



CO-OP COMMENTARY

Career & Experiential Education Center
Summer 2010

Co-op Employer Q&A with Sharon K. Strubbe

Executive Director of Summerfair Cincinnati

The Case for Co-op

There is no doubt we are in the midst of an economic re-entrenchment, the likes of which we haven't seen for many years. Last year, only 1 in 5 college graduates across the nation had jobs. This year, the initial statistics are more encouraging, the ratio is 1 in 4. By the end of October 2009, 7 in 10



Mount graduates had work related to their degrees. The Mount Career Center is experiencing the same phenomenon that other career centers across the country are seeing—alumni who are unemployed or underemployed are returning to college career centers for assistance. There is a wealth of competition in the job market and the ability to do a targeted job search is a must.

There is one group of students who are having success despite the economic downturn. Co-op students find they have fewer challenges finding that first professional position when they graduate. We are seeing many students finding employment with their co-op employers or with another employer who values their co-op work experience. Those students who plan ahead and participate in co-op are equipped to enter the job market with related experience on their resumes and the knowledge that they are in a field that is a good fit for them. In the last five years, more than 8 in 10 co-op students reported full-time employment after graduation and another 11% pursued further education.

Plan to co-op during your time at the Mount.

Register for the co-op readiness course, CED 220-- Professional Development, early in your sophomore year, if possible. Prepare for your job search experience with the guidance of a co-op coordinator who can help you navigate this new adventure. Through co-op, you'll gain beginning professional experience that will enhance your classroom learning. You'll also begin building a professional network, so when you graduate you'll be off to a running start with your career!

Get ready! Get set! Go co-op!

Q: What characteristics or qualities are you looking for in a co-op candidate?

A: I seek enthusiasm, professional presentation and appearance, a thorough yet succinct resume with NO TYPOS, and current contact information. I also look for knowledge of the organization, that they have researched our website, and that they have work experience and/or classes that apply directly to the position.

Q: What kinds of things can a student do to prepare for an interview?

A: Research the organization and the organization's competition and become familiar with the industry. Review your resume and highlight areas that you believe are a good fit for the position and make a point of discussing these during the interview. Make a list of questions to ask the interviewer and make a dry run to see where the office is located so you don't get lost the day of the interview.

Q: What can a student do during an interview to make a good impression?

A: Arrive promptly, offer a friendly handshake and a "thanks for seeing me," turn off your cell phone, don't chew gum, and watch those nervous habits. Be careful of your body language—sit up straight, make eye contact, and SMILE. Dress appropriately, eliminate body piercings, cover tattoos, and watch your hair color. Also, present a hard copy of your resume, come prepared with questions, and find ways to relate your class work and work experience to the position. Be enthusiastic yet professional, show that you are willing to LEARN and are open to new experiences. Finally, say "thank you" at the end of the interview, shake hands, ask for a business card and find out the next steps.

Q: How and when should a student follow up after an interview?

A: The interviewer should receive a "thank you" within 48 hours (handwritten note or email). Depending upon how it's left at the interview, follow up with a call back to ask if there are any other questions and to again express your interest in the position – one week after the interview or sooner if the decision is going to be made quickly.



Q: Do you have any other interview "pointers" for our students?

A: Always make sure that your contact information is directed to YOU personally, not your parents! (List your CELL phone on your resume NOT your HOME phone. Interviewers want to speak to you, not your parents!)

Alumni Reflections

Mount St. Joseph Graduate Putting Her Passion to Work

By Cliff Peale | CPEALE@ENQUIRER.COM | May 4, 2010

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DELHI TOWNSHIP - Ashley Niehoff was in second grade when she visited the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden and crayoned a drawing of her dream job: "I am going to be a zookeeper because I like gorillas." A decade later, Niehoff is doing just that.

Saturday, she'll march in commencement ceremonies for the College of Mount St. Joseph. Sunday, she'll report to work at the same Cincinnati Zoo for her job as a zookeeper, working part of the time in the primate center.

