

CAREER CENTER | 2025-2026

ANNUAL REPORT



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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

The most recent NACE Job Outlook 2026: Spring Update projects a 5.6% increase in hiring for the Class of 2026 – the strongest outlook in several years. Although growth is uneven across industries, employers continue to invest in recruiting early talent, reinforcing strong opportunities for our students.



**DR. KELLY
RAPP**

Director of Career Center

Across multiple national studies¹, students consistently cite career preparation as a primary reason for attending college, often motivated by the potential for better jobs and higher income. They seek more purposeful, career-aligned guidance to support informed decisions throughout and beyond college. This underscores the importance of the comprehensive services offered by the Career Center which enhance student success and support the University's enrollment and retention goals. To ensure our work remains responsive, we collect data on seniors' post-graduation plans and use those insights to refine our offerings.

Our Career Center team is our greatest strength. Although we said goodbye to a long-time colleague this year, we welcomed two new full-time staff members with a combined 20 years of higher education experience. We also proudly celebrated the graduation of three student employees.

Key accomplishments this year include continued growth in the professional headshot booth, made possible through the support of Enterprise Mobility and a partnership with the Missouri State University Bookstore. Enterprise Mobility also partnered with the Career Center, Women in Business, and Delta Sigma Pi to offer a networking workshop that helped students strengthen their networking, leadership, team-management, and professional communication skills while connecting directly with employer representatives.

We remain committed to empowering every student for lifelong career success and look forward to another year of helping our MSU Bears reach their goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Rapp". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Kelly Rapp, Ph.D.

¹bit.ly/ChroniclePathways; bit.ly/ForbesPriorities; bit.ly/NSLSWhitePaper



CAREER CENTER OVERVIEW

We're here to help students find and start meaningful careers, every step of the way.

We exist to bridge the gap between the high quality education students receive at Missouri State and the transition to lifelong career success. The Career Center's role is primarily educational. Individuals learn career-planning and job-search techniques that they will use not only during college and immediately after graduation but throughout their careers. Career Center staff members provide career counseling, introduce relevant resources, and teach career management skills. Students who use the Career Center's services enhance their career awareness and job-search strategies. Early career planning equals career success.

MISSION

To provide comprehensive career development services to students along their path to lifelong success and to foster partnerships among students, employers, faculty, and staff.

MEET THE STAFF



Dr. Kelly Rapp

Director of Career Center



Margie Stewart

Associate Director
Employer Engagement



Dr. Mike Wood

Associate Director
Career Development & Education



Brandon Gash

Assistant Director
Career Center Operations & COB



Kristina Rosewell

Administrative
Assistant



Sherry Elkins

Career Resources Specialist
RCASH



Rebekkah Wall

Career Resources Specialist
MCHHS



Gretchen Gawron

Career Resources Specialist
COB



Megan Krom

Career Resources Specialist
RCASH & COE



Danelle Maxwell

Career Resources Specialist
CNAS & AG



Jennifer Downer

Employer Relations Assistant



our team is better with
student workers!

- four **Graduate Assistants**
- six **Student Career Ambassadors**

A photograph of three women at a career fair booth. The woman in the foreground is smiling broadly, wearing a maroon Missouri State t-shirt, a pearl necklace, and a name tag. She is holding a sign that says "PK-12 TEACHER EDUCATION CAREER FAIR" and "RETURN YOUR TAG HERE". Behind her are two other women, also smiling, wearing maroon polo shirts. The background features a wall with many framed portraits of men, likely alumni or faculty. The overall scene is brightly lit and has a warm, orange-toned overlay.

STUDENT CONTACT

Career Center
MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY



STUDENT CONTACT

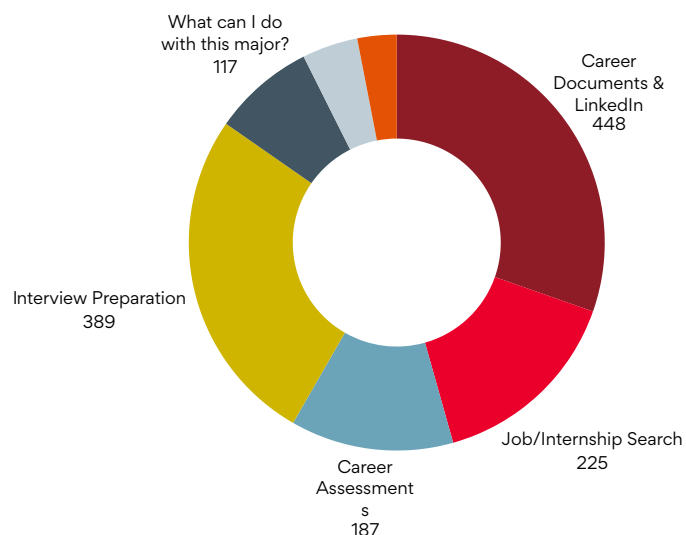
4,547 total one-on-one student contact points

