

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 3 JobCat: Thousands of Opportunities
- 4 Network: Mentorship and Camaraderie
- 5 Developmental Approach
- 6 2013-2014 Peer Career Mentors
- 7 Career Fair Events
- 7 Peer Career Mentor Mobile Schedule

## JobCat: One Website, Thousands of Job Opportunities

This online tool can help find part- and full-time positions at WCU, or full-time positions, internships and co-ops across the globe in addition to other valuable resources for career development.

*Continued on page 3*

## “Developmental” Approach Enables Real- World Adaption

Integrating career preparedness as a part of a student’s educational curriculum teaches skills that are useful in today’s job market.

*Continued on page 5*

## Peer Career Mentors Introduced

The 2013-2014 Peer Career Mentors consist of a group of highly motivated and successful student leaders on campus. *Continued on page 6*

*The Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education is a unit of the Office for Undergraduate Studies*



## Announcing Catamount Externships, a New Way for Students to Gain Experience, Build Workplace Competencies, and Learn about Careers

BY AUDRA BEGG

Internships, co-ops, service learning, and externships are terms often used interchangeably. However, each of these work-related experiences are different. While each opportunity represents a form of experiential learning and offers a particular set of benefits to participants, externships offer students a unique insight into “a day in the life” of their potential profession. The Catamount Externship experience provides students with the opportunity to shadow a professional within an industry or field of interest. The Catamount Externship is a structured shadowing experience during which students observe and practice workplace competencies and receive guidance and mentoring from practicing professionals.

The specific requirements and focused applicability of the internship, co-op, and service-learning opportunities offered to Western Carolina students inspired the creation of the Externship Program. Many types of experiential learning offer structured opportunities that are restricted to only some sectors or require a higher level of time or other commitment: internships and coops often require prerequisite coursework and a semester-long commitment; service learning tends to focus on nonprofit organizations and community service endeavors; and, general shadowing may sometimes lack structure for reflection and learning or is overly selective, which can make it less effective or inaccessible. The Catamount Externship is designed to balance structure with accessibility, and to function as a precursor to more formal experiential learning opportunities such as internships or co-ops.

The Catamount Externship program is open to any student wishing to participate. While an externship is ideal for first- and second-year students eager to gain preliminary exposure and

## Looking For More Advice?



Previous issues of Career Journal can be found at our online archive. More advice and resources are just a click away.

[wcu.edu/6663.asp](http://wcu.edu/6663.asp)

## Career Services' PROGRAMS FOR SUCCESS

STUDENTS AND ALUMNI: TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE MANY SERVICES WE OFFER!

### JobCat & Other Job Searching Services

Internet-based recruiting systems that include jobs as well as opportunities to post a résumé and sign up for interviews.

### Career Counseling

If you have a career concern that you would like to discuss, call for an appointment with a career counselor.

### Career Testing

If you are having difficulty making a decision about a major or a career, we offer career testing and interpretation.

### Cooperative Education

Co-op is a program that allows you to work in your career or major field and receive directly related experience and credit while you are still in school.

### Résumé Critiquing Service

E-mail your résumé (cover letter, too!) to [mdespeaux@wcu.edu](mailto:mdespeaux@wcu.edu) or [mashe@wcu.edu](mailto:mashe@wcu.edu) and make an appointment to discuss it!

### Student Employment

Need some cash? The [student employment office](#) can help you find a part-time job. We offer listings for on-campus as well as off-campus employment. View them at [careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu).

### Career Services Website

Our website offers links, articles, event calendars, job search tools, directories, videos and FOCUS-2, a computer-aided guidance program to help you in your career decision. Available at [careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu).

### Interviewing Skills Assistance

You can participate in a mock interview and improve your skills through our online [Perfect Interview Program](#).

### Career Days and Recruitment Events

Career Services offers multiple [recruitment events](#) every year, including Fall WCU Career Fair & Grad School Day, Health Services Career Fair, Etiquette Dinners, Summer Jobs and Internships Fair, WCU Career Fair, Etiquette Reception, & Education Recruitment Day.