Niehoff, of Bright, Ind., has worked full-time while a Mount student for the last year and knew she would need a bachelor's degree to make her job a career.

Niehoff has been focused on her preferred profession for years.

"I've wanted to shovel poop my entire life and work with exotic animals," said Niehoff, 22. "By the end of my first semester here, there was nothing else I wanted to do."

She did an internship at the zoo last summer and this year has been working there while maintaining a full course load at the Mount. She's majoring in general studies with minors in biology and photography.

Niehoff had to overcome a learning disability that makes spelling and reading more difficult. That's one reason she went to the Mount, with a program called Excel that she describes as a "security blanket."

Graduation day "will be the best day of my life," she said. "With all my struggles and my learning disability and the job, my life is coming full circle at this point. It will just be a huge weight off my shoulders to be done with school. It's been a big struggle." Another factor that sets Niehoff apart is her love of animals. Growing up, she had nearly 100 animals, including "pigs, goats, donkeys, lizards, frogs and rats."

"At one point she wanted to save the Earth," said Ashley's mother, Raelene Niehoff, who also graduated from the Mount. "We would go to the park and she would pick up trash. But then it fell back to zookeeping. She was very specific. She wanted the Cincinnati Zoo and she had a plan to get there."

Niehoff is there now, spoonfeeding many of the animals through their cages.

"The gorillas," she said, "are my favorite."

(Ashley co-oped for two semesters as a mammal relief keeper at the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens.)



Photo by Don Denney

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Please visit our LinkedIn group at:

<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=3234169&about=>

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2009-2010 Co-op of the Year —Erin Staubach



Erin graduated in May 2010 with a Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design and a minor in iDesign (Interactive Web Design). Erin completed seven co-op sessions at three different employers, gathering a variety of experiences. Her first co-op was with F & W Publications where she learned how a publishing company works and about corporate culture. She felt the best learning came from the mentoring she received from another designer who taught her computer key commands, functions in the design programs, and basic design rules and etiquette. Erin also worked at the non-profit organization Susan G. Komen for the Cure and created posters, brochures, invitations, magnets, web banners and billboards for the annual Race for the Cure and the Greater Cincinnati affiliate.

Her longest co-op experience was with the Ohmart/VEGA Corporation, where she designed, maintained and updated the company's co-op website, created flash banner animations, developed promotional items, and assisted with tradeshow preparation. She created a system for documenting literature and supplies, and wrote news articles. "The most rewarding part of co-op is that I was able to secure a full-time position upon graduation. I will be working in Ohmart/VEGA's Marketing Department doing design work. I love what I do. As a bonus, I am knowledgeable about their products and services. Therefore, I am already ahead of the game and won't have to start from scratch with a new company. I enjoy going to work every day and am excited about my future with the company." Congratulations, Erin!

2009-2010 Co-op of the Year Nominees:



Alison Damon
Major: Psychology
Co-op Sessions: 4
Co-op Employer: Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center Research Foundation



Nicolas Monroe
Major: Communication Studies
Co-op Sessions: 3
Co-op Employer: National Liftgate Parts Inc.



Megan Flanagan
Major: Biochemistry
Co-op Sessions: 1
Co-op Employer: Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center Research Foundation



Stephanie Nash
Major: Accounting
Co-op Sessions: 3
Co-op Employer: Messer Construction



Courtney Jaspers
Major: Business Administration
Co-op Sessions: 4
Co-op Employer: Procter & Gamble



Maria Ruebusch
Major: Graphic Design with an iDesign and Business Administration minor
Co-op Sessions: 5
Co-op Employers: College of Mount St. Joseph Career Center, Rumpke Corporate Communications, American Red Cross



Courtney Krieg
Major: Fine Arts with a Photography minor
Co-op Sessions: 3
Co-op Employers: College of Mount St. Joseph Photo Lab, Cincy Magazine



Jeffrey Schroer
Major: Nursing
Co-op Sessions: 6
Co-op Employer: Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center

2009-2010 Co-op Faculty Coordinator of the Year Meg Riestenberg, Ph. D.



