Seth Allen '03, says Southwestern helped him gain “hands-on” experience that helped him land a job

Seth Allen '03 developed a strong connection with the ideals of community service while he was a student at Southwestern University, and he set goals for himself to one day land a job that contained a community-service component.

A summer of service learning in Honduras, an internship with The Salvation Army in Austin, and participation in numerous skill-building programs through the Office of Career Services all helped Allen, an international studies/Spanish major, to land a position as assessment coordinator with the Texas Institute for Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistics (TIMES) at the University of Houston's Department of Psychology.

TIMES performs research in educational development, curriculum development and statistical modeling. Allen serves as project coordinator on a grant from the Gulf Coast Community Services Association and the city of Houston. The grant was awarded to provide evaluation for the local Head Start system.

Allen and 57 percent of his fellow 2003 classmates secured full-time employment, despite the nation's competitive job market. Like Allen, 80 percent of Southwestern’s 2003 graduates work in Texas. Sixteen percent work elsewhere in the United States, and three percent hold positions overseas.

Employers say developing diverse skill sets and “on-the-job” experiences are important elements for successful job searches. When combined with classroom knowledge, these elements offer students the best opportunity to establish a foundation for success post graduation.

"Participating in activities outside the classroom was just as important to my college career as the in-class learning," says Allen. "Each experience taught me not only effective skills for career building, but also about the values for living a life of learning.

"The summer that I spent in Honduras as a member of the Global Leadership Initiative Destination: Honduras took me out of my comfort zone and taught me how to make the world my classroom. During my senior year, Maria Kruger ’91, Internship Specialist at Southwestern’s Office of Career Services, introduced me to an internship opportunity with The Salvation Army in Austin. It was a great match for my skills, experience and career goals."
Allen used a variety of career-building techniques learned at Career Services workshops and was able to secure the internship. This internship provided him an opportunity to work with professionals in the Austin business community. Following graduation, The Salvation Army made Allen an offer of full-time employment.

Not only did Allen earn a job offer, he led efforts that helped The Salvation Army win $4.2 million in federal funding for community housing. Allen says this accomplishment will help him in future job endeavors.

Nationwide, most students graduate with at least one internship experience; many students choose to participate in two or more. Nearly 50 percent of Southwestern University students gain experience and "test-drive" careers through internships.

"I love the work I contribute to here. It is really a job of problem solving." — Seth Allen '03

Employers indicate that experience, in the form of employment, internships, volunteerism, leadership roles and significant class projects, is the most important credential job candidates offer, next to a college degree. Still, communicating one's knowledge, skills and experiences to employers takes planning, persistence and effort.

"After graduation, I moved to Houston, and the subsequent job hunt put all of my resume writing techniques, job research skills and networking strategies to the real test," says Allen. "I knew that facing the challenge of a tough job market would require me to look a little harder, have a little more patience and be a little more creative, but the jobs were out there, and I would find one."

Like Allen, the largest percentage of graduates (38 percent) attributed their job search success to networking. Additional methods of locating jobs included directly contacting employers (14 percent), Internet searches (13 percent), Career Services assistance (10 percent), internships and other career-related experience (7 percent). Most successful job searches likely include a combination of these strategies.

Allen says he spent most of his time networking and writing letters for job openings he had read about on Idealist.org, a web-based resource for the non-profit sector.

"Working my networks is where I saw real results. I did this by talking to anyone and everyone that my parents knew that were willing to give me a few minutes of their time. I told my friends in Houston about what kind of work I was hoping to do and asked if they knew anyone to refer me to. I even made cold calls to places that I was interested in working for, and utilized the Internet."

"I actually received a full-time offer from The Salvation Army in Austin, but I felt like I had so many angles working in Houston that a position was bound to come through any day. And it did.

"A friend from high school, who was working as a project manager at TIMES, forwarded an internal e-mail announcement to me for a new research project manager. I replied to her e-mail with my resume attached, and she forwarded it on to the hiring manager. He contacted me and set up an interview."

Allen's new position is keeping him busy. "I love the work I contribute to here. My job responsibilities are mostly supervisory, logistical and a little bit of PR. I am the direct supervisor for six examiners who work in the field administering assessment tests to pre-school children. It's really a job of problem solving."

"In my first week at work, I was told that we needed to test about 2,000 children among 22 different schools in 45 days, and that we should have started testing the week before I arrived! I also proofread materials, update records, schedule meetings and write letters and summaries."

Allen also will have the opportunity to continue his education with assistance from his employer. Currently, he is enrolled part-time in pre-requisites for graduate study and plans to enroll in an MBA program two years from now.

Twenty-six percent of his classmates also are continuing their education. Of those, 45 percent are enrolled in graduate school, 21 percent in law school, 19 percent in medical school and the remainder in other professional schools or are completing advanced coursework.

