

The Class of '82 Hits Tight Job Market — There Are Things To Do To Make It

By Milton Jordan
Years ago, a college degree virtually guaranteed you a job, but times have changed, and today's college degree hardly guarantees you an interview.

It's not that today's college degree is less valuable. It's just that the job market is a whole lot tighter.

"This is the worst that I've seen in the fifteen years that I've been in the placement office here," said Lindsey Merritt, director of NCCU's Career Counseling and Placement Bureau. "There are many good people coming out of college, but the jobs just aren't there, because companies just aren't hiring as many people."

To illustrate the point, Merritt said that historically about 85 percent of Central's students who used the placement bureau were employed in their fields right after college. This year, he says, the placement figure is going to be closer to about 25 percent.

At the local Employment Security Commission, Ms. Ann Colenda, a labor market analyst, echoes similar comments:

"We have about 1200 job openings now (mid-May)," she said, "and most of them are service jobs, such as waiters, waitresses, janitors, maids and counter workers, not the kinds of jobs a college graduate would be interested in."

So the problem winds up being a simple matter of supply and demand. There is a lot of supply — people needing jobs, particularly the newest crop of college graduates — and not so much demand, employers who need to hire a lot of people."

But while the picture is bleak, it is not impossible. There are jobs to be had.

In this area, for example, according to Merritt, the demand is for engineers, business majors with concentrations in data systems and people with broad training in the high technology industries.

Much the same is true

said Harry Russos, an Employment Security Commission job counselor. "One is to hit the job market with a proper preparation beyond the classroom, such as related job experience, even if it has to be volunteer. The second thing is not to make serious mistakes during the application process."

Russos listed four

come on the job, and go right to work," said Ms. Colenda, the job analyst. "They don't want to have to do a lot of training, or supervising."

The second step, of course, is to know what jobs are in the market.

High technology leads the way. According to a recent issue of *Black Collegian Magazine*, "The number of cor-

But what about those recent graduates who don't have high grade point averages, or experiences? Must they content themselves with unemployment or underemployment?

Not necessarily. A job as a paraprofessional can be a good interim step.

A paraprofessional is a person who has been specially trained to assist professionals in fields such as medicine, law and engineering. People in these slots get excellent "hands-on" experience in a particular field.

Consider law. "A paralegal can do everything an attorney does with the exception of three things," explains Ms. Sue Sullivan, director of the Lawyer's Assistant Program at the University of San Diego. "She cannot give legal advice, cannot represent clients in court, and she cannot practice as an attorney."

But to succeed, a paralegal has to be a special type person.

"A paralegal has to be a take-charge type who enjoys juggling a wide variety of duties," said Ms. Suzette LaFon, a California legal assistant. "On almost any given day I might prepare documents for one of the firm's lawyers, research and organize case material,

Mrs. Hester, Promoted at Mutual Savings



MRS. HESTER

Mrs. Annie I. Hester has been promoted to Assistant Secretary-Chief Accountant of Mutual Savings and Loan Association.

A Durham native, Mrs. Hester has worked as a Loan Processor and Loan Officer Trainee at Mutual Savings since joining the firm in 1978. She previously worked as an accountant with UDI Community Development Corporation, and with Mechanics and Farmers Bank for several years in a number of positions. She is a graduate of North Carolina Central University and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in business education.

Mrs. Hester is a member of the Board of Governors of Research Triangle Institute; member of The Downtown Club and past membership chairman of that club; and is treasurer of the Durham Striders Track Club. A member of Mount Calvary United Church of Christ, Mrs. Hester serves on the Trustee Board and as the church treasurer.



Recruiters Still Come, But With Less to Offer

A NCCU student chats with one of several recruiters who visited the Central campus this year. According to placement officials, though the recruiters are still coming, they are looking for fewer people to hire.

Photo by Silas Mayfield

across the country. In a recent article in *Black Enterprise*, a monthly black business publication, "...the job seekers who will prosper the most are those who have strong technical, scientific and business skills."

But even a degree in one of the fields in high demand is no guarantee, because the competition is still stiff. What you need is an edge.

"An edge can boil down to two things,"

mistakes, often made by new job applicants, that could kill your chances for a job, no matter how well you are educated, or how much experience you have. They are:

- Making unrealistic job and salary demands.
- Putting too much emphasis on what the company can do for you, such as fringe benefits, vacation, etc.
- Overselling yourself, boasting too much.
- Neglecting to do your homework before the interview, and therefore, not knowing enough about the company's needs and how you can contribute to them.

"It is important for a job applicant to demonstrate a specific focus and direction in his or her job hunt," Russos explained, "because the present situation is a 'buyer's' market, and employers are being more selective."

Merritt points out another reality of today's job market. "For the first few years after school, a person starting a career should be mobile and don't get tied down with a lot of responsibilities," he said. "Be ready to go where the jobs are, take whatever you can find, and chart a specific course designed to get you where you want to go."

The first step to get where you want to go is to be able to do what needs to be done.

"Employers are looking for people who can

perform, laboratories and institutes involved in high technology work in this country is growing by leaps and bounds. So



These graduates, about 700, waiting for their degrees in the recent commencement exercises at NCCU, face a very tight job market. With some in-

novative thinking, a commitment to excellence and hard work, many of them can find their places in the world of work.

Facing A Tight Market

NCCU Granted Funds For Two Fellowships

The North Carolina Central University School of Library Science has been awarded \$16,000 by the United States Department of Education to support two fellowships in library science during the 1982-83 academic year.

The grant was made by the Office of Libraries and Learning Technologies and will support two graduate students during the summer session of 1982, the

academic year of 1982-83, and the summer of 1983.

Dr. Annette L. Phinazee, dean of the School of Library Science, will administer the grant, which is designed to increase the number of black and Native American professionals in the library and information science field. Students at NCCU will work toward the Master of Library Science degree.

When everyone thinks alike, few are doing much thinking. —Nashua Cavalier

Here's How You Can Make More Money

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Mr. Subria's Durham, N. C. Schedule is:

June 3	Donahue Show	Channel 11	9:00 a.m.
June 3	NCCU	Free Lecture	7:30 p.m.
June 4	WDUR Radio	Interview	11:00 a.m.
June 5	Holiday Inn West Adm. \$10	Seminar	6:00 p.m.

For Lecture Information, Contact
Mrs. Lou Barnes (Program Director)
NCCU-Alphonso Elder Student Union
1801 Fayetteville St.
Phone 683-6494

For Seminar Information
Mr. William McLaughlin
McLaughlin's Medical Arts Pharmacy
2520 Fayetteville St.
Phone 683-1089

Mr. Subria's book *Black Folks Guide to Making Big Money in America* has sold more than 15,000 copies, was listed on the *Black Enterprise* Bookshelf, and is featured in a cover article in the June issue of *Essence Magazine*.

The author has appeared on the Today Show, Tony Brown's Journal and will be featured on the Donahue Show, June 3 at 9 a.m. on Channel 11, WTVD.

Mr. Subria has toured Washington, D. C., Chicago, Detroit and New York. Durham headlines a whirlwind North Carolinian tour in June.

(Books may be purchased at McLaughlin's Medical Arts Pharmacy)

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