

ASSISTING YOUR STUDENT WITH THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- 1. Encourage your student to make his/her own decisions.** College is the time to start figuring things out without the assistance of parents and loved ones and to develop problem solving skills. While it is helpful to discuss your child's future, too much advice will not allow the student to develop critical thinking and reasoning skills, which is essential to career/life planning success. Encourage independent decision making. If your student contacts you with a problem, ask what action he/she believes should be taken. Brainstorm options, but do not rescue at each stumbling block. **Successful problem resolution leads to increased levels of maturity, self-sufficiency and self-confidence!**
- 2. Have discussions with your student about what he/she would like to DO after graduation!** If your student seems unsure or indecisive, offer your input and insights related to his/her perceived strengths, positive personality qualities, or obvious areas of talent. Give your opinions about career options, keeping in mind that it is much more important for a student to study something they are interested in or passionate about. Also, help the students to realize that **picking a major DOES NOT mean picking a career. BE PATIENT AND UNDERSTANDING!**
- 3. Encourage your student to take advantage of opportunities for Career Exploration on campus.** This means getting involved in one or more organizations that are of interest to your student. These may include a club related to the student's major or leadership groups such as Student Government Association, Senate, or the Campus Activities Board. **This will not only help to develop leadership skills, but research shows that students who are engaged in their campus community are more likely to complete their education and have successful employment outcomes.**
- 4. Help your student with connections for summer employment, part-time work, or internship opportunities.** Introduce your student to individuals who have careers which may be of interest to them. Although, it is cliché, the old adage of "who you know is more important than what you know", has never been more true. With most companies having electronic/online application systems, recruiters often average 100 or more resumes per job vacancy. The differentiating factor in who gets interviewed and hired is often that person on the inside who knows you and can advocate for your student as an excellent candidate. **Emphasize networking!!**
- 5. Encourage your student to visit the Career Development Center.** We suggest students write a resume their freshman year, and build on this marketing tool as they progress through their college experiences. Our office can also offer assistance with part-time jobs, internships, deciding a major, skills and interest assessment, career exploration, informational and behavioral interviewing, job search strategies, and numerous networking and educational events. Please go to our website at www.park.edu/career and check out the wealth of information available for your student.
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