



PathTech LISTEN

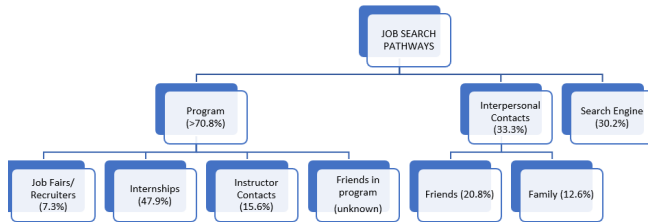
Mixed Methods Longitudinal Investigations of Students in Technician Education

Research Brief Series

Volume 1, No. 5

Job Search Pathways Melinda Leigh Maconi, M.A.

PathTech interview data related to the search for paid employment was used to identify job search pathways utilized by community college alumni during or after participating in technical programs. Percentages in the figure below come to more than 100% because it is common for student job seekers to use multiple avenues in their search.



Program-Supported Opportunities

Multiple college programs provided supports for their students' job searches via internships, job fairs, and more informally, though instructor contacts. Forty-six participants participated in internships or apprenticeships. Internships sometimes led directly to a job at the same company. Other times, the experience from an internship played an important role in getting a job at another company. It is important to note that some students stated that they did not have the option to participate in internships due to personal responsibilities, particularly if they are unpaid. Few students explicitly mentioned job fairs hosted by their school. However, those students who did discuss job fairs or recruiters on campus described the experience positively and stated it was helpful.

So the program...they talk to the different curators or directors of the aquariums that are around the United States, and they ask them to send someone from their aquarium, usually it's the director or their assistant director, and they come out and they do mock interviews with the students for about a week. We get to know them... A lot of the curators basically come to our program and shop because we have so highly regarded students.

Many students (15.6%) discussed the direct impact their instructors had in facilitating their job search. In some cases, instructors worked with individual stu-

dents who they felt would be a good fit for a particular job. In other instances, the help from instructors was more general, such as professors letting their entire class know.

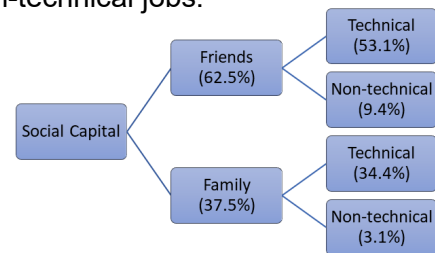
She would help point me to all the various different renewable energy companies that she thought might fit my interests... Little did I know, her and, my boss at the time, who ended up hiring me, they knew each other...She was actually one of my references.

Interpersonal Social Connections

Of the 96 participants interviewed, 32 indicated that their current job placement was in part aided by their social connection to friends or family. One of the most common pathways stated was when friends, family members or family friends connected them directly with a technical job or introduced them to someone with connections to technical jobs.

It was all through networking. That was pretty much how I found all my jobs, was just through networking with other students which I found to be the most lucrative way to find gigs.

This was particularly true if the participant had other family members in the same field. Some participants also shared that friends or family members connected them to non-technical jobs.



The Use of Internet Search Engines

Many respondents (30.2%) reported using search engines to seek employment. Some websites (e.g. Indeed) allowed users to make a profile to post their resumes and be contacted by recruiters. Others (e.g. Craigslist) put the onus entirely on the job seeker to search through job listings. One participant referenced a job search engine called Tech Connect, which specialized in seeking technical jobs.