1,475 pre-planned appointments	536 drop in visits	2,536 Handshake résumé reviews
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The Career Center helps Missouri State students through personal and accessible approaches to career exploration, job preparation and searching, and employer connections. Students can make **appointments** year round to meet with trained, field-specific **Career Resources Specialists**. Students can also utilize our **drop in hours** (at our Carrington Hall location), as well as meet virtually - all prioritizing student accessibility to our expansive resources.

PRE-PLANNED APPOINTMENTS BY CATEGORY

- Career Documents & LinkedIn
- Job/Internship Search
- Career Assessments
- Interview Preparation
- What can I do with this major?
- Graduate School Preparation
- Specialized Programs



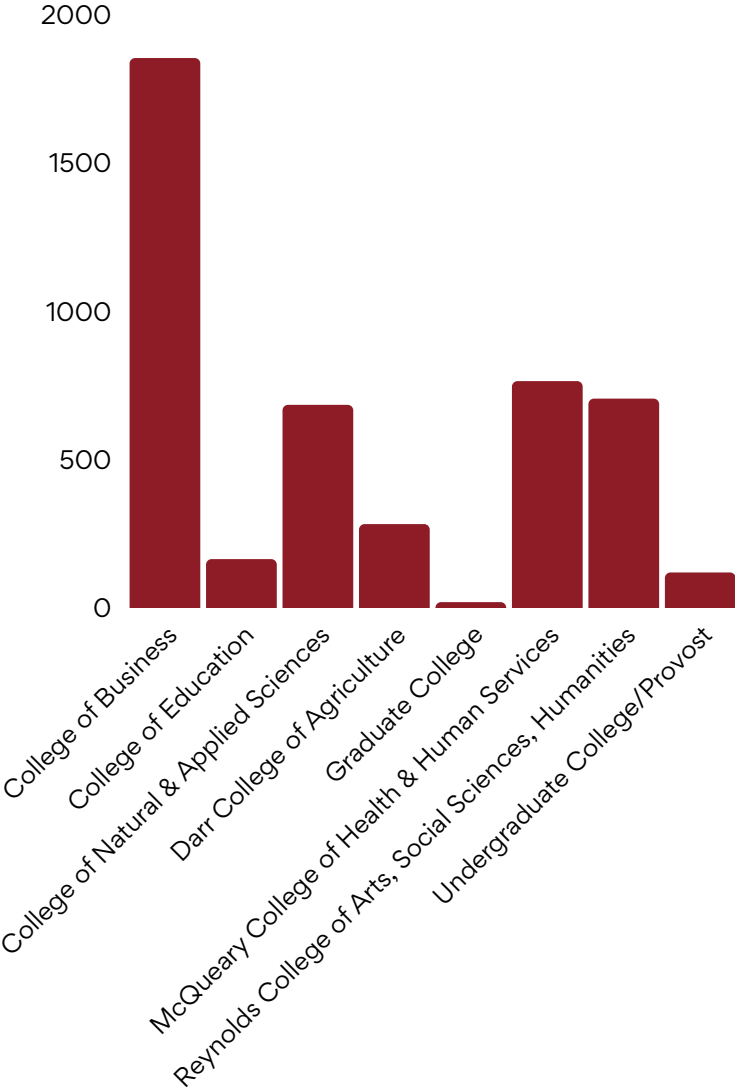
1,475 total appointments

STUDENT CONTACT

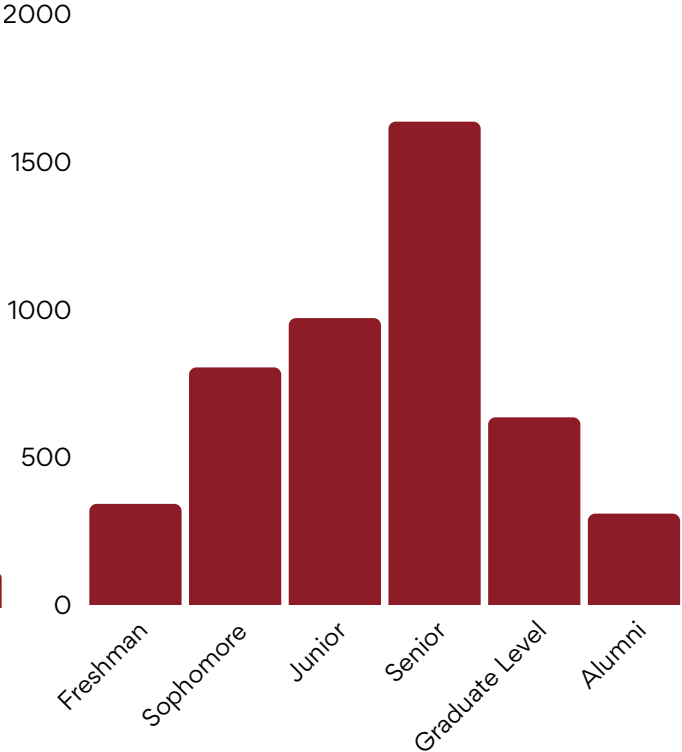
BY THE NUMBERS

4,547 total one-on-one student contact points

STUDENT CONTACT BY COLLEGE



STUDENT CONTACT BY YEAR



Virtual In Person Phone

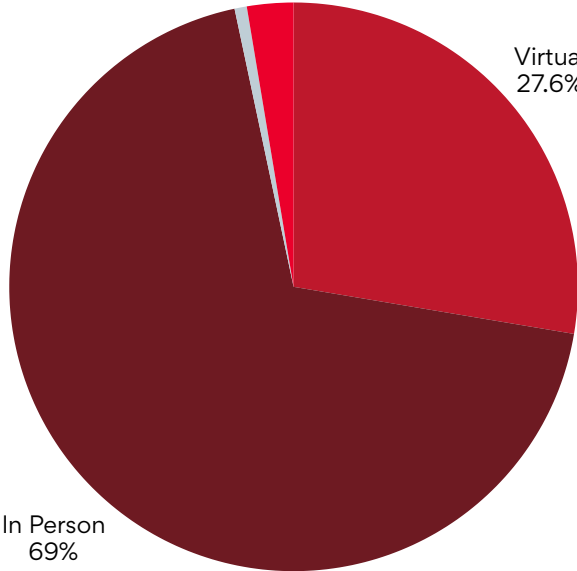
Email 2.6%

Virtual 27.6%

In Person 69%

MODALITY

*excluding Handshake résumé upload reviews



full time office locations

Carrington Hall 309
Glass Hall 276



CAMPUS WIDE IMPACT

CAMPUS WIDE IMPACT

Outside the walls of our offices, the Career Center ventures into many opportunities for student connections across campus. From partnering with academic departments to provide relevant in-class **presentations** and faculty-requested **class assignments**, to presenting for **student organizations**, we strive to meet the career needs of our campus community.