## Career Services INFORMATION

828.227.7133 | [careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu)

Mardy Ashe, Director and Career Counselor  
[mashe@wcu.edu](mailto:mashe@wcu.edu)

Michael Despeaux, Associate Director and Career Counselor  
[mdespeaux@wcu.edu](mailto:mdespeaux@wcu.edu)

Colleen Davis, Career Graduate Fellow  
[ckdavis@wcu.edu](mailto:ckdavis@wcu.edu)

Carrie Hachadurian, Non Work-Study Student Employment Specialist  
[cphachadurian@wcu.edu](mailto:cphachadurian@wcu.edu)

Deneen Landis, Administrative Support Specialist  
[dslandis@wcu.edu](mailto:dslandis@wcu.edu)

*The CAREER JOURNAL is a publication of the Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education at Western Carolina University.*

*Publisher: Michael Despeaux  
Editor: Colleen Davis*

WCU is a University of North Carolina campus and an Equal Opportunity Institution. This public document was created for electronic distribution by the Office of Creative Services | Oct. 2013 | 13-788



## JobCat ONE WEBSITE, THOUSANDS OF JOB OPPORTUNITIES

JobCat has become a necessity for all interested in finding non-work study and local off-campus employment opportunities as the Student Employment Office now uses the online database to post position vacancies. In addition to listing part-time jobs, an advanced search on JobCat allows the user to search both part- and full-time positions, in addition to internships and co-ops. Although JobCat is the primary location for jobs at Western Carolina University, it can also be used to find positions that are available from companies located regionally, and even nationally.

In addition to providing thousands of job opportunities, the website also allows users to upload their resumes, cover letters, and any other documents that one deems relevant. Once users upload these documents to their file, they are then able to publish and send them to employers to further implore about desired postings. Published resumes and other documents become a part of a user's profile, which is able to be seen by other JobCat users.

No matter the need that leads one to create a JobCat profile, this website offers thorough assistance with an expansive reach, and does so quickly.

### GET STARTED: HOW TO SETUP YOUR PROFILE

1. Visit [wcu.experience.com](http://wcu.experience.com) or [careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu).
2. Log in using your personalized "9-2" student identification number and birthday (alumni can self-register to create an account)
3. Complete your personal profile
4. Upload your resume; if you do not have an up-to-date resume, visit Career Services or a peer career mentor for assistance.
5. Begin looking for current positions based on major, professional interests and position locations using personalized search criteria\*\*

## Announcing Catamount Externships

CONTINUED FROM COVER

experience within a field of interest, it also may benefit a junior or senior in need of professional guidance and networking prior to entering the job market. Although students do not receive payment or class credit, externships prove worthwhile in terms of confirming or disproving career aspirations, developing workplace competencies, investigating a functional area, and networking with professionals in a chosen field. Additionally, externships may prevent the students from prematurely declaring or repetitively changing their majors. Ultimately, the externship offers an experience that assists students in making timely decisions about their appropriate major and career path.

### The Catamount Externship Experience Specifics

The [Catamount Externship](#) experience requires shadowing a professional for a minimum of eight hours over the course of two-to-five business days. Students may find an externship site on their own or through [JobCat](#). Students are required to complete and submit a [Catamount Externship Student Application](#) as well as a [Catamount Externship Host Application](#) (if you find one on your own; if it's on campus or through Career Services/JobCat, this is already on file). Externs are expected to articulate and specify which skills and competencies they would prefer to observe or practice. Upon completing the externship, students will complete a [Catamount Externship Student Reflection](#). Students who successfully complete their externship experience will receive a Certificate of Completion and are recommended to add the externship to their resumes.

# Network: Mentorship and Camaraderie that Springboard Your Career

BY COLLEEN DAVIS

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 69 percent of all jobs are found through networking.

