Recession-Proofing Your Student

If only this were possible! Sadly, none of us are immune to the effects of our current downturn, but there are some bright spots. First, unemployment for college educated workers is lower than that for other workers, so they have an advantage in their degree. Second, the National Association of Colleges and Employers reports that emerging careers might be good bets for students. For details, see http://www.naceweb.org/spotlight/2009/c040109.htm. And third, here at UCSB we are doing all we can to give students access to existing job openings. Our on-line job listing system has about 500 listings (17 of which came in within the last day) so employers are still reaching out to students. And our big spring job fair – BizTech, on April 16 – has over 30 employers registered. Understandably, the pool of options is not as big as in past years, but we expect another 10 or 15 to sign up in the next week or two, so there are still jobs to be had. If that doesn’t work, we have planned a “Career Survivor Day” (see upcoming events) the following week with tips for those who didn’t get connected.

This economy is going to require your students to be creative and imaginative. Here is a great story from an article by Kevin Donlin entitled How To Find Jobs and Get Hired Faster: “Janet FritzHuspen from St. Paul, Minnesota, landed a job after mailing coffee cups to area employers. That's right—coffee cups. Here's what she did...FritzHuspen found jobs advertised online, then sent a box with a travel coffee mug, her resume and a cover letter inside. Her letter said, ‘I would like to meet you over coffee to discuss how I can benefit the ABC Corporation as your director.’ She sent the box via FedEx Ground, so she could track and know when they signed for it. She then waited about 20 minutes after it arrived, called and said, ‘Hi. You just got my package!’ and went from there. FritzHuspen sent three coffee cups in two weeks. ‘I called and spoke with somebody at all three employers, and had a conversation with one hiring manager that resulted in an interview.’ About two weeks later, FritzHuspen got a job!”

This is the kind of creativity that can do wonders in a difficult job market. Encourage your students to not only use networking and the traditional search techniques, but to also think outside the box and use the kind of guerrilla tactics that can bring success in a challenging time.
Recreational Sports

The Recreation Department at UCSB aims to help students stay physically fit, relax, have fun, meet new people, and develop new skills and interests.

Indoor and outdoor campus recreation facilities include tennis courts, sand volleyball courts, the Santa Barbara Harbor Sailing Facility, a softball field, the Uyesaka Baseball Stadium, Cachuma Lake Rowing facility, the Recreation Center and more. The Recreation Center, a popular spot for students to exercise and hang out with friends, features swimming pools, a climbing wall, racquetball courts, weight rooms and much more.

The department’s Recreational Sports program meets the needs of students with varying athletic abilities by providing different levels of competition and ways to participate. Intramural sports are offered quarterly and any student, regardless of skill level, may create or join an existing team. Sports include kickball, flag football, ultimate Frisbee, bowling and more. Participation fees range from $10-65 and vary each quarter. To sign up, students should visit the Intramural Office in room 1110 of the Recreation Center. More information about intramural sports is available at http://www.essr.ucsb.edu/recsports/im/faq.php.

Sport clubs are also open to all ability levels, but are often split into Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Frosh/Novice skill levels. Sports include cycling, bowling, water skiing, fencing, lacrosse, rowing, rugby and more. Sport club teams travel and have experiences similar to intercollegiate team athletes. Participation fees vary by team. Students interested in joining a sport club team should contact Recreational Sports Assistant Director Taggart Malone at taggart.malone@essr.ucsb.edu. For more information about sport clubs, visit http://www.essr.ucsb.edu/recsports/club/.

Parents’ & Family Weekend 2009 will be held November 6-8, 2009. More information is available at www.ia.ucsb.edu/pfw.

Meeting the Mental Health Challenge

As you learned last month, UC Santa Barbara is exceptionally proactive in meeting the mental health challenges facing college campuses today. Our approach begins with wellness, that is, with helping students to attain and maintain physical, mental, and emotional health. It continues with prevention and intervention services—such as services that reduce high-risk drinking, help students to stop smoking, and assist students in minimizing risk while managing underlying issues such as anxiety and depression. Finally, our mental health efforts culminate in key resources that enable us to readily respond to pressing needs.

These resources include:

- Training sessions which help faculty and staff members identify and assist students in distress
- A campus emergency response protocol
- The student organization Active Minds and student intern initiatives that promote peer education around issues like suicide prevention

Our overarching vision is for a campus where students:

- Understand and attend to their physical, mental, and emotional health
- Develop habits for a fit and active lifestyle
- Are freed from stigma and connected with the resources they need
- Learn how to help themselves and others so that they practice individual responsibility within a healthy campus community

As parents, you already support this vision in many ways—by talking with your students, pointing them to campus resources, and being attuned to changes in their mood and behavior. Also key is any financial support you can give to our mental health initiatives. Your gifts are vitally important to expanding our staff of mental health professionals, to training our faculty and staff, and to getting students the help they need when they need it. To make a gift to mental health at UC Santa Barbara, please contact our Student Affairs Grants and Development office at (805) 893-5037 or contact our executive director at laurie.hoyle@sa.ucsb.edu.

Thank you, and we wish you and your family the best of health!