The Career Center also hosts several free workshops throughout the year, like our **Résumé Cafe events** and **Mock Interview Day**. Our Career Resources Specialists and Student Career Ambassadors make themselves accessible by hosting **Career Corners** and **Career Center Tabling** throughout the semester. Students dive even deeper by enrolling in **IDS 120**, our academic course on exploring majors and careers.



* PRESENTATIONS AT A GLANCE

3,479

student attendees

131

requested presentations

TOPICS

- Résumé and Cover Letter Development
- Career Center Overview
- Interviewing
- LinkedIn
- Job/Internship Search
- Networking
- Skills/Career-Readiness Competencies
- What Can I Do With a Major In.....?
- Handshake Overview
- Professionalism

RECIPIENTS

**non comprehensive*

African Student Association
Bear POWER
Bears Teach
Leaders in Community Service

Art & Design
Agriculture
Chemistry
Communication & Media
Criminology & Criminal Justice
Dietetics & Nutrition
Education
Engineering

Fraternity & Sorority Life
Geological Society
Peace Corps Prep
Student Governments

First Year Foundations
Hospitality Leadership
Kinesiology
Management
Museum Studies
Nursing
Physical Therapy
Social Work

CAMPUS WIDE IMPACT

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

We're proud to partner with academic departments, allowing faculty and staff the opportunity to submit requests for class assignments.

