

Are Big Cities the Best Place for Recent College Grads?

Graduation is nearing once again and seniors must find jobs and a new place to call home. The choices graduates make about where to live fresh out of Elon University shape their careers — and lives — as they are tossed into corporate America. The once-promising career is now riding on the continually changing workforce and decreasing number of jobs, thanks to modern technology and difficult economic times.

While the numbers are gradually improving, the reality of today's job market frightens many graduates. The aftermath of mild responsibility, partying and living essentially rent-free in college has boomeranged many students back to the comfort of their hometowns as moving back into parents' houses has become a trend during the last few years.

According to a recent survey by The Atlantic, nearly 85 percent of grads are heading home straight out of college. Elon senior

Rachael Berman plans to move back to her hometown of Baltimore after graduation in preparation for her new job in August. Moving back home is more and more common, and it can act as the perfect springboard for grads to find their places in the working world.

But some grads refuse to return to the nest. Instead, they look for a new place to inhabit that has the perfect combination of job opportunities, potential mates, nightlife and comfort. Forbes recently ranked Boston and Baltimore as its top places to live after graduation. These cities seem to offer a recipe for success.

Washington, D.C., which was also at the top of the Forbes list, continues to be a melting pot for recent graduates — especially Elon grads. Washington, D.C., offers a solid job market that ranges from steady government jobs — which tend to be recession-proof — to Fortune 500 company positions to creative communication careers. Sara Kaplan, Class of 2011, moved to Washing-

ton, D.C. shortly after graduation.

"It's the perfect combination of the North and South," Berman said. "I feel like the experience and exposure I am getting in D.C. is exactly what I need to start my career [in politics]."

Locally, the Raleigh-Durham area is also climbing to the top of the rankings for best cities. This area offers low unemployment rates and a comforting small-town feel.

"I love this city — it's vibrant, beautiful and fun," said Mary Catherine Cornick, Class of 2011.

Cornick moved back to her hometown of Raleigh to work at a software company.

Ultimately, the success of graduates is based on how motivated and determined they are. And that can start with finding the right city to set up camp, as the dynamic of the real world is sure to challenge the ease of college life. The adventures to finding career stability, and a place to call home, starts now.

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