Those who found jobs through networking did so by using their personal and professional contacts to be alerted and provided access to job openings before their posting. However, the power of networking extends beyond the immediate action of finding a job. The technical and interpersonal skill one builds through networking is also valuable, as it gives a person an air of professionalism and confidence, leading others to assume initiative and dedication.

Networking can be divided to partition the search, pursuit, and continuance components of the process.

## The Search:

**Personal Networks:** Although networking is a powerful way to land a job one does not necessarily need a super powerful contact like the company CEO, for example. Usually the search for a career-enhancing contact does not extend beyond the personal network you already have. Many strong useful contacts are found amongst friends, classmates, professors, or old bosses. Speaking with these individuals about your career goals and together brainstorming potential methods to capitalize on those goals is gratifying. Meeting with your contacts allow a person to gain camaraderie and the confidence to move forward with reassuring encouragement and advice.

**Expanding the Network with Conversation:** Meeting presenters at classroom lectures, career fairs, conferences, and seminars are opportunities to expand your network. Not only do these functions introduce new contacts into your network, they provide a ground for which you can learn more about the field and expose yourself to future possibilities.

**Expanding the Network through Social Media:** Today's technology aids in the job search, as it allows people across

the globe to interact with one another. There are many networks from which people can publish various forms of media to support their cause and share with other users of that network. To let these social networks grow a meaningful network, adhere to the following tips:

1. Be visible—Future employers not only screen profiles for inappropriate behavior, they also look for any activity that show initiative and dedication to your cause. Be cognizant of the image you portray. Focus on showing your value in the field by posting relevant articles, writing blogs, or engaging in conversation that pertain to your chosen field.
2. Utilize your resources—Ask colleagues for endorsements and recommendations as their words provide credibility for the qualities and experiences you mention in your profile.
3. Break the ice—For contacts that you would like to make but do not know initiate contact by following them on Twitter and favorite, re-tweet or comment on their posts. After correspondence through a passive form look into the possibility of connecting with that person in other networks, or consider emailing them to ask for information regarding their field.

## The Pursuit:

### Introduce Yourself

Once you happen upon a potential contact, it is important to let them know you have a strong awareness of yourself and the career path you want to pursue. Promote your skills and abilities through your hobbies and experiences.

### Learn about Them

No matter what field the contact is in, it is enriching to learn about someone else's career path. Their advice about the skills required for their position or what they considered useful information when they first entered the job market is transferable

to your personal experiences. If the contact is a presenter at a career fair, asking questions about their career paths shows your curiosity and interest in the field.

## Create a Connection

In addition to contributing to lively conversation, establishing a common ground can help an employer or presenter remember who you are.

## Keep In Touch

Make future plans to meet with a new contact upon meeting them. Before you end the conversation, be sure to get their contact information and let them know you plan to use them as a resource for navigating the job market and learning more about the field.

## The Continuance:

Arranging a professional network does not end after the search and pursuit. To reap the full benefit of making a contact, take the care to maintain correspondence. Any communication will provide you an opportunity to learn and connect with a professional contact, and consequently, your field. Be sure to keep track of emails and articles you acquire through your correspondence, as that information may deem itself worthy in future interviews and additional networking opportunities.

## How to Maintain Contact

1. Send a thank you note to show appreciation for meeting a representative and attending to your regard about the field
2. Ask a contact to review your resume in preparation for applying for a job within their field or company
3. Schedule an information interview to explore your field and seek advice. Without the burden of asking for a job offer, use the meeting to discuss topics like the skills required for the field, the nature of their job, or what they consider to be the most challenging aspect of their current position.



## “Developmental” Approach Enables Real-World Adaptation

Western Carolina’s Office of Career Services utilizes a “developmental” approach to career development, where graduates are able to adapt to the real world with the education and experiences they had as a student. This approach, recently featured in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, extends beyond a simple service-related or “transactional” method, and teaches “life skills, professional development, conflict resolution, financial literacy, and public speaking” starting before the student’s first class, and continuing “well past graduation.”