25

class assignments

581

students served

TOPICS

- Mock Interview
- Résumé Review
- Cover Letter Review
- Portfolio Review
- Graduate School Preparation

IDS 120: EXPLORING MAJORS & CAREERS

Our **IDS 120: Exploring Majors and Careers** course is designed to assist students in learning the process for making meaningful academic and career choices that are aligned with their unique strengths, interests, values, and personality. Taught by our **Career Resources Specialists**, students participate in self-assessments, major and career exploration, and decision-making activities.

3

Course sections

52

Students enrolled

WORKSHOPS AT A GLANCE

We hosted **Résumé Café** and **Mock Interview Day** events across campus, open to all students, along with targeted workshops designed to meet the unique needs of specific student groups. In addition to students receiving résumé assistance from Career Center staff, several events included **employer participation** (where employers were also reviewing résumés or conducting interviews), providing easily accessible networking opportunities.

In collaboration with the Office of International Services, we delivered presentations to international students preparing for **Optional Practical Training (OPT)**. These sessions highlighted career planning tools tailored to the unique needs of international students. To support continued exploration, a resource sheet with clickable links was provided, offering easy access to all tools and information discussed during the sessions.

453

student attendees

25

workshops

51

employer attendees

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

EMPLOYER CONNECTION

Kraft-Heinz visited campus October 1st & 2nd to recruit Missouri State University Engineering, Technology Management, and Supply Chain/Logistics students for their Global Manufacturing Trainee (GMT) program, an 18-month immersive experience designed to develop future leaders in Kraft-Heinz manufacturing plants. Kraft-Heinz held an information session attended by 10 students and then met with 7 students the next day for 1:1 coffee-chats. Most of the Kraft-Heinz managers and recruiters who visited are Missouri State University alumni.



NETWORKING EVENT

The Career Center offered a networking employer panel in spring 2026. Students and alumni were invited to join *Pitch Perfect: Making Connections Count*, featuring business professionals who shared practical strategies for networking. Following the panel discussion, students participated in guided small-group practice to refine their 30-second commercial and receive feedback from employers. This session taught students how to approach conversations with confidence and how to turn brief introductions into lasting connections.



JCPENNEY VIRTUAL SUIT-UP EVENT

The Career Center promoted the JCPenney Virtual Suit-Up Event, providing Missouri State students and recent alumni with an exclusive opportunity to purchase professional attire at a discount. This more-affordable business wear, shoes, and accessories helps participants prepare for career fairs, interviews, and the workplace.

370
student participants

CAMPUS WIDE IMPACT OUTREACH



112

Career Corners hosted by
Career Resources Specialists



12

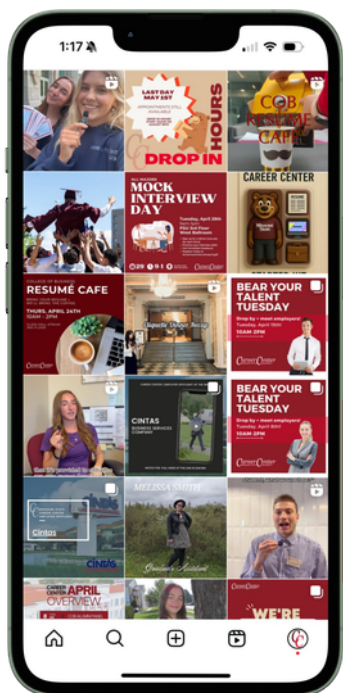
Tabling events hosted by
Student Career Ambassadors
193 Students reached

**CAMPUS
WIDE**

- Ann Kampeter Health Sciences Hall
- Blair-Shannon Dining Hall
- Blunt Hall
- Brick City
- Darr Agricultural Center
- Hill Hall
- Glass Hall
- Plaster Student Union
- Strong Hall



MARKETING ENGAGEMENT



Our strategic communication consists of multichannel marketing campaigns to **actively engage with and inform Missouri State University students**. We create content and regularly post on our social media channels: Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn. We collaborate with departments across campus to promote student events and important free resources (*via monitor graphics in campus buildings, departmental newsletters, SOAR, The Standard, and others*). Our digital presence creates opportunities for relevant employer engagement as well.

