

Summer job? Yeah, right. Employment options slim

Summer forecast: drought in the job market for students

By Beth Tatum
Features Editor

Summer and the part-time job always seem to go hand-in-hand. Lying out in the sun all day and waiting tables at night, rewarded by a deep tan and big bucks. The ultimate summer scenario, right?

Wrong. At least not this summer in Chapel Hill. Forget the deep tan. Just finding a job would be nice. Between the recession and budget cuts, the number of students looking for jobs is up and the number of jobs to be had is down. Pickings are getting scarce.

Harland Dick, a senior international studies major from Charlotte, said he really had a hard time finding a job. "I went to a lot of places, and, after 20 or 30 applications, I went to the (Spring Garden Bar and Grill) and got a position in the kitchen."

Regina Fogle, a senior business major from Charlotte, has had a similar experience, but with one main difference — her search isn't over yet. She has been searching on Franklin Street since before the end of the semester, but nothing has opened, she said.

"They either need full-time staff or else their staff is staying on," Fogle said. "And I need a job if I want to eat."

While the lack of jobs across the state does not seem to have sent people running to summer school for things to do (the number of people in summer school is about the same as last year), some thought that summer school would be a time to take a few classes, get a job and start forking in the bucks.

"I wanted to stay and make some money, and now I'm here trying to make any money," Dick said. "This is not what I thought it would be."

So why are things so hard? Patricia Penn, coordinator of Monarch Temporary Services, said she had

"We're getting 10 to 15 applications a day, 100 to 150 a week."

Bob Loomis
Spanky's manager

seen a large number of students come to the agency looking for work. "I would guess that there are more students looking for part-time work because the University and the hospital, the main employers of students, have had to cut positions due to frozen funds," she said.

She added that graduates are finding it more difficult to find jobs immediately, and many law school students are having to rely on temporary work because there are no internships. "Across the board, there are just fewer jobs available," Penn said.

Todd Wade, a senior political science major from Jamestown, said he found a lack of students to be an obstacle in his job search. "I tried applying at The Gym in Carrboro, because I thought they might need help," he said. "But the manager said he was not sure if he could hire many people because things are really slow in the summer. There aren't as many students."

And then there is the old, familiar refrain — "We don't hire for summer." Jennifer Vaughn, of the employment division of the UNC Human Resources department, said they were having a lot of students coming in and asking about jobs. "We do hire students, but not for summer employment," she said.

Instead, she tells them to call each individual department, such as the business school or the dental school, and see if they have any positions. Added to the shrinking job market are the sheer number of students applying. Ask any local business if the number of applicants are up, and the answer is a resounding yes.

"We're getting 10 to 15 applications a day, 100 to 150 a week," said Bob

Loomis, general manager and personnel director of Spanky's.

And he really hasn't had any positions open. "Because of the economy, I think a lot of people knew they had to work," he said. "By late March, early April, we were full."

Some students have given up on the conventional job market and started getting creative.

"My roommate from last semester is going to be selling T-shirts (he has created himself) at the flea market this summer," Dick said. He added that the situation was so bad that he had heard some guys talk that they would even work at the PTA Thrift Shop.

Others have given up on earning money and are thinking about their time instead. Finding a short-term job may be difficult this summer, but there are always opportunities with non-profit organizations, said Erasmo Barrera, an evening college graduate student from Panama.

"I'm trying to decide what to do next. I have some savings, so I may decide to volunteer," he said.

While students need jobs for this summer, Loomis had some advice for those who will be hunting next summer. The prime time to find a job in Chapel Hill is the two weeks between exams, the end of class and graduation, he said. "That's when we needed people. If people had been here, they could have gotten jobs," Loomis said.

Crossword solution

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Students can enjoy the peaceful serenity of the Coker Arboretum, away from the hubbub of campus

Arboretum rich in history — natural

By Melissa Palmer
Staff Writer

Big shady trees arch over students, sleeping and studying. Wide green lawns become a soft carpet for picnickers and sunbathers. Exotic plants and flowers add color and fragrance to the scene. This is Coker Arboretum: otherwise known as "the arb."

Located on the northeast side of campus, Coker Arboretum's five acres of gardens provide a peaceful and attractive retreat for Chapel Hill residents.

Mike Van Fossen, Davis Library librarian, eats his lunch there. "It's quiet, and I like to be around the plants after working with books and papers all day," he said. "This gets me away from my work environment."

"It's the one peaceful place on campus," said sunbather Molly Morkoski, a junior from Hendersonville.

William Chambers Coker, the Arboretum's founder, probably would have liked these comments. Records in Wilson Library's North Carolina Historical Collection show that one of Coker's main goals for the Arboretum was to provide pleasure to the community. His other goal was to begin a

collection of plants that could be improved and increased for students studying in the botany department.

Originally, the area that is now the Arboretum was too wet and boggy to build on, so the University used the land as a faculty cow pasture. The most notable resident of this pasture was University President David Swain's white mule, Old Cuddy.

As chairman of the botany department, then located in Davie Hall, which is next to the gardens, Coker asked University President Francis Preston Venable if he could use the area as a place for his students to study. Venable agreed and, waving his hand at the bog, said to Coker, "Maybe you can do something with that."

So with \$10 and one assistant, Coker built a rectangular garden patterned after English "Edwardian" gardens that contained three "rooms" or lawns. Coker planned for the Arboretum to contain plants native to North Carolina.

Today although the Arboretum still has some species that are native to the state, it consists mostly of plants from East Asia. The reason for this alteration involves UNC's botanical gardens on U.S. Highway 15-501, said Diane

Birkemo, Arboretum curator. Many people, she said, do not realize the N.C. Botanical Gardens operate the Arboretum. The two gardens provide a comparison of two regions of the world that contain similar plant species.

The Arboretum contains plants of East Asia, while the Botanical Gardens contain plants from the southeast United States, she said. By having these two different regions represented in each garden, the similarities and differences between the plants of the two areas can be studied.

Besides showing floral relationships between East Asia and the Southeast, Birkemo said that, as curator, she wants to maintain the garden's history by keeping changes (such as to paths and lawns) to a minimum.

Birkemo came to Chapel Hill in March of 1986 after receiving a Bachelor of Science in environmental studies at Springfield College in Massachusetts. She also received two years of horticultural training at Pennsylvania's Longwood Gardens. Nine months out of the year, Birkemo has one intern to assist her.

Birkemo also is concerned about the Arboretum's reputation. She said she thought one rape occurred in the gardens in the 1960s, which may be the reason that the area often frightens students and residents.

"The Arboretum is often discriminated against; I want to make it a place for people to enjoy," she said.

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