flight Plan played a key role in our strategic vision for the office, as we concentrated on two focus areas: (1) improving the undergraduate student experience and (2) expanding financial resources and modernizing infrastructure.

With the incorporation of Flight Plan initiatives into our operation, we were able to identify an underserved population in our engagement and communication with first-year students. The 2014-2015 Provost's Micro-Grant will enable us to target this population and work toward assisting students with early intervention for retention and focusing on success in the freshman year.

Overall, student engagement with our programs and resources was at an all time high with 3,791 students and alumni attending six career fairs, 1,107 students participating at our career development workshops, and 206 students receiving Career Readiness certification. These endeavors will ensure that our students are well prepared to enjoy a successful career in their chosen profession.

This annual report will highlight the accomplishments and initiatives that make up our strategic plan.

M. Lynn Haley

Interim Director/Assistant Director-Career Services

# Mission Statement

The mission of Career Services is to assist students and alumni in planning, organizing, and conducting a successful job search. Our primary objective is to provide students with the skills they need to gain full-time, part-time, or experiential employment. We connect employers with students and graduates through a state-of-the-art recruiting platform to assist in the transition from college to the world of work.

Career Services is a division of Academic Affairs. The unit fully supports the mission of Tennessee Technological University by our commitment to the life-long success of our students. Through a comprehensive Experiential Education program and a focus on career outcomes (assisting students in securing their first destination after college), Career Services is aligned to contribute to the professional success of our graduates. Our office is committed to student retention initiatives that support the Flight Plan and correlate directly to the university's Vision Statement: "producing practical, **ready-to-work** graduates from a broad range of academic disciplines prepared to compete in a technologically driven world."

# Status of the 2013-2014 Hiring Environment

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), employers plan to hire 7.8 percent more new college graduates from the Class of 2014 for their U.S. operations than they did from the Class of 2013.

The top ten degrees most in demand for 2014:

- |                            |                                   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Finance                 | 6. Electrical Engineering         |
| 2. Computer Science        | 7. Computer Engineering           |
| 3. Accounting              | 8. Marketing                      |
| 4. Mechanical Engineering  | 9. Management Information Systems |
| 5. Business Administration | 10. Logistics                     |

The top hiring industries for 2014, bachelor's degree graduates:

- Educational Services
- Professional Scientific, and Technical Services
- Healthcare and Social Services
- Federal, state and local government
- Finance and Insurance

Top paying industries for 2014, bachelor's degree graduates:

- Mining, Quarrying and Oil and Gas Extraction
- Management of Companies and Enterprises
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Finance and Insurance

*Source: NACE Job Outlook 2014*

# 2013-2014 Goals

The following goals were established for 2013-2014 in the Career Services strategic plan:

- Proactively develop and implement innovative career development workshops and programs employing both traditional and web-based delivery methods to increase student engagement
- Support retention efforts by managing the university Experiential Education (cooperative education) program
- Conduct four on-campus and two off-campus career fairs as a venue for career exploration and increase opportunities for co-op, internship, and post-graduate employment
- Generate annual career fair revenue of \$68K. Note: this revenue objective is derived from comparing previous year's revenues and the strength of the job market.
- Increase employer, student, and faculty communication through Tech Times, office newsletters, surveys, and emails
- Collect and report student graduation and First Destination Survey data

The following pages will highlight the results and outcomes relative to these goals.

# Goal Accomplishments

**Goal 1:** Proactively develop and implement innovative career development workshops and programs employing both traditional and web-based delivery methods to increase student engagement.

- Partnered with 10 industry professionals to deliver 13 workshops.
- Over 1,000 students attended these events which generated a 79% increase over 2012-2013.
- Marketed web-based career development resources including Sigi 3, Candid Career, and Career Spots. Student usage of this technology showed a 9% increase.

