Co-op Commentary  
Career & Experiential Education Center  
2013-2014

Expanded Our Reach in 2014-2015  
Linda Pohlgeers, Director  
Career & Experiential Education Center

Universities across the country point to career readiness as a top priority for their students. At the Mount, we are way ahead of the curve with our well-established experiential education opportunities including, a thirty-two year history of co-op and nineteen years of service learning. Our mission this year is to communicate throughout the university and the community-at-large, the myriad of multi-dimensional services we offer to students and alumni to prepare them for their next step.

According to Jonas Price, Manpower Group CEO, “Due to the lack of applicants with the right technical competencies, experience, and soft skills, one out of three [global] employers struggle to fill open roles.” The Mount offers solutions to this issue through degree programs that target five of the ‘top 10 hardest jobs to fill in the U.S. in 2014’ including sales representatives, teachers, accounting and finance staff, information technology staff, and nurses. (CAM Report, Facts and Trends, Volume 37, Number 10, 2014) Mount students enter the scene with a competitive edge thanks to a winning combination of dedicated and experienced faculty producing academically rich programs that provide the right theoretical/technical competencies, and the Career & Experiential Education Center offering opportunities for on-the-job experience and soft skills development through classes and events.

Another unique quality of the Mount is the in-depth series of three classes on professionalism delivered by the Career & Experiential Education Center to target career development and soft skills. This sequence includes Foundations of Professionalism, a course required for co-op; Building Your Professional Edge; and Accelerating Your Successful Career. These courses along with a meaningful co-op experience, produce a graduate more than prepared for the job market; a graduate who is clearly the whole package!

The Talent Opportunity Program (TOP) is the Mount’s wrap-around program to tie excellent academic programs with career-ready skills to produce graduates to meet the needs of employers. TOP provides students a framework to create their own unique pathway to a successful career. It is a combination of leadership opportunities, special events, and career development coursework to help students excel in the workplace, while complimenting and enhancing the excellent academic experience provided by their major.

Students…come to the Career & Experiential Education Center and discover how to enrich your Mount experience and build your professional skills portfolio.

Employers…contact the Career & Experiential Education Center to discover how we can serve your organization’s needs. Connect us with other companies where we can help make a difference in their workforce.

Our goal is to carry this message to all Mount departments, current students, prospective students, alumni, and tri-state employers. Let’s agree to spread the word, expand our reach! We are the Mount; we are ready to send our graduates into the world.

Co-op Success Story

Stephen Mazzei  
December 2013 Graduate  
Computer Information Systems

Stephen is a December 2013 graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Information Systems and a minor in Business Administration. He recounts his experience as a co-op, and how the opportunity assisted him in landing a full time job after graduation.

I first started co-oping for Geiler Plumbing in their Accounts Receivable department. After six months, I transitioned from Geiler to Beechglen Development as a Technical Support Assistant/CIS co-op. Co-op gave me the opportunity to experience real life work policies, practices, and the business environment.

My second co-op at Beechglen Development, offered me experiences that I would never have had in the classroom. This co-op helped shape and mold my knowledge and interests, and gave me the desire to finish my schooling. Beechglen Development provided me with confidence about what I wanted to do in life, and the company hired me on full time after graduation. My current job title is Technical Support Services and I have responsibilities that range from customer technical support/services, project management, in-house project development to in-house server maintenance.

Career Center Events

October 2014  
Wednesday 15th  
9am - 11:30am  
Coffee on Co-op  
Classroom Building Lobby

November 2014  
Wednesday 5th  
5pm - 6:00pm  
Graduate School Workshop  
Corona Room

Wednesday 12th  
11:30am - 1:00pm  
Connect to Your Future  
Corona Room/  
Fifth Third Dining Hall

March 2015  
Tuesday 4th  
9am - 4pm  
Spring Employment Fair  
Harrington Center Gymnasium

April 2015  
Wednesday 1st  
9am - 11:30am  
Coffee on Co-op  
Classroom Building Lobby

Tuesday 14th  
5pm - 7:30pm  
Co-op Recognition Dinner  
Art Gallery, Fifth Third Dining Hall
Co-op Fast Facts

- 253 placements in “2013-2014” school year
- Paid co-ops earned between $7.50-$16.48 an hour
- $11.00 was the average wage for paid co-ops
- $951,373.20—the total amount earned this year by co-ops
- Approximately 35% of co-ops obtained a full time position with their co-op employer upon graduation

What characteristics or qualities are you seeking in a co-op candidate?
Candidates with a solid work history and record of advancement or leadership get a lot of consideration from me. Grades are important, but more so are activities that highlight the individual's dedication, work ethic, and initiative.

What steps should a student take to prepare for an interview?
Candidates should do adequate research on the company, as well as the industry. Students can impress interviewers by using their knowledge of the organization during the interview conversation or by asking pertinent questions about the company or industry.

What can a student do during an interview to make a good impression?
Punctuality is a must, as are a firm handshake, good eye contact, full attention, and good posture. Candidates can make themselves stand out by being prepared, taking notes, asking questions, and using the interviewer's name when responding.

