Keene STATE COLLEGE Wisdom to make a difference.

Office of Institutional Research

Class of 2008 Survey

In September and October 2013, Keene State College surveyed alumni who received bachelor's degrees in 2008. The purposes of the survey were to determine how many recent graduates are employed or pursuing further education, whether their employment or further education is related to their undergraduate studies at KSC, and how well their KSC experiences prepared them for transitions their lives. The survey was conducted online with email invitations and follow-up reminders. Follow-up phone calls were made to selected non-respondents. Five $100 Amazon gift cards were offered as incentives for participation.

There were 999 unduplicated bachelor's degree recipients in fiscal year 2008, and the college had valid contact information with permission for email contacts on 373 of these (37% of the class). While one would hope to have valid email addresses for a larger portion of the class, it is not surprising that the percentage for whom the college has contact information declines over time. Email survey invitations were sent to these 373 alumni, and usable responses were received from 141 of respondents following the initial online invitation, plus 15 who were reached later by phone, for an overall response of 156 or 42%. This is a very high response rate for this type of survey.

Alumni surveys about employment and further education tend to draw a disproportionate number of responses from those who are employed or enrolled in graduate school. To combat this problem, each of the messages about the survey indicated that KSC was interested in hearing how things are going for these alumni, even if life was not going as planned. Then in data analysis, responses of those reached by phone in the second phase of the study (the original non-responders) were compared to the earlier online responses and found to be statistically indistinguishable. Given these efforts and the high response rate, readers should be able to infer that responses are fairly representative of the Class of 2008 for whom email addresses are available to the college.

KEY FINDINGS

- Five years after graduation, 98% of the respondents are either employed or engaged in further education.

- Ninety-five percent of the respondents reported that they are employed; 2 ½ percent indicated that they are not employed by choice (for example, to care for family members or enroll in graduate study), and the remaining 2 ½ percent reported that they are unemployed and seeking work.

- Among those who are employed, 76% report that their current position is closely related or somewhat related to their studies at KSC, and 75% of these indicated that KSC had prepared them well or very well for this employment.

- The median annual salary range for those who are currently employed is $40,000-$44,999.

- Forty-four percent of the respondents reported that they had enrolled in one or more programs of further education at some point after graduating from Keene State College, most pursuing master's degrees.

- Among those who have engaged in further education, 82% reported that their programs were closely related or somewhat related to their studies at KSC, and 74% of those judged that KSC had prepared them well or very well for this next step in their education.

- When asked what else they are doing, besides work and further education, that is meaningful to them five years after graduation, respondents most often mentioned marriage/family/home ownership, community service, professional accomplishments, and travel.

- Eighty-one percent of respondents reported that their KSC education had prepared them well or very well for the transitions in their lives in the five years since graduation.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Employment

The great majority of the respondents (95%) indicated that they were employed in some capacity at the time of the survey, in the following types of employment:

- 83% full-time regular employment
- 10% part-time regular employment (1/3 of these were also engaged in further education)
- 1% paid internship
- 1% unpaid internship (and also enrolled in further education)
- 1% military service
- 2.5% not employed by choice (e.g., in school, travelling, or caring for family)
- 2.5% not employed and looking for work

Among those who are employed, 76% reported that their current position is closely related or somewhat related to their studies at KSC, and 75% of these indicated that KSC had prepared them well or very well for this employment. The median annual salary range for those who are currently employed is $40,000-$44,999, and 7% of those who responded to this question indicated that they earn salaries of $80,000 per year or higher.

Further Education

More than four in ten respondents (44%) reported that they had enrolled in further education at some point since graduating from Keene State College, with most of these seeking master's degrees. The most commonly reported general field of study for these advanced degrees and certificates was education (30%). Most enrolled in institutions in New Hampshire or surrounding states in New England or the Northeast. However, some enrolled farther away, including one who studied in Aukland, New Zealand. Among those alumni who have engaged in further education, 82% reported that their programs were closely related or somewhat related to their studies at KSC, and 74% of those judged that KSC had prepared them well or very well for this next step in their education.