# Goal Accomplishments (continued)

**Goal 2:** Support retention efforts by managing the university Experiential Education (cooperative education) program.

- 261 students were enrolled in the cooperative education program.
- Students are working in 15 states and represent 17 university majors.
- There are 261 employers participating in the program which is an increase of 26 over the previous academic year.



# Goal Accomplishments (continued)

**Goal 3:** Conduct four on-campus and two off-campus career fairs as a venue for career exploration and increase opportunities for co-op, internship, and post-graduate employment.

- Four career fairs were held on-campus during the year. In addition, two fairs were held in Nashville for the May graduates and Education majors. Tennessee Tech student attendance ranked highest over all 13 participating consortium schools.
- Student attendance at all fairs: 3,791 which is a 5% increase
- Revenues generated from career fairs and career fair sponsorship opportunities: \$69,025 which exceeds our project goal.

# Goal Accomplishments (continued)

**Goal 4:** Generate annual career fair revenue and, where possible, identify new revenue streams.

- Obtained approval to conduct an additional on-campus career fair specifically for Education majors.
- Grants Awarded:
  - John Deere Foundation - \$5,000
  - Enterprise Holdings Foundation - \$2,500
  - Provost's Micro-Grant for Student Retention, Persistence and Graduation – \$4,000

# Goal Accomplishments (continued)

**Goal 5:** Increase employer, student, and faculty communication through Tech Times, office newsletters, surveys, and emails.

## Student Initiatives:

- Identified an underrepresented population in communication between the Career Services Office and first-year students. With funding acquired through the Provost's grant, we will begin targeted marketing of the career planning programs and services offered by our office and proactively support the university's effort to retain and engage first-year students. Early identification of a college major will aid in setting students on a four-year path to graduation.
- Trained two Career Ambassadors and seven student workers to serve as Peer Mentors. As a knowledgeable point-of-contact they provide resources and schedule appointments.

## Employer Initiatives:

- Developed new employer survey requesting information about student hires and suggestions for improvements to our program.

## Faculty Initiatives:

- Faculty from Agriculture, Biology, Business, Civil Engineering, Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering have incorporated the Career Readiness Certification program into their curriculum. Their support of the program has led to an increase of 81% in certifications awarded.

# Goal Accomplishments (continued)

**Goal 6:** Collect and report student graduation and First Destination Survey data.

- Data collected at the March 2014 Senior Salute provided a 98.5% response rate which surpasses last year's goal of 65%.
- Career Services developed a four question survey (using dropdown menu options) asking (1) highest degree completed, (2) current major, (3) what is your status immediately after graduation, and (4) would you like to keep your Experience eRecruiting account active. The survey was placed on four laptops and administered by the Career Services Career Ambassadors and Peer Mentors. This peer-to-peer initiative enabled us to increase interaction with our graduates and helped to generate a record breaking response rate. Additionally, in examining response data, 83% of graduates requested their Experience eRecruiting account remain open identifying that the resources and communication from Career Services remained valuable in their undergraduate and post-graduate experience.

# Initiatives

Several initiatives were introduced and others expanded in this reporting period.

1. Career development and exploration videos: Candid Career and Career Spots instructional videos were viewed by 916 users.
2. Peer-To-Peer Teaching: Two seniors were hired as Career Ambassadors and seven student workers were trained as Peer Mentors. Serving as a knowledgeable point-of-contact for students visiting our office, they provide resources and schedule appointments, confirm appointments via email and provide web-based resources prior to appointments. Peer Mentors send a follow-up email reminding students we are available to assist them at any time. Career Ambassadors conducted 190 resume reviews, mock interviews, and classroom presentations.
3. Career Readiness Certification: This program is designed to address key elements in career planning success. 206 certificates were awarded from seven university departments. This is an increase of 81% over last year.
4. First Destination Survey: Data collected at the March 2014 Senior Salute provided a 98.5% response rate which surpasses last year's projected goal of 65%.

