

For new grads, more job offers— but fewer perks

Employers expect to hire more new college graduates this year but don't plan to offer more perks. Fewer employers will be offering signing bonuses, for example. These findings are from two different 2004 surveys published by the National Association of Colleges and Employers.

Sixty-one percent of employers surveyed in August 2004 reported that, compared with the 2003-04 academic



year, they expected to hire more new college graduates in 2004-05. In a December 2004 followup survey, about 63 percent of employers responding confirmed their original projections; another 25 percent revised their hiring projections upward.

The positive hiring outlook doesn't translate into added incentives for jobseekers, however. Nearly 87 percent of respondent employers said they weren't planning to offer more perks to their new college hires, according to the December survey. About 42 percent of employers expected to offer signing bonuses in 2004-05. And 70 percent of the employers who plan to use bonuses will offer them only to selected candidates, not to all.

For more information about the association's surveys, write to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, 62 Highland Avenue, Bethlehem, PA 18017; call toll-free, 1 (800) 554-5272; or visit online, www.nacweb.org.

DOORS opens doors for jobseekers

Jobseekers who want to work for the U.S. Department of Labor now have another way to find and apply for vacancies. The Department's Online Opportunities Recruitment System (DOORS) works in conjunction with USAJOBS—the Federal Government's official jobsite—to streamline the job search and application process.

Jobseekers can search for vacancies online through DOORS (www.doors.dol.gov) or USAJOBS (www.usajobs.gov). But jobseekers cannot apply for a vacancy until they create a profile on USAJOBS. The information in the profile is stored electronically and can be used to apply for other positions. When applying for U.S. Department of Labor vacancies, information from the USAJOBS profile is transferred directly to DOORS; applicants then answer vacancy-specific questions to complete the process.

The U.S. Department of Labor comprises many agencies, including the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS),

the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the Employment and Training Administration. Many other Federal agencies have online application systems, but the Department of Labor is the first to fully implement a system that works seamlessly with USAJOBS. As more Federal agencies launch similar systems, the Federal job hunt—and the application process—will become a little

easier. Learn more about applying for Federal Government jobs in "How to get a job in the

Federal Government," in the summer 2004 *Occupational Outlook Quarterly*; the article is available online at www.bls.gov/opub/ooq/2004/summer/art01.pdf.

For more information about DOORS, write to the U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20210; call toll-free, 1 (866) 4-USA-DOL (487-2365); or visit either DOORS or USAJOBS online.



The eyes have it: Opportunities in ophthalmic assisting

Ophthalmic assistants, also called ophthalmic medical personnel, are allied health workers who help eyecare patients. These workers' responsibilities include taking medical histories and educating patients about the use of contact lenses. Some ophthalmic assistants help eye doctors (ophthalmologists) with surgical procedures.

Ophthalmic assistants work in clinics, medical centers, and hospitals. Positions may require a high school diploma, and certification is preferred but not required. Most ophthalmic assistants learn through on-the-job training and gain certification while working; others begin in a training program and seek employment after completing the program. Certification consists of three progressive levels of training; an additional specialty option is available for surgical assisting.

For more information, write to the Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology, 2025 Woodlane Drive, St. Paul, MN 55125-2998; call JCAHPO toll-free, 1 (800) 284-3937; or visit online, www.jcahpo.org/assist.html. Scholarships in medical assisting are available from the commission's foundation. For more information, write to the foundation office at the commission's address, or visit online at www.jcahpo.org/foundation.htm. To contact the Association of Technical Personnel in Ophthalmology, the professional organization for ophthalmic assistants, visit online at www.atpo.org.



Suggestions welcome:

Do you have an item for the Grab Bag?
Send it to: ooqinfo@bls.gov

Finding jobs for doing good

Do you think that the bottom line should be about more than making money? Think about looking for work in the nonprofit sector, where making a difference is a top priority.

Nonprofits are neither businesses nor part of governments. These organizations include charities, foundations, private schools, churches, professional and trade associations, many scientific institutions, and more than half of the Nation's hospitals. Nonprofits' causes range from astronomy education to zydeco celebrations.

Your employer doesn't have to earn a profit for you to earn a living. Al-

though BLS does not collect data specifically on nonprofits, industry sources suggest that salaries in the nonprofit sector vary widely. Some people consider the satisfaction of working for a worthy cause to be more rewarding than income.

An online resource, www.idealists.org, can help you start turning your noble visions into reality. Find out about upcoming nonprofit career fairs; browse programs, events, campaigns, and more; and check out the Career Center for jobseeker tips and resources. A searchable database lists job openings, internship postings, and volunteer opportunities available both domestically and abroad. Some of the information available online may also be obtained by writing to Action Without Borders, Inc., 79 Fifth Avenue, 17th floor, New York, NY 10003, or by calling (212) 843-3973.

To learn more about working in a nonprofit job, also see "Helping charity work: Paid jobs in charitable nonprofits," in the summer 2001 *Quarterly*. The article is also available online at www.bls.gov/opub/ooq/2001/summer/art02.pdf.

