

Present Yourself

First annual CIDP career fair a success

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Career fairs are not only an excellent opportunity for students to get a head start on identifying potential employment, but also helpful practice preparing a resume, presenting themselves professionally, and networking with potential employers. (Pictured: School of Health Professions career fair held in February 2017)(Photo by Jonathan Logan)

By: Danni Francis

On April 7, the Community & International Development Program (CIDP) hosted their first annual career fair. Those involved with the CIDP, including Tim McGuire, graduate student, and Alex Raney and Anna Kim, graduate assistants, helped coordinate the event with Beverly Peck, the department's administrative assistant.

Dozens of eager students maneuvered from table to table to converse with hiring managers and representatives from eight companies.

Representatives from [Adventist Southeast Asia Project](#), [Bashor Children's Home](#), [Benton Harbor Area Schools](#), [Bethany Christian Services](#), [Child and Family Services of Southwest Michigan](#), God's Abundant Family, [Lakeland Health](#) and [Wightman & Associates](#) met with students to discuss job opportunities.

“The career fair is a great benefit to students,” explains McGuire. “It gives students the opportunity to practice their job acquisition skills, how to interview, prepare a resume and present themselves. So, while they may not be interested in these particular organizations, they might find the skills they learned through this process to be useful.”

Students were encouraged to visit each table for the chance to win gift cards to Barnes and Noble, as well as leave their resumes and contact information to hear about internships and job opportunities.

Vendors Jose S. Diaz, dual language education specialist and Rita Seay, safety grant supervisor, from the Benton Harbor Area Schools provided insight from the hiring side of the table.

“We are looking for committed, enthusiastic bilingual educators for the 2017-18 school year,” Diaz explained. If you are graduating and don’t have much experience, we understand. Still include whatever experience you have in your resume. Everything counts.”

“Right now, we want educators for all grade levels,” Seay concurs. “We want those with experience or an interest in urban education. As far as previous experience, some of these candidates might just be graduating, but they should include volunteer experiences like Vacation Bible School or other work with children because we do consider that.”

Seay advises how to stand out through the job process.

“Volunteer experience and confidence about being in urban environments with students who might not be like you are really important,” he says. “Demonstrate a willingness to support students who are dealing with legitimate baggage. Although they may not present themselves in the best way, these students deserve a good education too.”

A representative from Wightman & Associates, one of the most prominent engineering, surveying and architectural firms in the Midwest, shared what the company looks for.

“We want to see some passion for the planning and architecture side of things; attitude is a big piece of the puzzle,” said Jordan Parker, 2013 Andrews graduate and project manager. “Skills can be taught but your attitude is something we are looking for—a good cultural fit. Someone who is open-minded and shows that they have well-thought-out ideas is the best candidate. Skill sets are a leg up, but it won’t outweigh someone who has a good attitude.”

He offered tips for hopeful applicants. “It’s important to make personal connections and show that the jobs that you’ve had, no matter what they were, are important experiences in your life. Even if you pushed carts in a grocery store, we all did those jobs too, demonstrate what you took from it, not just what they took from you.”

Jordan Smart, senior psychology major, reflected on the career fair experience.

“To be able to come to a localized place with various potentials for a career path is something I commend the Community & International Development Program for creating,”

said Smart. “I feel like this career fair really helped me and my fellow students find a good sense of direction.”

The CIDP encourages anyone with questions, comments or concerns about the career fair to email them at cidp@andrews.edu or call 269-471-6675.

Related Links

- [Community & International Development Program at Andrews](#)
- [Behavioral Sciences at Andrews University](#)

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