75,266

Instagram reel views

35+

reels created

1.5K

Instagram followers

@msucareercenter



TESTIMONIALS



HOW GREAT IS THE CAREER CENTER?

"I found their guidance very helpful, especially in understanding work opportunities for international students. They provided insights on Curricular Practical Training (CPT) after two semesters and guided me on using Goingglobal for job searches. Additionally, they advised on the best time to start job hunting after graduation, which gave me a clear roadmap for my career planning." - **Mehedi Hasan, Project Management, Graduate Student**

"I went into this meeting initially with the fear that I would just be told to look at certain websites or ask professors in my department, but I came out incredibly pleasantly surprised. I was provided with a list of resources to get me started on my job search, an understanding of the kind of work that would help me get into my field, locations near the areas I had indicated that were especially entry-level friendly, and advice on how to continue to use the career center to my advantage. My staff member, Rebekkah Wall, was incredibly patient and friendly, and I felt listened to. I went in feeling lost and a bit hopeless about my future in finding a career for me, and left with that weight off my shoulders." - **Alyssa Graves, Psychology, Senior**

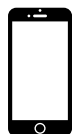
"Danelle has worked with me through the whole process of this specific internship. I have developed new skills and confidence within myself because of her concrete guidance. She was clear, precise, and kind. She walked through the process with me and I felt genuinely supported. Everytime I meet with Danelle I feel more confident in myself and my skills." - **Brandie Elliott, Environmental Plant Science, Senior**

"I found that the most beneficial thing was to ask for systematic ways to reach a decision about my major of interest. The staff member who helped me offered loads of resources and valuable guiding questions that I wouldn't have come across or known what to do with on my own." - **Aicha Beye, Early Childhood Education, Freshman**

"We went over my assessment results, and [the Career Resources Specialist] was very helpful in explaining them to me. The assessments themselves were insightful and have given me a better idea of what I value in a career and where to go next." - **Skylar Heinzl, Psychology, Freshman**

"[The Career Center] helped me prep for my internship interview. I'm very happy to share that I was offered the position, and I'm incredibly grateful for your support and guidance. [I] wouldn't have done that well without your help." - **Thobile Ncube, Mechanical Engineering, Junior**

TOOLS & RESOURCES



6,733

unique students who
logged into **Handshake**



1368

Big Interview
student users

Handshake

- * Students and alumni use **Handshake** to make Career Center appointments, stay up to date on Career Fairs and events, get recruited by top employers for full time jobs, part time jobs, internships and more.

biginterview

- * **Big Interview** helps students practice interview skills using their own webcam and provides automated performance feedback.

kuderjourney

- * **Kuder Journey** is an assessment that allows students to gain insights on interests, skills, and work values, then explore a range of career and education options.

What Can I Do With This Major?

- * **What Can I Do With This Major** features 100 major profiles with information on career paths, employers hiring in specific fields, strategies and more.

GoinGlobal Jobs here, there, everywhere.

- * **GoinGlobal** provides jobseekers with tools to fast track their career explorations, employment, internship and study abroad resources for more than 120 locations.



EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Career Center
MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY



EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

147,777 job postings
tailored to students

24,068 internship postings
tailored to students

500+ engaged
employers

TOP INDUSTRIES RECRUITING

- Healthcare
- Government - Local, State & Federal
- K-12 Education
- Transportation & Logistics
- Non-Profit - Other

The Career Center connects students and alumni with employers ready to recruit by inviting them to Career Fairs and events, providing ample networking opportunities as well. **There are more than 500 engaged employers who partner with our office** to host events, attend on-campus employer visits (Bear Your Talent Series), Career Fairs and **post jobs with our students in mind.**