Meg Riestenberg, Ph. D., is an alumna of the Mount and also this year's recipient of the Co-op Faculty of the Year award. She graduated in 1968 with a bachelor's degree in medical technology. Later, she attended graduate school at the University of Cincinnati and earned a master's degree in biology (1981) with a concentration in botany. She finished her studies at UC by completing a Ph. D. in geology (1987) with an emphasis on the role of trees in preventing landslides in the local area. She has taught at the Mount for 25 years in geology and biology.

Dr. Riestenberg works closely with the staff and Mount co-op students at CREW (Center for Conservation and Research of Endangered Wildlife) at the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens. "I am thrilled that they invite our students to enjoy a co-op experience in their lab. They are given real challenges such as culturing tissue from endangered plants onto a growth medium or running DNA experiments to determine diversity within a population of rare and endangered species."

Dr. Riestenberg is an outstanding liaison for the Mount's cooperative education program and we are honored to select her as faculty coordinator of the year in appreciation for her many years of dedicated service.

2009-2010 Employer of the Year, GE Aviation Legal Operations

GE Legal Operations has been an active co-op partner with the Mount since 1995. In the ensuing 15 years, a total of 16 Mount co-ops have worked in one of the following divisions: Litigation, Labor & Employment, or International Trade and Compliance. Currently, there are three Mount co-ops within the Legal Division. Deborah Kuhns, Lead Paralegal to the Vice President of Legal Operations, has been our co-op connection with GE for the past several years, serving a key role linking the organization and its available opportunities with Mount students.

Working under the direction of GE legal professionals, the students experience a corporate law environment and the intricacies of a global business environment. Co-ops perform administrative and paralegal duties. Substantive responsibilities are delegated so that students enhance their professional development while working both independently and as part of a team. GE professionals mentor and encourage co-op students, providing a work environment that is both welcoming and challenging. Congratulations to GE Aviation Legal Operations as our Co-op Employer of the Year!



Fast Facts About Co-op at the Mount

- There were 296 placements in the 2009-2010 school year.
- Hourly wages ranged from \$7.50-\$15.50 an hour.
- The average co-op pay was \$10.61 an hour
- Mount co-ops earned \$1,070,544.00 this year!

Co-op Events

Career Center Open House	September 15, 2010
Coffee on Co-op	October 13, 2010
Connect to Your Future	November 4, 2010
Spring Employment Fair	March 1, 2011
Coffee on Co-op	March 16, 2011
Co-op Recognition Dinner	April 6, 2011

College of Mount St. Joseph

2009-2010 Co-op Employers and Positions

American Burrito Company
manager

American Modern Insurance
group underwriting co-op

American Red Cross
graphic design co-op

Anthony Munoz Foundation
graphic design co-op, events planner

Arbor Living
interior design co-op

Ascendum
accounting co-op

Berger, Cop & Nienaber
paralegal co-op

Bethesda North Hospital
patient care assistant

Blue Sky Creative
marketing co-op

Bob Evans Restaurant
management co-op

Business Courier
graphic design co-op

Chiquita Brands
finance intern

The Christ Hospital
patient care assistant

Cincinnati Boys & Girls Club
activity/team leader

**Cincinnati Children's Hospital
Medical Center**
patient care assistant, nursing co-op,
clinical research co-op, research assis-
tant, human genetics assistant, materi-
als management co-op, molecular ge-
netics co-op, genetic counseling assis-
tant, clinical cardiology co-op

**Cincinnati Eye Institute
Foundation**
public relations co-op

Cincinnati Insurance Company
commercial accounts co-op

Cincinnati Reds
sport management co-op

Cincinnati Sports Medicine
sports metrics instructor

Cincinnati Zoo-CREW
research assistant

Cincinnati Zoo-Primate Center
mammal relief keeper

Cincy Magazine
photography co-op
graphic design co-op

City of Cincinnati
accounting co-op

Clear Channel
corporation events planner

College of Mount St. Joseph
network administrative support, media
relations, gallery assistant, annual giv-
ing, admission, sports information,
ceramics lab, marketing, MSJ Scope
coordinator, photo lab, orientation
leader, service learning, athletic director
assistant, Computer Learning Center,
division web page designer, Box Office
assistant, computer info, assistant foot-
ball coach, alumni relations, business,
accounting, marketing, assistant
women's basketball coach