# Student Engagement - Events

Career Services provides opportunities for students to engage in skill building as they prepare to enter the world of work or the experiential education program. Students are also provided with opportunities to meet prospective employers through five annual career fairs. Student and alumni attendance results for fall and spring semesters are illustrated below:

2013 – 2014 Events	Student Attendance	% Increase/Decrease from 2012-2013
Workshops (13)	1,017	79% increase
Career Day (October 2013)	2,064	13% increase
Engineering Fair (Feb. 2014)	877	2% increase
Healthcare Fair (Feb. 2014)	175	55% increase
Spring Fair (March 2014)	463	.2% decrease
Nashville College to Career Fair and Teacher Recruitment Fair	212	10 % increase

# Student Engagement

Student and alumni engagement with Career Services includes:

2013 – 2014 Activity	Student Participation	% Increase/Decrease from 2012-2013
Career Readiness Certifications	206	81% increase
# of Students Registered with Experience eRecruiting	12,596	39% increase
# of Active Alumni Registered with Experience	424	46%
# of Student Users Interacting with Perfect Interview software	1,864	10% increase
SIGI 3 Users (Career Exploration web-based software)	1,109	10% increase
Candid Career and Career Spots Users (Career Development and Career Exploration web-based software)	216 / 916	9% increase

# Student Engagement – Experiential Education

Participation in the experiential education program as a cooperative education (co-op) or internship student is voluntary, and participation is open to students in all majors. Career Services provides advisement and assistance in connecting students to employers.

While co-op students are registered and monitored by Career Services, internship students have the option to register as a co-op student or to seek approval for academic credit through their academic advisor. If academic credit is authorized, the student is monitored by their academic advisor while on assignment.

Student co-op assignments are tracked by Career Services. The following statistics provide insight into the strength of this strong and well-regarded program.



# Co-op Participation Statistics 2013-2014

STATISTICS	PARTICIPATION
# of Co-op Work Assignments	261
# of Co-op Employers	110
# of New Co-op Employers	26
# of States Where Co-ops Are Working	15
# of Co-op Students on International Assignments	4
# of Academic Majors Participating in Co-op	17
Average Hourly Pay Rate: Engineering	\$17.21
Average Hourly Pay Rate: Non-Engineering	\$12.50

## First Destination Results

Career Services works diligently to track First Destination activity for graduates. Past survey methods have only yielded a 30% response rate. This rate is well below the 65% standard guideline which is recommended by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). At the spring Senior Salute, we implemented a new, abbreviated survey which provided a **98.5%** response rate. The results of this survey are listed below. Follow-up split surveys were then developed to target respondents still in need of job search assistance. These surveys will be deployed within 90 days, 6 months, and 12 months after graduation. All surveys include the exact verbiage used by U.S. News and World Report to collect student data.

Destination	Percentage
Plan to Attend Graduate School	26.4%
Joining Military	.6%
Starting My Own Business	1.2%
Employed Full-Time In My Career Field	38.2%
Still Seeking Employment In My Career Field	30.0%
Employed But Not In My Career Field	3.6%

# Employer/Alumni Participation

A primary responsibility of Career Services is to host on-campus events to attract employers to campus. The following highlights employer involvement for the reporting year:

Activity	Participation
On-campus interviews	413
On-campus job fairs	4
Number of employers at TTU job fairs	277
Number of employers at Nashville job fairs	294
Number of employers conducting Career Services workshops	10
<b>Job Opportunities</b>	
Number of jobs posted on-line	1,289
Number of resumes viewed on-line by employers	7,764
Number of on-line resumes sent to employers	1,846
<b>Alumni Involvement</b>	
Number of alumni mentors	212
LinkedIn alumni members	3,492

# Student Retention Efforts

In support of Flight Plan's focus area to improve the undergraduate experience and reduce time-to-degree, Career Services partnered with student services and various academic units to increase student engagement. Additionally, Lynn Haley and Ashley Walls received the 2014-2015 Provost's Micro-Grant for Student Retention, Persistence and Graduation and will begin implementation of a targeted marketing program to first-year students. This year's activities included:

