



GCRC

Strengthening Relationships
Between Government
And Higher Education

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Please note that the Returning Veterans topic will be covered in more detail at the Trends in Recruiting Conference on Thursday, November 16th. The presenters will be Michael Holub, Department of Defense and Donn Merritt, Naval Station Great Lakes. For more information or to register for the conference, visit <http://www.mace.org>

Resources for Returning Veterans

Currently, 126,000 troops are overseas in Iraq and Afghanistan according to a June 2006 Department of Defense press release. Among those soldiers, 1,400 are from the Illinois National Guard. A third of those soldiers are current students either on active duty or recently returned from a deployment.

More and more of these student veterans are returning to campuses across the country. Illinois in particular has a unique program that assists returning veterans in continuing their higher education. Specifically, a number of higher education institutions participate in the Illinois Veteran Grant Program (<http://www.collegezone.com/>

[information-zone/3392_3648.htm](http://www.collegezone.com/information-zone/3392_3648.htm)), one of the most generous in the country. It gives qualified students up to four years of paid tuition and mandatory fees. This only serves as a further enticement for a veteran to either return to school or to begin a program of study.

With the increase in the veteran population on-campus, both career centers and employers who recruit at and hire students from universities should be aware of resources available for this unique population in obtaining and maintaining employment. Beyond services offered at college campuses, which often include on-campus re-

cruitment and job fairs, veterans seem to be having difficulty entering the job market. According to the US Department of Labor, veterans of traditional college age are suffering more unemployment than their cohorts of the same age (17.2% versus 10.4%). Because of these figures, it is important for university personnel to let their veteran students know about two important resources that will aid them in finding employment.

The first is Veterans Preference for federal jobs. The U.S. Government offers certain veterans preference in hiring, a practice dating back to the Revolutionary War and codified in the Veterans *(Story continues on Page 2)*

IRS Collecting New Hires

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is actively seeking new recruits with accounting and business backgrounds. This year alone the Examination division has hired approximately 1700 revenue agents and tax compliance officers.

The Service is actively expanding to reflect its increased workload as it focuses on enhancing collection activities while actively hir-

ing in advance of a growing number of retirements. Specially-trained IRS recruiters, local managers, and Exam employees have visited colleges and universities with recognized business and accounting programs to recruit first-rate candidates.

All new hires are trained in tax law and IRS procedures. Training methods include self study, classroom and online

training to ensure IRS employees have the knowledge they need to deal with the tax issues of the 21st century.

For more information or to schedule a recruitment event at your institution, please contact Carole L. Sendziol, Midwest IRS Recruiter, at 630-493-5267 or Carole.Sendziol@irs.gov or go online at www.jobs.irs.gov.



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Preference Act of 1944. Eligible veterans must have been discharged under honorable conditions. Active duty for training or inactive duty by National Guard or Reserve soldiers does not qualify as "active duty" for preference. Five points are added to the passing examination score for those who served during the Korean, Vietnam or Gulf Wars; earned campaign badges for El Salvador, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, Southwest Asia, Somalia, or Haiti; or served

more than 180 consecutive days since September 11, 2001. Ten points are added for a veteran who served at any time and who has a compensable service-connected disability; those who are more than 30 percent disabled receive absolute preference in non-scientific or professional positions above entry level. Veterans must report their Veterans Preference eligibility and supply copies of their paperwork when applying for jobs on USAJobs (<http://www.usjobs.gov>). Veterans

are also encouraged to apply for their G.I. Bill benefits to assist with tuition.

The second is a national program announced in May, 2006 by Lt. Governor Pat Quinn of Illinois called 'Operation Hero for Hire.' Initiated by Quinn, the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs and Career-Builder.com, this site was created in order to connect veterans with employers looking for their particular skills, talents and expertise. 'Operation Hero for Hire' can be accessed via <http://www.OperationHomefront.org>.

Social Security's Students Serving America Internship

The U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA)'s Chicago Region has expanded its college intern program to the Chicago Regional Office, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio and Indiana. The unpaid interns receive academic credit and impressive experience relevant to a variety of academic majors. SSA has an unparalleled number of offices and

many of these are near universities and colleges. SSA assists the more than 52 million Americans who receive retirement, disability, family benefits, survivors, Medicare and Supplemental Security Income Program (SSI) benefits.

All U.S. citizen graduate or undergraduate students enrolled in good academic

standing are eligible. Students must be enrolled in or carrying a combination of courses, research projects, or special studies which meet one half of the academic workload standards and practices of the institution. The intern will be assigned to the Chicago Regional Office or one of the SSA field offices.

(Story continues on Page 3)



Meet Our Members: Ed Arroyo

The third in our series of "Meet Our Members" focuses on a familiar face to anyone involved with GCRC for any length of time. We would like you all to meet Ed Arroyo, Regional Equal Opportunity Manager, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. Ed has been in his current position at ATF for over 10 years and has been a GCRC member since 1990. He's also

served as President of GCRC in the past and is now an ex-officio Steering Committee Member. Essentially, that means his wisdom, advice and experience are still very much valued by the Steering Committee, and he volunteers to assist with various events throughout the year. In terms of his job with ATF, Ed would like univer-

sity members of GCRC to know that ATF is currently in recruitment mode and has been for quite some time now. Vacancy announcements do develop periodically and hiring can take up to 10 months. He advises university personnel to tell their students and alumni to not become discouraged. "If you don't succeed the first two or three times, continue to try. The market is extremely competitive; but not impossible." *(Story continues on Page 3)*

Would you like to be featured next in our 'Meet Our Members' column? We're looking for both recruiters and college members to introduce themselves? If so, please contact

Barbara Cosentino at

B-Cosentino@neiu.edu

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In fact, continues Arroyo, "Several of our employees were student volunteer Interns with me, under my program not so long ago! We have several notable success stories that can be told and verified."

