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Their FutureFile

A news summary on issues affecting students and their career plans



New Online Survey: Career-based Schools Offer Ideal Education Option

Multi-campus survey conducted by Gibbs group of colleges and schools

Students interested in a specific career path – and motivated to earn their degree as quickly as possible – find career-based schools an excellent educational option, according to a new online survey conducted by the Gibbs group of schools and colleges. These results mirror findings from a recently published Career College Association (CCA) fact book.

More than five hundred current Gibbs students from nine campuses across the northeast were polled on such topics as factors that led them to attend a career-focused school, future professional goals, and overall assessment of career-based training.

“These survey results indicate that the large majority of our students share our conviction that career-based training is a crucial component of this nation’s higher education spectrum,” says Virginia Carpenter, executive vice president, Gibbs Division, Career Education Corporation. “Career-focused schools provide students excellent, practical instruction that enables them to enter the business world quickly – with the tools to excel.”

With short-term degree programs and a topic-intensive curriculum, career-based schools often attract students whose needs cannot be adequately address by traditional four-year colleges. Fully 63.7% of the respondents in the Gibbs survey indicated that, as compared to traditional colleges, career-focused schools offered them the best opportunity to meet their occupational goals.

According to the Washington, DC-based CCA, career colleges make up 46% of all postsecondary institutions in the United States. The CCA fact book notes that career school graduates who receive their degree within three years of enrollment report having a better chance to earn high salaries

(75%), take on added job responsibility (74%), and experience greater overall job opportunities (78%) than community college students who also graduated within three years.

The Gibbs students concurred, with 72.9% of those who responded noting that because they attend a career-focused school, they anticipate achieving success sooner than if they had studied at a traditional two- or four-year school.

When asked to identify the single most important factor in deciding to attend a career-focused school, “time” was the clear choice, with 43.8% of those who responded expressing enthusiasm for short-term degree programs that enable them to enter the workforce more quickly. Another key aspect (37.3%) was the career-focused curriculum, which allows students to truly focus on their subject of choice.

“Our students are dedicated individuals who know their goals, and actively pursue them,” says Steve Kashkin, acting president of Katharine Gibbs School in Melville, NY. “From recent high school graduates to seasoned and successful businesspeople, there are many individuals interested in continuing or expanding their education – but they find it difficult to identify a school that meets their varying needs. For many, career-based schools are the solution, as this survey of our students demonstrates.”

The survey also inquired about respondents’ career aspirations. Looking ahead to 2011 – when Gibbs will celebrate its centennial anniversary – students were asked whether they envision themselves owning their own business, working as an employee of either a large or small company, or continuing their education. The largest number, 40.5% anticipate working at a large company, while 24.2% aspire to be an entrepreneur.

As for the age of individuals who pursue career-focused training, the survey found a nearly even divide between those age 30 and above (27.5%), those between from 21-25 (29.9%), and those aged 18-20 (30.3%).

Gibbs colleges and Katharine Gibbs schools – which recently observed the 95th anniversary of their founding by Katharine Gibbs in Providence, RI – offer degree and diploma programs in a broad range of fields. Campuses are located in Boston, MA; Cranston, RI; Livingston, NJ; Melville, NY; New York City; Norristown, PA; Norwalk, CT; Piscataway, NJ; and Vienna, VA. Addition details are available at www.gogibbs.com.