With programs like externships, co-ops, career events, FOCUS-2, career counseling, job search assistance, and workshops on a variety of topics, WCU’s Office of Career Services provides a comprehensive approach where career preparation is woven into a student’s entire educational experience.

### Examples of services that constitute our developmental approach:

*Note: Services may satisfy more than one aspect of an integrated approach to career development*

#### Experiential Learning

Universities and employers work together to provide a unique and exceptional learning venture for students

- **Externships** provide exposure to a career or field by observing or participating in the practice of core workplace competencies
- **Co-ops** and internships allow students to combine academic study with career-related work experience

#### Life Skills/Personal Evaluation

- **FOCUS-2:** Online system for career planning and major exploration
- **Career and Major Exploration Course:** 1 credit hour course taught by career counselors
- **Peer Career Mentors:** Student mentors provide career guidance to peer WCU students
- **Career Counselors:** Consultation for students with regard to any career decision

#### Professional/Interpersonal Development

- **Etiquette Dinners and Reception** provide a formal setting for students to experience practicing a professional demeanor and networking
- **Career Events and Fairs** allow students to meet and network with real employers and pursue both internships and post-graduate jobs.
- **Perfect Interview** is an online program that allows students to practice effective interviewing skills.

**SOURCE:** Supiano, Beckie. “Career Centers Stretch to Fill New Roles.” *www.chronicle.com*. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 30 Sept 2013. Web. 30 Oct 2013.

# Introducing: Your 2013-2014 Peer Career Mentors

BY COLLEEN DAVIS

The Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education would like to welcome seven of our newest members on staff, the peer career mentors (PCMs). All students at Western Carolina University, these bright mentors have a shared knowledge of professionalism pertaining to the workplace and a desire to assist their peers in finding a career.

Each week throughout the semester our PCMs will set up a table in a satellite location on campus to ensure coverage for all departments within WCU's system. The mobile mentor station travels to places including the Courtyard, UC, CRC, Hunter Library, and other high-traffic areas on campus. In order to find the current location of the PCM table, simply refer to the "PCM Table Schedule" published on the back page of this journal, or on the [Career Services website](#). All are welcome to receive assistance at the table, students and staff alike, even if just in passing questions and inquiries.

Our PCMs also give presentations to residence halls, registered student organizations, and other student groups around campus. In order to request a presentation from the PCMs or the office's career graduate fellow please call the Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education at 828.226.7133.

**The Peer Career Mentors can be found around campus Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:15 a.m.–2:45 p.m. and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:15 a.m.–2:45 p.m.**

**Dates and locations are posted at [careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu) with dates and locations updated every August and January.**



**Allison Adkins**, is a senior from Matthews, N.C. A member of the Honors College, Phi Beta Lambda, and Alpha Lambda, she plans to graduate with an accounting degree in May 2014. Allison has a passion for helping students of WCU and looks forward to assisting them in the process of realizing their career goals.

*On being a PCM: "I have seen first-hand the struggles my fellow students have with developing their professionalism. I have experience helping others with their resume, and I am excited to get to do this more often while sharing my advice with the students of Western Carolina University."*



**Summer Brathwaite** is a junior from Goldsboro, N.C., majoring in both criminal justice and psychology. A member of the Honors College and the National Society of Leadership and Success, and the Pi Gamma Mu Social Science Honor Society, Summer is also an academic course tutor with the WaLC. In her spare time, she enjoys exploring local music, writing, and reading poetry.

*On being a PCM: "I desire to be a peer career mentor to better prepare my generation of college students for future employment. While moving through my college career thus far, I have watched my fellow students both flounder and excel in 'real world' settings. By taking on the role of a peer mentor, I can assist students with their future career goals and increase their chances of a future filled with success."*



**Stefani Cronley** is originally from Long Island, N.Y., but now resides in Waxhaw, North Carolina. This fall at Western will mark her junior year as an acting major with a minor in film studies. She has also enjoyed being a part of the Honors College and looks forward to another exciting year.