1. Student Orientation, Advisement and Registration (SOAR):
  - SOAR: Staffed an information table at 11 events; answered questions for incoming students and parents about our resources for career exploration and planning.
2. Career Advising:
  - Over 1,000 students used the Sigi3 career exploration software. Staff provided one-on-one counseling to assist students as they investigated career options.
3. Career Fairs:
  - First year students were invited to participate in four on-campus career fairs to enable them to investigate career opportunities.
4. Internship/co-op information dissemination:
  - Conducted workshops specifically focusing on the benefits of real-world experience.
5. University 1020 First-Year Connections:
  - Delivered workshops, office tours, events, and classroom presentations to increase awareness of our services and programs.

# Staff Development

Career Services leadership is committed to representing the university in a positive and professional manner within our career field. Staff members attend training and participate in professional activities in order to maintain expertise in the field and to be subject matter experts and leaders within our profession. The department holds memberships in national, regional, state, and other professional organizations. Membership in these organizations provides our staff with access to the latest information in the career field.

## **Lynn Haley – Interim Director/Assistant Director**

### Memberships:

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

Nashville Area College of Career Fair Consortium – Board of Directors

Tennessee Association of Colleges and Employers (TACE)

- Vice President of Colleges - Director of Communications

Southeastern Association of Colleges and Employers (SoACE)

Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM)

Tennessee Association of Career Development

SACSCOC Compliance Certification Committee – Student Achievement Team

### Conferences:

July 26, 2013 – Tennessee Association of Colleges and Employers – Crossville, TN

August 1, 2013 – Experience eRecruiting Group Users – Chattanooga State Community College

Nov. 1, 2013 – Tennessee Association of Colleges and Employers – Trevecca Nazarene University

April 24-25, 2014 – Tennessee Association of Colleges and Employers – Annual Conference – Pigeon Forge, TN

May 30, 2014 – Tennessee Association of Career Development – Tennessee State University

June 9 – 11, 2014 – National Association of Colleges and Employer – Annual Conference – San Antonio, TX

# Staff Development (continued)

## **Donald E. Foster – Associate Director**

### Memberships:

Nashville Area College of Career Fair Consortium – Board of Directors

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

Tennessee Association of Colleges and Employers (TACE)

Southeastern Association of Colleges and Employers (SoACE)

Southeastern Regional Cooperative Education Conference (SERCEC)

### Conferences:

Nov. 1, 2013 – Tennessee Association of Colleges and Employers – Trevecca Nazarene University

April 24-25, 2014 – Tennessee Association of Colleges and Employers – Annual Conference – Pigeon Forge, TN

June 9 – 11, 2014 – National Association of Colleges and Employer – Annual Conference – San Antonio, TX

### Presentations:

March 2014 – Tennessee Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. “Mock Interviewing at its Best” – Middle Tennessee State University

April 11 – 12 – 2014 – Women’s National Conference on Cyber Security. “Resumes that Gain Attention” – Nashville, TN

May 14 – 16, 2014 – Southeastern Regional Cooperative Education Conference. “Engaging More Employers Through Flexibility and Cost Effectiveness” – Columbia, SC

## **Ashley Walls – Administrative Associate 3**

Nashville Area College to Career Fair and Teacher Recruitment Fair Grant Writing Workshop

University Training Workshops – Banner, ePrint, EagleBuy, Budget, Travel and IDT, On-Line Leave Reports, SIGI 3

# Career Services

## 2014-2015 Goals

1. Conduct five on-campus career fairs with the establishment of a new Education Fair in 2015.
2. Partner with academic units to develop workshop programs to ensure there is no duplication of efforts and resources.
3. Begin implementation of grant-funded initiative to increase awareness of programs to first-year students.
4. Augment web-based suite of career development and exploration software with the integration of Going Global and CSO Research.
5. Increase participation by students and employers in the Experiential Education program by 5%.