
Wednesday, April 29, 2009

Stimulus Jobs for New College Grads

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Charlotte Haigh, who is graduating from Tufts University with a degree in political science in May 2009, says she's very aware of the [economic stimulus package](#) but doesn't know what jobs will be available or even how to find them.

For college seniors and recent graduates with technical and liberal arts degrees, the stimulus plan will provide tremendous entry-level job opportunities. But despite this encouraging news in a dismal job market, many college students don't know how to turn these opportunities into actual jobs and careers.

What's the first step for interested new grads, like Haigh? To identify the industries that are being funded. The main areas of investment -- and subsequent job creation -- include:

- Healthcare.
- Alternative and renewable energy.
- Education.
- Roadways and bridge infrastructure.
- Small businesses.
- Government.

Now let's take a closer look at each area and some of the resulting opportunities.

Healthcare

[Healthcare](#) has been allotted \$8.5 billion for research and an additional \$1.5 billion for buildings and construction. Positions that will be available to college graduates include [staff scientists](#); computer-based [researchers](#), which require a computer science or math degree; [healthcare policy analysts](#) for economics majors; [technical writing jobs](#) for English or communications majors; and

trained healthcare worker positions for sociology majors. Employers will include medical facilities and agencies, biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies, and university researchers.

For those graduates without technical degrees, check out the [National Institutes of Health's Web site](#) for information on programs and training related to the stimulus.

Alternative and Renewable Energy

[Alternative and renewable energy](#) will receive \$67 billion in funding, with 500,000 new jobs projected in renewable wind, solar, hydropower and geothermal endeavors, smart grid creation and energy efficiency initiatives.

The green job market is booming. Entry-level technical jobs abound in [engineering](#) (electrical, electronic and mechanical) and in product [installation](#), [auditing](#), [field service](#), [technical support](#), [project management](#) and [construction](#). Nontechnical entry-level positions include those in [sales](#), [marketing](#), [public relations](#), [communications](#), [customer service](#), [sustainability consultants and educators](#), corporate social responsibility, [architects](#), [urban planners](#), [environmental policy](#), economic [analysts](#) and [ecotourism agents](#).

To learn more about green jobs and careers, take a look at the [Green Jobs Guidebook](#) published by the Environmental Defense Fund and the [US Department of Energy's Web site](#). [My Green Scene](#) provides information on green training and education opportunities.

Education

Education funding includes money for school construction, technology in the classroom, and [special education](#), [early childhood](#) and [K-12 teachers](#). In addition to classroom teachers, stimulus funds will produce jobs in [performance auditing](#), [IT](#) and [technology training](#).

Teaching is a popular choice for this year's graduating seniors, and news of expanded opportunities comes as welcome relief to Haigh. "Lots of my friends want to teach to ride out the recession, but knowing there will be more jobs in education is great news," she says.

Race to the Top, which is receiving \$5 billion in stimulus dollars, includes funds for adult-literacy education, creating the need for more [literacy teachers](#). Additional money provided to help students pay for higher education, such as Pell grants, college work-study programs and student aid administration, will add the need for [accountants](#), [administrators](#) and [finance specialists](#).

For information on these positions and teacher certification, visit the [Department of Education Web site](#).

Infrastructure

[Infrastructure](#) funding is directed toward improving roadways, bridges, electricity grids and federal buildings. [Civil engineers](#) and cost estimators will be needed. Nontechnical entry-level opportunities can be found in larger construction companies and their suppliers, in areas such as [sales](#) and [marketing](#), [public relations](#) and [customer service](#).

Small Business

Small businesses are getting additional tax deductions for 2009 capital investments, loan assistance and expanded available credit. The most likely sources of entry-level jobs are startups or small company suppliers for the construction, healthcare, education and energy industries.

A December 2008 survey by Michigan State University showed that companies with less than 54 employees project an increase in hiring college grads in 2009 over 2008, across all industries. This is positive news but will require researching industry associations and publications to find these opportunities. *Forbes* compiles an annual list of [best small companies](#).

Government

More young professionals are looking for [government jobs](#) than ever before. The federal government is actively recruiting candidates of all academic backgrounds. [Studentjobs.gov](#) lists government positions for students and recent grads.

Other strategies that have proven successful to secure a job with the federal government include temporary or contract work and job fairs, like [Monster's Keep America Working Tour](#). Also, first completing an internship or paid fellowship with the department could lead to landing a permanent job.

How to Land a Stimulus-Related Job

College seniors and recent graduates who are focused, prepared and assertive have the best chance of [landing stimulus-related jobs](#).

Successful preparation involves developing compelling job search materials and effective interview strategies. It is essential to stand out by promoting your education, training, experience, [accomplishments](#) and current activities relevant to the industry you are pursuing. "The students who will stand out in this job market are the ones who know who they are, what skills they bring to the table and how they can have an immediate impact at an organization on

day one,” says Megan Houlker, director of the Undergraduate Center for Career Development at Babson College.

Lastly, it’s vital to engage in a proactive, disciplined, assertive job search. Your job search plan should target specific employers. Be sure to develop company-specific roadmaps that indicate how you’ll learn about job openings, connect through networking and gain opportunities to demonstrate your value.