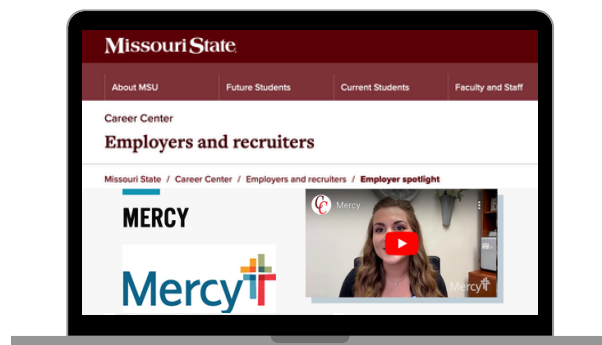
OUR MOST ENGAGED EMPLOYERS

O'Reilly Auto Parts
State of Missouri
ArcBest
Missouri Department of Corrections
Mercy
Burns & McDonnell
Bass Pro Shops/Cabela's
Enterprise Mobility
Greene County Government
BJC Health System
Old Missouri Bank
Leggett & Platt
Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc.
CoxHealth
Forvis Mazars
First Residential Mortgage

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

With our **Employer Spotlight** program, we offer the opportunity for one employer per week to be featured across our social platforms and university website (with a custom graphic highlighting their logo, summary text, and shared promotional video) to reach our student audience.



BEAR YOUR TALENT SERIES

Organizations and employers may request to reserve designated Tuesdays to recruit on campus, known as **Bear Your Talent Series**. This opportunity is available in most academic buildings or various locations on campus. This includes a contact table and promotion on our social media, allowing students to casually and easily interact with recruiting employers.



13

Bear Your Talent Series/other employer tables



GIVING BACK

Employers also volunteer with the Career Center, offering their time and services through events like our Mock Interview Day, Résumé Cafés, informational panels for student organizations or classes, as well as job shadowing opportunities to serve our students.

CAREER FAIRS



10

career fairs this
academic year

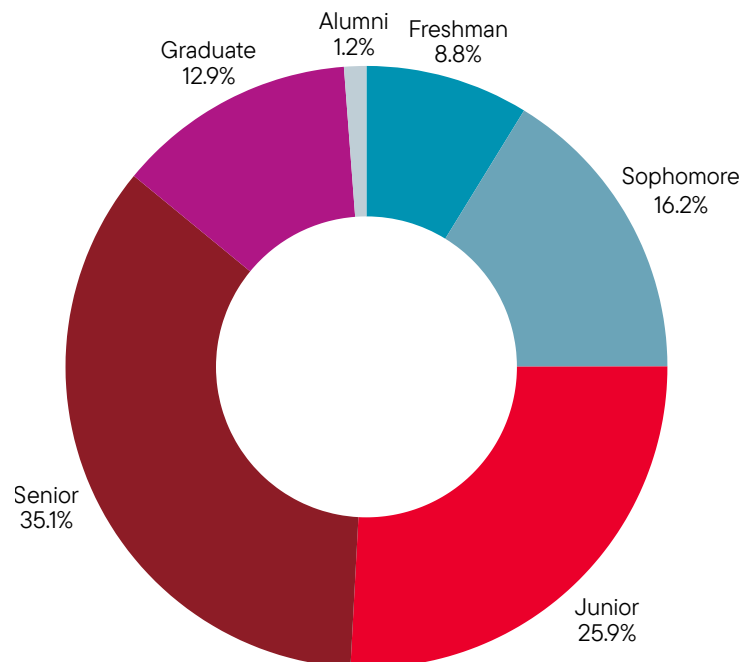
502

employer
attendees

2,212

student
attendees

Missouri State University attracts employers locally, nationwide and globally. Employers want to connect with students as they build the talent pipeline for their organizations. Employers recruit students and alumni for full time jobs & internships by **attending our career fairs**. The Career Center hosts an annual **Job and Internship Career Fair open to all students**, as well as partnering with departments at MSU to host **several industry specific career fairs** throughout each semester.



CAREER FAIR STUDENT ATTENDEES BY YEAR IN SCHOOL

ENTERPRISE MOBILITY SPONSORSHIP



PROFESSIONAL HEADSHOT BOOTH

Sponsored by Enterprise Mobility, the Missouri State University Career Center's **Professional Headshot Booth** provides students, alumni, and staff with free access to high-quality professional photos. The headshot booth is located in the **Missouri State University Bookstore** and is available during the bookstore's regular business hours. Students begin their session by entering their Missouri State email address into the Iris Professional Headshot Booth system. After the session, their self-selected headshots are emailed directly to them. Since the ribbon-cutting launch in September 2024, 1,200 students through 2,046 unique sessions have taken advantage of this resource.