What Else Are Alumni Doing?

The survey asked respondents, "Besides employment and further education, what else are you doing that is meaningful to you five years after graduation?" Common themes are listed below, along with sample comments for each.

Marriage/Family/Home Ownership

I am happily married, and a have a beautiful 22 month old daughter.

I will be getting married next year and I enjoy hiking and spending time with my fiancée and dog.

Recently got married, we are excited about our future!

I own my home and an engaged to my fiancé whom I met at Keene State.

I was married last year to my husband, whom I met while at Keene.

I am married to my wonderful wife. I have purchased my first home in the town I grew up in.

I am married (to another teacher!), a homeowner along with my husband, and we're loving parenting our shelter puppy right now!

Getting married June 2014 and have 3 fellow KSC alumni in my wedding party

I am engaged to a United States Navy submariner and taken over the step mother responsibilities of his two beautiful boys!

I've survived brain cancer, married my husband I met at KSC, and have 3 year old twins. Life couldn't be better!

Got engaged Bought a house Got sober In that order

Community Service

Through my current employer I am able to volunteer for a location food bank….

Working with Girl Scouts

I work with the community often and collaborate with non profit organizations on behalf of Old Navy as a Community Leader.

Volunteered for 3 months in 2008 at a rehabilitation center for former child-soldiers and child-mothers in Northern Uganda. Taught Physical Education in San Pedro de Marcois, Dominican Republic for a week in April 2013.

Mentoring students at KSC both in my major and other related fields, do presentations and health fairs at KSC to encourage students to branch out in the health field, work with KSC Dietetic interns with events, presentation, food preparation and other events, sit on numerous committees, coalitions and networks encouraging a healthier community in Keene, serve on the Keene Young Professionals Network, serve on the KSC Community Partner Advisory Board to help/encourage partnership with CMC/DHK, my work and the students I have as interns, AND work for Healthy Monadnock 2020, our region's goal of becoming the healthiest community in the nation!

I am the chairman for a committee developed to redesign and rebuild my community's public work facility.

I am still an active volunteer with Habitat for Humanity both Nationally and Abroad. My interest and involvement with Habitat all began at KSC.

I joined Teach For America upon graduating in 2008 and spent two years working in high needs schools in New Orleans. I then moved to Europe to work on a farm in Greece for three months. I returned to the states to work in urban education in Brooklyn, New York. I manage a team of 3 as we seek to place the very best teachers from NYC and across the country in our 4, soon to be 5, high performing charter schools.

I served as an AmeriCorps VISTA and am now a part of the program as an alumni and I speak on panels at trainings for current AmeriCorps members. I'm looking to switch from an MBA to an MPA degree and I'm currently enrolled in an elective class at UConn.

I started volunteering with Habitat For Humanity and The International Global Village Program while at Keene. Since graduation, I have gone on two more trips and decided to be a Trip Leader for our most recent trip to Nicaragua this past winter. It is a passion of mine that Keene helped me find.

Professional Accomplishments

I've presented at some national higher education conferences, created and piloted a university level Leadership course …, have had a really great experience developing the department that I've worked for over the last 5 years. I have received 2 promotions in 5 years at this institution.

Became an Occupational Safety and Health Technologist (OHST) and a Board Certified Safety Professional (CSP).

Presented at the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Regional Conference in 2012

I have presented at the New Hampshire Association of World Language Teachers conference.

Travel

A big goal for me right now is to travel and experience other cultures.

Travel abroad regularly

Traveling to Hawaii and the Dominican Republic along with numerous states within the US.

My current job has allowed me to travel internationally and see things I wouldn't normally see and meet amazing people which was what I had wanted to do in the first place.