*On being a PCM: "I wanted to be a peer career mentor because I enjoy interacting with people and working cooperatively to achieve career goals. I feel that being a PCM would allow me to gain new insights into the workforce and share that knowledge with my peers. I look forward to the exciting opportunities that come from working with various types of people and the joy of teamwork to accomplish a goal!"*



**Kelly Kinnear** is a junior from Greensboro, N.C. She plans to graduate with a double major in recreational therapy and Spanish. Kelly is a Chancellor's Ambassador and treasurer of the Recreational Therapy Association. Upon graduation, she plans to pursue her master's degree in occupational therapy in order to help people learn basic life skills and improve their standard of living.

*On being a PCM: "I want to be part of PCM because I have a lot of personal goals and I feel that PCM offers valuable tools to help me achieve these goals. Additionally, I want to help my peers pursue and reach their goals."*



**Kelly Randle** is from the Middletown, Del., a state known as the “small wonder”! She has earned a bachelor’s of science degree from the University of Delaware in cognitive science, with a concentration in speech-language pathology and a minor in psychology. Kelly is currently working on a master’s of science degree in WCU’s Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. As

an aspiring speech-language pathologist who will work with people from various backgrounds, she has looked to local community and campus groups to achieve a better connection to this region. That experience led her to become a peer career mentor!

*On being a PCM: “I believe that serving as a PCM will help me grow personally and professionally. I anticipate learning about campus programs and career opportunities to better serve as a resource to the students that surround me daily. In turn, I hope to develop my own writing and resume skills that will help me become the most appealing candidate as I transition into the workforce in the years to come!”*



**Allee Taylor**, a senior from Lowgap, N.C., is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a concentration in management and a minor in accounting. She is active in the Alpha Gamma Delta sorority. Although she has held many positions in her sorority, she currently serves as the vice president of recruitment. Allee has also served as the treasurer for the

National Society of Leadership and Success and the treasurer for Future Business Leaders of America and enjoys being involved in the many events that take place around campus. After graduation, she plans to pursue a master’s degree and a career in human resource management.

*On being a PCM: “Being a peer career mentor will help me become more knowledgeable about job searching, resume building tips and other valuable skills. I know that I will be able to use the information I learn in this experience to grow as an individual and use my knowledge to help my peers now and in the future. The skills I gain through being peer career mentor will help me come closer to achieving my future career goals.”*



**Sandra Yankah** is a senior majoring in psychology and sociology with a minor in marketing. Sandra is a resident assistant and an Academic Success Program peer mentor. She was born in Ghana but has lived in more than seven countries or states because of her father’s job in the U.S. Army. The longest she has ever lived in one place is the seven years her family spent in Germany. She speaks

three languages and rally enjoys learning new things and keeping up with current events. She enjoys reading a lot of news blogs in her free time and recently became interested in business and economics after observing the effects of the changing economy.

*On being a PCM: “I want to become a peer career mentor because I want to help my peers be more successful while also gaining skills that will help me as I pursue my own career goals.”*

## 2013-2014 Career Fair Events

### WCU Career Fair & Graduate School Day

Wednesday, Oct. 30 | UC Grandroom, 1-4pm

Please visit the following website for a list of registered employers that plan to attend.

[https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf\\_details?fhnd=6285](https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf_details?fhnd=6285)

### Spring Etiquette Dinner

Tuesday, Feb. 18 | UC Grandroom, 6-8pm

Cost: \$20; cash, check, or declining balance accepted.

Make reservation between January 27 and February 14 at 5pm in Career Services, 205 Killian Annex

[https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf\\_details?fhnd=6288](https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf_details?fhnd=6288)

### Summer Jobs & Internships Fair

Tuesday, Mar. 18 | UC Grandroom, 1-4pm

Please visit the following website for a list of registered employers that plan to attend.