What are your expectations for students in a professional work environment, i.e. behaviors, dress, punctuality, etc.?
Candidates need to know that organizations are made up of professionals who are dedicated and self-motivated, and we expect to see these attributes in co-ops. We will provide training, assign tasks, and outline priorities for the students. We would like them to succeed and become an integral part of our company by completing tasks correctly, on time, and on their own. In short, they should treat the co-op job as if it were a “real” job (because it might be one someday!).

What should a student do in terms of following up after an interview?
Candidates should follow up with an e-mail expressing an appreciation for the in-person interview and an interest in the position.

Do you have any other interview “pointers” for our students?
Without a doubt, the biggest pointer I would suggest is for the candidate to show interest in the position by asking pertinent questions about the organization. Simple, broad questions work the best, such as “Who is your competition?”, “Why is your firm different?”, “How did the recent recession affect you?”, “What are your plans for growth?”

Employer Q & A

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Employer of the Year

Hampton County Job & Family Services

Hamilton County Job & Family Services (HCJFS) administers state, federal and local programs designed to assist those in need and help families work toward a better way of living. The agency has served Hamilton County since 1947. Currently, they give assistance to hundreds of thousands of residents in the form of public assistance, children's services, child care, child support, and workforce development.

In January of 2011, HCJFS Child Care Division, joined Mount St. Joseph University's list of co-op employers. Through a grant, funded by The Haile Foundation, our partnership was established. Over the past three years, HCJFS has provided 34 co-op placements to approximately 20 students.

These students have come from a wide variety of majors including business, communication studies, criminology/sociology, fine arts, sociology, and social work. Currently, five co-op students are employed with HCJFS.

Amy Story and Jane Huesman have been very involved with the Mount's co-op program and have supervised many of the co-op students. HCJFS consistently offers Mount students valuable, real-world experience in the areas of business, research, communications, public relations and marketing. We congratulate Hamilton County Job & Family Services as our 2013-2014 Co-op Employer of the Year.
Paige Gast is a biology student who has served as a co-op for the past four semesters at Good Samaritan Free Health Clinic, where she works as the IT Specialist. In this role, she was responsible for scribing for doctors during patient visits and scheduling patients in the database. In one of her evaluations Paige mentioned, “My personal and professional development has greatly improved from holding this position. It has guided me to realize my future career aspirations and has helped me to develop the professional mannerisms that are needed for the position.” Her supervisor added that, “Paige is a delight to have. The doctors look to her for computer guidance. She handles herself well with the volunteers, is cheerful, responsible with her work, and demonstrates a strong work ethic.” Dr. Jill Russell, Associate Professor of Biology and Paige’s faculty coordinator, recalls a conversation with her supervisor; “We discussed the student’s strengths and I was informed that Paige has been ‘a God-send’ and that they ‘could not live without her’. She has been an invaluable asset to their team of physicians, nurses, and staff.” Congratulations to Paige for being an outstanding representative of the Mount and being selected as our Co-op of the Year!

Co-op of the Year Nominees

Name: Hannah Kimmich
Major: English with a minor in Communication Studies
Co-op Sessions: Six
Co-op Employer: Mount St. Joseph University, Office of Institutional Advancement
Position Title: Advancement Communications Assistant

Name: Katherine Mushaben
Major: Graphic Design with a minor in Marketing
Co-op Sessions: Four
Co-op Employer: Mount St. Joseph University, Studio San Giuseppe and Flats Gallery
Position Title: Art Gallery Co-op

Name: Megan Northway
Major: Art History and Fine Arts with a concentration in Ceramics
Co-op Sessions: Four
Co-op Employer: Mount St. Joseph University, Ceramics Lab
Position Title: Ceramics Lab Co-op

Name: Michael Petitgout
Major: Accounting
Co-op Sessions: Nine
Co-op Employers: Home City Ice
Position Title: Accounting Co-op

Name: Jennifer Rotundo
Major: Sociology, Family Dynamics Track with a minor in Gerontological Studies
Co-op Sessions: Four
Co-op Employer: Mount St. Joseph University, Career & Experiential Education Center
Position Title: Service Learning Co-op

Name: Craig Shanks
Major: Criminology/Sociology with a minor in Business Administration
Co-op Sessions: Seven
Co-op Employer: Hamilton County Job & Family Services
Position Title: Analyst/Research Co-op

Name: Dominique Springs
Major: Communications & New Media Studies
Co-op Sessions: Three
Co-op Employer: Mount St. Joseph University, Marketing & Communications Department
Position Title: Web/Social Media Co-op

Name: Jennifer Vogel
Major: Graphic Design with a minor in iDesign
Co-op Sessions: Six
Co-op Employer: Mount St. Joseph University, Career & Experiential Education Center
Position Title: Graphic Design & Marketing Co-op

Name: Sierra Shotton
Major: Education Studies
Co-op Sessions: Five
Co-op Employer: Mount St. Joseph University, Help Desk/Library
Position Title: Help Desk Co-op and Public Services Co-op

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Major: Graphic Design with a minor in Marketing
Co-op Sessions: Four
Co-op Employer: Mount St. Joseph University, Studio San Giuseppe and Flats Gallery
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Co-op Faculty Coordinator of the Year
Brooke Gialopsos, Ph.D

Dr. Brooke Gialopsos, Assistant Professor in the Criminology department, truly embraces her role as a co-op faculty coordinator. She has served in this role for several years and has worked with the majority of the criminology co-ops, juggling nine students this semester alone!