NETWORKING WORKSHOP

Enterprise Mobility continued its commitment to student career readiness by partnering with the Missouri State University Career Center, Women in Business, and Delta Sigma Pi to host the Enterprise Mobility Networking Workshop during the spring semester. Held in Glass Hall, the event gave students the opportunity to develop practical networking, leadership, and team-management skills while engaging directly with employer representatives. Attendees gained valuable insight into building professional relationships, making strong first impressions, and navigating career conversations with confidence. The workshop also created a space for students to connect with recruiters from Enterprise Mobility and expand their professional networks with campus organizations dedicated to student success.



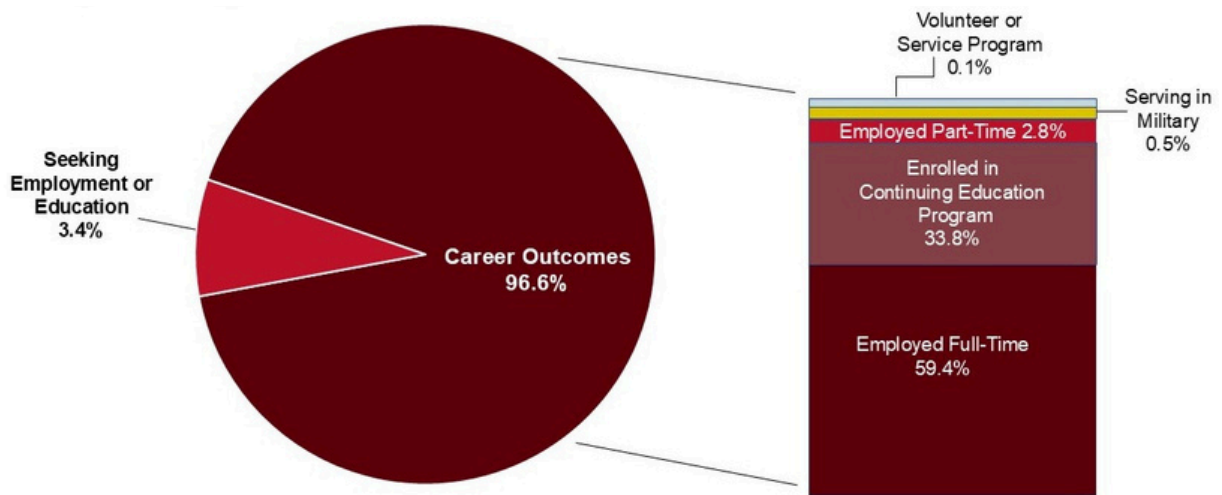


GRADUATION OUTCOMES

Career Center
MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

GRADUATION OUTCOMES

2024-2025 STUDENT SUCCESS AFTER GRADUATION



Knowledge Rate is the percent of graduates for which the institution has reasonable and verifiable first-destination information. The 2024-2025 knowledge rate for Missouri State University is 63.8%. Although lower than desired, this is in line with the National Association of Colleges and Employers and the MO Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development standards (60-65%).

TOP EMPLOYERS

CoxHealth
Springfield Public Schools
Mercy
Nixa Public Schools
Bass Pro Shops/Cabela's
O'Reilly Auto Parts

TOP LOCATIONS

Springfield, Missouri
St. Louis, Missouri
Kansas City, Missouri
Nixa, Missouri
Ozark, Missouri
Jefferson City, Missouri
Dallas, Texas

YEAR END ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Sherry Elkins successfully completed the University Staff Ambassadors (USA) Program, enhancing leadership and campus engagement skills.



Megan Krom & Sherry Elkins supported the Springfield Way Internship Program by facilitating candidate interviews.



Danelle Maxwell collaborated with the Cooperative Engineering Program to hold a spring Engineering Resume Refresh.



Gretchen Gawron & Brandon Gash planned a panel for College of Business students that featured business professionals who shared practical strategies for networking and provided opportunities for students to refine their 30-second commercial and receive feedback from employers.



Margie Stewart served as President of the local Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) chapter, Springfield Area Human Resources Association (SAHRA) in 2025 & 2026.



Rebekkah Wall represented the Career Center at the Student Resource Center's event during Welcome Weekend, providing career services overviews to incoming students.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO ANOTHER YEAR OF SUPPORTING
MSU BEARS ON THEIR PROFESSIONAL JOURNEYS.**



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