Complete Outdoors
administrative assistant

ComputerEase
graphic design co-op

Crossroad Health Center
communication co-op, nursing co-op

Delhi Historical Society
archivist/curator co-op

DePaul Cristo Rey High School
graphic design co-op

Dick Penny Showroom
interior design co-op

Dunham Recreation Center
recreation leader, inclusion specialist

dunnhumby
graphic design co-op

Elder High School
freshmen lacrosse coach

Eldermount Adult Day Program
marketing co-op

epop studio
graphic design co-op

Fifth Third Bank
teller

Four Corners Community Church
associate pastor

Frontgate
graphic design co-op
e-commerce co-op

Game Day Communications
public relations co-op

GE Aviation
paralegal co-op

Geograph Industries
sales/service assistant

George Fern Company
graphic design co-op
interior design co-op

GGG Technical Services
document conversion specialist

Great American Financial
administrative assistant

Hamilton Co. Emergency Mgmt.
special projects co-op

Harrison High School
assistant football coach

Haute Chocolate
marketing co-op

Hobson's Digital Media Inc.
client development, account manager

Home City Ice
accounting co-op

Hughes High School
athletic director assistant

Ideopia
graphic design co-op

Joseph Craig Limited
interior design co-op

Justice & Young
graphic design co-op

Kenwood Tile & Stone
interior design co-op

Kenton & Campbell County Courts
pretrial services co-op

Kroger Company
ISS technical recruiter

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
campaign co-op

Libby Perszyk Kathman Inc.
accounting co-op, graphic design co-op

Luxottica Retail
recruiter co-op
educational outreach co-op

Maize Music
marketing assistant

Marketing Research Services Inc.
call center director

Marvin Lewis Community Fund
graphic design co-op

Merchant Bank & Trust
teller

Mercy Hospital Western Hills
nursing co-op

Messer Construction Company
communications co-op
accounting co-op

Miami Whitewater Forest
manager co-op

Mother Margaret Hall
activity assistant

National Liftgate Parts Inc.
management co-op

**Northern Kentucky Chamber
of Commerce**
graphic design co-op, marketing intern

Oak Hills High School
athletic marketing co-op

Ohmart/VEGA Corporation
graphic design co-op

Our Daily Bread
marketing assistant

Oystar/RA Jones
graphic design co-op

People Working Cooperatively
accounting co-op

Price Hill Will
event coordinator

Procter & Gamble Company
Successway co-ops

PS Group
interior design co-op

Purcell Marian High School
athletic department co-op

Q Laboratories Inc.
chemistry lab tech
microbiology lab tech

Radio One Cincinnati
program co-op

Resurrection School
counselor assistant

Rumpke
graphic design co-op

SC Communications
writer

SC Senior Care Corporation
marketing co-op

SC Ministry Foundation
communication co-op
education co-op

Seton High School
recruiting co-op, student activities
assistant

SHP Leading Design
interior design co-op

Skyline Chili
manager

Susan G. Komen for the Cure
graphic design co-op
education outreach co-op

Total Quality Logistics
sales co-op

**Tri Health Fitness &
Health Pavilion**
event coordinator

Upstream Media
graphic design co-op

USI Insurance
account manager

**Validex Employment
Screening Services**
records associate

Verbag's Furniture
interior design co-op

VonLehman & Company
accounting co-op

Wallace Boggs & Rouse
business co-op

**Western & Southern
Financial Group**
graphic design co-op

Western Hills Fitness Club
marketing co-op

Whitmer & Company CPA
accounting co-op

Willow Green/ Designs Direct
graphic design co-op

WKRC-TV
newsroom co-op

Working in Neighborhoods
graphic design co-op

WXIX-TV
newsroom co-op