Living abroad in Madrid, Spain, having friends around the world, learning and speaking Spanish

What Part of the KSC Experience Remains Meaningful?

The survey asked, "What experience did you have at KSC - inside or outside the classroom - that has proved most valuable for whatever you are doing now in your life? Common themes in the responses are listed below, with sample comments.

Specific Courses/Majors/Assignments

I have found that my methods and student teaching experiences helped me prepare for my current position.

Two Art History courses with Prof. Henry Freedman

My capstone class prepared me well for the real world - providing real challenges that taught me what to expect from future employers.

Methods teaching and student teaching

History degree taught me my place in this crazy world, gives some understanding

Two things come to mind immediately. A project I worked on in one of Rosemarie Bernardi's classes in which we rented and renovated a space and hosted an art exhibit with our original works. The second was preparing my portfolio and resume which was a requirement for my major. Both of those things were immensely useful in finding employment once I left Keene State.

The BFA program and the senior project piece of the program proved to be immensely valuable in helping me build my career. It taught me not only how to continue learning, but also how I learn best. In the senior project program, I was responsible for defining what my project was about and my success criteria for the project, and then I had to plan how I would reach my goals and deliver a final project that I was proud of. All of these skills proved to be essential in my career thus far in the creative webworld.

Film production classes, believe it or not. It's most closely related to what I'm doing now.

My minor in Holocaust studies and my connection to the Cohen Center. I developed and am now teaching a course on Genocide studies and my relationship with the Cohen center has helped that.

Friendships

Friendships are the most valuable experience from my time at KSC.

I have made great friendships….

…What I can tell you is that I am still friends with all of the students that I was involved with on SAC, Student Assembly, Class Gov't, Habitat for Humanity and my co-workers at the information desk. These are people I lean on, get advice from, stay in touch with and enjoy.

Socially, my experiences at KSC were wonderful - I made my best, lifelong friends there.

Making new friends

The friendships and connections that I made with others has been the most valuable to me. I carry with me many great experiences from my time there.

I made several life-long relationships, and learned what truly matters most in life.

The relationships I built with friends in college.

Internships/Student Teaching

I think Student Teaching really helped me get my confidence in the classroom that I used later on.

The internship I did during the summer after my junior year

Methods teaching and student teaching

Internships. If I didn't go ahead with my internship in 2008 I wouldn't of found the [job] I have today. It prepared me fully to do what I have to do.

Student teaching was … THE hardest experience of my life, even harder than circus school and I am grateful for the guidance and encouragement from my KSC professors who helped me through that. It helped me see my potential and what I have to offer the world.

I completed 5 internships, to my knowledge, the most of any other safety student to date. I also was the president of the KSC ASSE student chapter. These opportunities gave me the chance to meet many individuals in the safety and health field. I am currently employed with one of the companies I did an internship with. Time management and putting in an extra 10% has helped me develop an excellent career.

Student teaching and hands-on experiences in classroom settings prepared me for my profession.

The best professional experiences I had at KSC that translated into future career opportunities and connections were my two internships during my senior year. Having actual work experiences in, addition to classroom experience, in related fields while still in college helped boost my experiences for my resume and lead to great professional references.

Having the opportunity to have real life experience as part of my internship/practicum class. A lot of my work is community outreach so having the basic knowledge of how different organizations work and what their needs are is very valuable

I have found that my methods and student teaching experiences helped me prepare for my current position.

Relationships with Faculty/Staff

Having mentors or role models like Susan Theberge and Dan (forget last name) but he is practicing school psychologist in Keene.

The most important experience and one that has the deepest lasting effect on me, is the professor who offered me to work on a independent study with her. She had empowered me with her faith in me that I had the capabilities to carry out and learn the many different skills for this study. She saw in me not what I lacked, but rather what I possessed, she simply believed in me.