Seventeen percent of the Class of 2003 are working part-time, volunteering, and currently seeking employment. This group includes students who are traveling or fulfilling family obligations. One percent of 2003 graduates did not respond to this survey.
The largest percentage of graduates attributed their job search success to networking.

A Sample of Employers & Graduate / Professional Schools with 2003 SU Grads

Employers:
Accenture
Alamo Title Company
AmeriCorps
Associated Colleges of the South Technology Center
ATS Consulting Engineers and Inspectors
Austin Bio Med Lab
Austin ISD
Ballet Austin
Bank of America
Bay Area Technologies
Baylor College of Medicine
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Texas
Bouveau/Bryan-Brown, Inc.
Brown McCarroll LLP
Brown, Graham & Co.
Casa Marianella
Cheyney Communications
CEDRA Corporation
Central Texas Health Research
Chili's Bar and Grill
Cintas Corporation
City of Houston Public Libraries
Clinical Pathology Labs, Inc.
Dell, Inc. (Spherion)
Dr. Carolyn Flanary, Orthodontist
Drive Financial Services
E & J Gallo - Glacier Distribution
Eckerd Youth Alternative, Inc.
Edinburg ISD
Employee Benefit Solutions, Inc.
Encycybe Pharmaceuticals
Enterprise Rent-A-Car
Fertility Resources of Houston, LLC
First Savings Bank
Fulbright & Jaworski, LLP
Golden Gate Natural Parks Conservancy
GSD&M Advertising
Harcourt Achieve
Hardy-Heck-Moore, Inc.
Harmony Science Academy
Harvard Business School
HEB
Hewitt Associates
Hogares, Inc.
Houston ISD
JET Programme
John Edwards for President Campaign
Johns Hopkins University
KickSport
Kolovosky & Delay Eye Consultants

Schools:
Arizona State University
Baylor University
California State University - San Marcos
Duke University
Emory University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Harvard University Law School
McGill University
Michigan State University ICL College of Law
New York University
Nova Southeastern University
Radford University
Rice University
Rutgers University
South Texas School of Law
Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law
Southern Methodist University
Perkins School of Theology
St. Louis University School of Law
St. Mary's University School of Law
Syracuse University
Texas A&M University
Texas Christian University
Texas State University - San Marcos
Texas Tech University Health Science Center
University of Arizona
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
University of California, Davis
University of California, Los Angeles
University of Connecticut
University of Denver College of Law
University of Georgia
University of Houston
University of Kentucky
University of Maryland School of Law
University of Missouri, Kansas City
University of Montana School of Law
University of New Mexico
University of North Texas
University of Queensland
University of Texas at Arlington
University of Texas at Houston Medical School
University of Texas Health Science Center–Houston
University of Texas Health Science Center–San Antonio
University of Texas Medical Branch
University of Texas School of Law
University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas
Utah State University
Yale University
Career Services at a Glance

Southwestern University’s Office of Career Services upholds a mission to help students and alumni develop, assess and implement life-long career planning skills that support contributions toward the well-being of society.

Advising
Career Services offers one-on-one advising for:
- Major and career exploration
- Self-assessment testing
- Internship development
- Resume development
- Graduate and professional school advising
- Job search strategies

Events
Special programming events throughout the year provide occupational information and teach career skills.

Examples are:
- Professional Practice Interview Day
- Etiquette Dinner
- Getting into Graduate School
- Career Connections
- Real World 101
- Careers in... series

Resources
Career Services Resource Center (600+ publications)
Career Services website: southwestern.edu/careers
Major Possibilities Guides
Resume Writing Guide
E-Line job and internship postings
Alumni and parent networking contacts

MonsterTRAK
Students and alumni can register free of charge with MonsterTRAK, a web-based resume referral system, to search for jobs and internships. Registered users are eligible to participate in on-campus recruiting.

Recruiting and Career Fairs
Students can interview on campus and attend information sessions for non-profit, government, private-sector business and education employers. Career Services also provides transportation to job and internship fairs around Central Texas.

Location and Hours
Call or e-mail for an appointment or stop by the office in the McCook-Crain Building. Office hours are 8 a.m.–12 p.m. and 1–5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

First destination for 2003 graduates by major

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Continuing Education</th>
<th>Employed Part Time</th>
<th>Other/Not Seeking</th>
<th>No Information</th>
<th>Total Majors Graduated</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
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<td>11%</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<td>Natural Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
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<td>7%</td>
<td>19%</td>
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<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent/Interdisciplinary</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Of 318 graduates, 55 students earned two or more majors in 2003.

CAREER SERVICES
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career.services@southwestern.edu
www.southwestern.edu/careers