Moreover, Arroyo is in the process of preparing a narrative describing the combined efforts of the Chicago Field Division and ATF's Equal Opportunity Office Internship Program because of the notoriety it has received recently. Specifically, the program has worked so well that it is in the process of being immortalized and launched nationwide. In addition, a description of the program was included in the bureau's National Newsletter, entitled "Inside ATF." Since the summer of 1996,

approximately 100 students have participated in the Internship program from 32 universities across the United States.

He would also like to inform career services personnel of the ATF diversity recruitment plan, which in part is quite different from similar federal law enforcement types. "Our efforts include making attempts to recruit directly out of college, as well as those applicants that may have other law enforcement experience under their belt."

Arroyo has the following advice to students/alumni: "If landing a government job is the objective, then continue to apply until you land one, anywhere and for any agency. Upon landing the job, do your best at what you were hired for, give your employer a "calculated

amount" of your dedicated work ethic, and later continue to apply for the position desired, with the desired agency. Once you get "your foot in the door," gaining the experience other agencies are looking for; it is easier to make "a lateral transfer" to other government agencies."

He also advises students to make a concentrated effort to improve their verbal and written communications skills. In particular, Arroyo asks that students focus on their writing skills, as he has found this to be the common denominator among past successful student interns. Anyone interested in talking more with Ed regarding the Internship program, or recruitment with ATF, please call him at (312) 846-7292.

Student Success Stories: Becca Goldstein, Assistant to Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley

Although Becca Goldstein, an Assistant to Chicago's Mayor Richard M. Daley, has always been involved in public service, she got her professional start in municipal government in the Mayor's Office Fellowship Program, assisting senior staff in policy research, program analysis, and the development of new programs and initiatives. She now handles policy research, development, and implementation on a variety of urban issue

areas and oversees the Fellowship Program.

Public service has always been in the Northwestern and Kennedy School of Government grad's plan: "Since I was a child, my family was always involved giving back to the community. From a young age, I volunteered at neighborhood events and participated in advocacy activities for a variety of issues. As I grew older, I knew

that I wanted to be involved in public service issues and make a difference in the world around me."

Becca finds "local government is one of the best places to make a difference. Local government policies and service delivery actually touch the daily lives of city residents, and I've found that it's exceptionally rewarding (*Story continues on Page 4*)

Social Security...continued from Pg. 2

These offices are responsible for the direct delivery of services or the support of managers/employees administering those services for the SSA's retirement, survivors and disability programs, the Black Lung Benefits program and the SSI program. He/she will be provided with a variety of administrative and operational staff duties. Depending on the intern's course of study, year in school and strengths and interests,

these duties in the Regional Office could include: undertaking general staff functions such as coordinating meetings/events, undertaking research projects, writing reports, memoranda, letters, etc; assisting with local outreach to state agencies, medical and mental health facilities, community groups, etc; and assisting with studies of administrative practices to detect deficiencies and recommend methods of improvement.

In the field offices, interns could assist with researching and preparing responses to congressional inquiries, customer surveys and analysis, appropriate technical/programmatic activities and service to the public. To apply, e-mail a current resume and a brief statement of interest to: (Mr.) Shannon Fleming at Shannon.Fleming@SSA.GOV or faxed to (312) 575-6430.

The top 10 occupations for which the Government hired new Federal employees in FY 2005 according to the Central Personnel Data File, were:

1. Social Insurance Administration
2. Customs and Border Protection Officer
3. Miscellaneous Administration
4. Contracting Specialist
5. Auditing
6. Nurse
7. Information Technology Management
8. Natural Resources/Biological Sciences
9. Criminal Investigations
10. Management/Program Analyst

Source:
<http://mspb.gov/studies/newsletters/06septnws/06septnws.htm>



Government College Relations Council

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The mission and purpose of the Government College Relations Council is to foster communication and cooperation between college and government communities through the dissemination of new and relevant information and the formation of mutually beneficial relationships.

Our Goals are:

- Help college students and graduates find career-related jobs with government employers
- Help government employers find educated and skilled employees to meet their hiring needs
- Enhance structure, communication and efficiency of the organization

**Strengthening Relationships Between
Government and Higher Education**

We're On the Web!!
<http://www.gcrcassociation.org>

Student Success Stories...continued from pg. 3

to be someone responsible for putting new programs and initiatives in place.”

Goldstein has already made a difference. While pursuing her Masters, she worked in New York accelerating the first phase of a city-wide capacity building and community development pilot program and served as an area facilitator for a 5,000-person community conversation to discuss proposed plans for the rebuilding of Lower Manhattan. She has worked as a policy analyst at the Chicago Housing Authority, facilitating strategic planning, reporting, and policy-making in support of the Plan for Transformation. At the City of Chicago Department of Housing, she has worked on affordable housing policies.

Two important mentors have helped Becca along multiple steps in her career path. She continues to learn from them as “each mentor continues to be extremely helpful in providing advice and counsel on both specific workplace questions as well as questions about my career path.”

In her role of Fellow coordinator, Becca is responsible for recruitment of graduate fellows and interns. She shares her tips for a successful government internship:

- Results matter. Be a problem-solver. Those who demonstrate hard and fast results in government are more likely to move forward quickly.
- Jump at opportunities. You never know when they will pop up and where they will lead.

- Get hands-on experience as much as possible, even if it's not 100% what you imagined yourself doing.
- Read the newspaper and know what's happening in your field of interest.
- Apply early and follow directions very closely.

Do you have a student or an alumni who would like to be featured in our Student Success Stories? If so, please contact Barbara Cosentino at B-Cosentino@neiu.edu