[https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf\\_details?fhnd=6287](https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf_details?fhnd=6287)

### Etiquette Reception & How to Network

Tuesday, Mar. 18 | Ramsey Center Hospitality Room

Cost: \$10; cash, check, or declining balance accepted.

Make reservation between February 24 and March 14 at 5pm in Career Services, 205 Killian Annex

[https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf\\_details?fhnd=6289](https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf_details?fhnd=6289)

### WCU Spring Career Fair

Wednesday, Mar. 19 | UC Grandroom, 10-4pm

Please visit the following website for a list of registered employers that plan to attend.

[https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf\\_details?fhnd=6290](https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf_details?fhnd=6290)

### Education Recruitment Day

Tuesday, Mar. 25 | UC Grandroom, 4-6pm

Please visit the following website for a list of registered employers that plan to attend.

[https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf\\_details?fhnd=6292](https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf_details?fhnd=6292)

## Peer Career Mentor Mobile Schedule Fall 2013

The Peer Career Mentor Mobile Mentor Station can be found at the following location during the coinciding dates:

Monday and Wednesday 10:15am–2:45pm

Tuesday and Thursday 11:15am–2:45pm

October 14-17 – Stillwell

November 4-7 – Belk

October 21-24 – Forsyth

November 11-14 – Killian

October 28-31 – UC

November 18-2 – Library

October 29 Advising Day  
Killian Annex/One Stop

November 25-29  
THANKSGIVING

October 30 Fall Career Fair  
University Center

December 2-5 – Killian Annex

*\*The Mobile Mentor Station will not open during official University holidays, but will be open on Advising/Reading Day*

# ATTENTION PRIORITY ALERT: WANTED

- Looking for a career mentor?
- Interested in becoming a mentor?
- Know someone who should be a mentor?

Brought to you by WCU's Office of Alumni Affairs,  
Family Association, and Career Services.

For more information regarding our 2013-2014 Career Mentor Program,  
please contact [Mike Despeaux](#) or [Mardy Ashe](#) in the Office of Career Services.



Find us on  
**Facebook** 

Facebook is a registered trademark of Facebook, Inc.

 WCU Career Services has a Facebook page!  
Become a fan, and we can send you updates on Career Services and Co-Op Event happenings.  
Find us online by searching keywords:  
"WCU Career Services" on Facebook.

Want to get on the career path?

USE **JobCat**

1. Log in to JobCat at [careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu).
2. Complete a personal profile.
3. Upload a résumé.
4. Submit your online application by the deadline.

JobCat is updated with new jobs almost every day, so check for updates regularly!

The Career Services office is currently offering the following presentations for any student organization on campus, free of charge, to help develop the students professionally.

#### APPROPRIATE ATTIRE

Learn to identify the context in which business casual or business professional is required. Guidelines for men and women are both featured.

#### JOB SEARCHING

Explore job search resources available at Career Services while briefly reviewing how to write resumes and cover letters.

#### RÉSUMÉ & COVER LETTER WORKSHOP

Methods of how to craft a resume based upon the needs of the audience:

- Creating your first resume, and how to use it later as a repository for future activities
- Modifying a pre-existing resume to focus on strategy and answering more job-specific questions

#### NETWORKING AT EVENTS AND THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Learn how to professionally and methodically grow a beneficial network by finding networking arenas, pursuing contacts and maintaining correspondence.

#### INTERVIEW SKILLS & PREPARATION

Provide students with a space to prepare and practice for an interview. The Perfect Interview program will be demonstrated as a resource.

#### CAREER DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES AT WCU

This presentation describes the ideal chronological progression of career development for students while providing an overview of services within our office. Actual resources will be described or demonstrated, including career counseling, FOCUS 2, resume assistance, job search tools like JobCat, and Perfect Interview.

If you are interested in booking a presentation for your student organization, please contact Career Services at [careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu) at least two weeks prior to the potential date of the event.