Brooke focuses on the learnings of each of her students, helping them make the connection between classroom and real world experience in their work environment. She goes out of her way to provide detailed feedback gleaned from her site visits, about the students’ successes and challenges, while working hard to promote the co-op program and cement strong employer relationships. She is outstanding in her efforts and dedication to this program and for this, we honor Dr. Brooke Gialopsos, as Co-op Faculty Coordinator of the Year.

Alumni Reflections
Katelyn Lutz
May 2014 Graduate
Social Work

What were your goals going into the co-op process?
I started with the goal of obtaining a co-op which would give me professional experience, build my resume, and help with networking.

Where did you co-op during your time at the Mount?
I co-oped as a Research Assistant for the Cincinnati Home Injury Prevention (CHIP) Study at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center.

Where are you currently working and what are your job responsibilities and your title?
I am currently working for the CHIP Study at Children’s as a Clinical Research Coordinator. I work on quality checking data and conducting home visits with participants to collect research on injuries and literacy, in babies and toddlers of low income families.

Tell how co-op has been meaningful to you?
Give an example.
Co-op has been meaningful to me by helping me gain more professional skills, confidence, and networking opportunities. Co-op also allowed me to receive a full time job at Children’s following graduation.

What new skills or knowledge did you develop or strengthen through your co-op experience?
I developed and strengthened my interpersonal and communication skills with co-workers and study participants. I have increased my time management skills and my abilities to multitask to get work done quickly and efficiently. I have also gained knowledge regarding interviewing, job searching, and teamwork.

How did your co-op experience enhance your college learning experience?
My co-op enhanced my college learning experience by allowing me to stand out from other college students. It provided me with my own unique learning experience, which was unlike many other students. It also provided me with the opportunity of learning about real world success on the job, rather than solely taking classes.

What impact has co-op had on your career path?
Co-op has made a big impact on my career path, as I was offered a full time position at Children’s following graduation. Prior to my co-op, I had been unsure of what kind of work I would like to do after graduation. Co-op allowed me to pursue a career path, that I really came to enjoy.

CEEC Staff

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Keith Lanser
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Laura Keeney
Graphic Design Co-op
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Tevin Byers
Service Learning Co-op
tevin.byers@msj.edu
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<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adena Health System</td>
<td>Design and Marketing Co-op</td>
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<td>Beechglen Development Inc.</td>
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<td>CHIP Phone Surveyor</td>
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<td>Human Genetics Co-op</td>
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<td>HR Co-op</td>
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<td>McCabe Do It Center</td>
<td>Merchandise and Marketing Manager</td>
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<td>Mercy Health West</td>
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Messer Construction Co.
Accounting Co-op

Mount St. Joseph University
Academic News/Web Co-op
Advancement Communications Co-op
Alumni/Annual Giving Co-op
Art Gallery Co-op
Business Co-op
Ceramics Lab Co-op
Creative Manager Co-op
Fiscal Operations Co-op
ISS Help Desk Co-op
Institutional Advancement Co-op
Instructional Media Co-op
Marketing/Graphic Design Co-op
Math Lab Co-op
Office of Admission Co-op
Orientation Co-op
PR/Marketing Co-op
Photo Lab Co-op
Project Manager Co-op
Public Services Co-op
Service Learning Co-op
Special Events Co-op
Sports Information Co-op
Web/Social Media Co-op

New York Life Insurance Company
Intern

Oxford Physical Therapy
Tech

Patheon
Planning Intern
Chemist Co-op

Patty Brisben Foundation
Graphic Design Co-op

Q Laboratories, Inc.
Lab Tech
Analyst

Quikrete Company
Sales/Merchandise Intern

RockTenn
Technical Illustrator Co-op

Rocket Supply Company
Sales Assistant Co-op

Rookwood Pottery Company
Website Design Co-op

SC Ministry Foundation
Communications Co-op
Program and Grants Co-op

Sherman-Carter-Barnhart
Interior Design Co-op

St. Joseph Home of Cincinnati
Direct Service Provider Co-op

Summerfair Cincinnati
Special Events Assistant

Sur-Seal
Supply Chain Intern

Procter & Gamble
Cost Engineering Co-op
HR Co-op
R&D Co-op

TriHealth
OB Stats Document Coordinator

U.S. Probation Department
Intern

University Hospital
Patient Care Assistant

University of Cincinnati
Nursing Marketing Department
Graphic Design Co-op

VEGA Americas Inc.
Graphic Design/Marketing Co-op

WS Packaging, Inc.
Customer Service Rep

Wesley Community Services
Business Co-op

Western & Southern Financial Foundation
Rotational Accounting Co-op

Wornick Foods
Health and Safety Manager

Xerve
Customer Care Service Associate

YMCA
Before and After School Assistant