I had been studying French (not as a major, though) and was thinking about stopping since I was getting frustrated with how long it was taking me to master it. One evening as I was walking on Main Street, I bumped into Professor Langford. I no longer remember the details of our brief chat, but I don't think I told her I was thinking of stopping French. At any rate, she said something to the effect of, "you should go after something you've wanted for a long time", which for me, was being able to speak another language. So I continued and finished a French minor.

The relationship I had with all the math professors. It taught me to be a challenging and supportive teacher. It also opened me up to opportunities like publication and presenting that I never would have seen for myself.

Meeting and studying under David Ornstil. His insight on finance influenced me beyond description. Too bad he is no longer with KSC.

Working at the Center for Writing - Phyllis Benay changed my life and many of the other folks I worked with.

The mentoring I received from Dr. Susan Whittemore gave me confidence in myself and my abilities, which has allowed me to succeed in the field I have entered since graduating.

Close relationships with professors who acted as mentors.

Student Activities/Athletics/Greek Life

Time Management and Networking. I learned how to manage a load of extremely challenging classes all while participating in sports and clubs. I learned how to meet new people and take advantage of opportunities that the college provided.

I cannot pinpoint one specific experience. The journey throughout my four years at KSC and all that it entailed- classes, dorm life, Campus Crusade for Christ, PE Club, and intramurals all helped in their own ways.

There's so many to choose from. I loved being a part of Campus Crusade for Christ (Cru). It gave me hope that there are still people out there who believe what I do and are willing to stand up for that faith and encourage others to do so.

Great campus, dorm life was valuable experience….

The social aspect did wonders for me. I was involved in Greek life and since I have graduated I have heard that many houses are getting shut down (which is unfortunate).

My involvement in Greek life and being in a fraternity has proven to be the most valuable thing I have taken from KSC. It taught responsibility, dedication, how to work with others and manage a large group along with countless other experiences that have contributed to my success in the real world.

Going on two Alternative Break Trips (now I work with students at UConn that plan and go on these service trips). Being an RA and Orientation Leader (now I work in student affairs at UConn with student leaders)

My involvement with KSC Ecology club really developed my leadership skills. I feel they have aided me greatly in my post KSC experience.

… My time as a member if Chock Full O'Notes a cappella. I also loved playing rugby with the women's rugby club.

Frat life phi kappa omega!!!!

Playing basketball at KSC and developing time management skills and work ethic.

Being a part of the rugby team taught me a lot about myself and I made some life long friends.

Study Abroad

Getting to study abroad help me gain a different perspective on how the world works. In changing careers, living in England, helped focus my ultimate goal of owning my own business.

I … had the opportunity to study abroad for 3 semesters and I commend the team at the Global Education Office for their support and the rich programming they offer. This allowed me to delve into my career - I now work at an International Education non-profit, and went on to pursue my masters in Intercultural Relations/ International Education.

Study Abroad semester

…My time abroad in Italy gave me a love for travel and other cultures.

Studying abroad was the best experience. It has allowed me to become a better teacher as I can tell my students about real life experiences.

My experience abroad was … very influential.

Preparation for Life's Changes

The survey asked, "How well did your KSC education prepare you for the transitions in your life in the past five years?" Eighty-one percent of respondents answered *Well* or *Very Well*. The survey then followed up with two open response questions.

The first was, "What aspects of your KSC experience helped the most in moments of change in your career or your life?" The responses to this question fell into the same categories as outlined above, concerning what remains meaningful today: courses/majors/challenging assignments, friendships, internships/student teaching, relationships with faculty and staff, student activities/athletics/Greek life, and study abroad. The correspondence between that question and this one was found at the level of the individual respondent, since respondents often cited their previous answers in answering this question.

The second open-response question about life transitions was this: "Is there anything we could have done better to help you prepare for an unpredictable future?" The most common responses to this question focused on career preparation/job placement assistance and life skills education (such as learning tax preparation and Excel). Other responses were very program-specific and will be shared with the affected departments, as appropriate.