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Parker College of Business students meet virtually with potential employers

July 13, 2020

The School of Accountancy in the Parker College of Business at Georgia Southern University helped more than 60 students meet with potential employers during its first-ever virtual career fair held in June.

The virtual event took the place of the school's annual Accounting Day career fair. Ranisha Newbold, a junior accounting student at Georgia Southern, is looking for an internship in Spring 2021 and was grateful to learn about the event.

"The fact that we actually had an accounting career fair was the best thing, given the pandemic and that we couldn't have the face-to-face Accounting Day," stated Newbold. "I am grateful to the Parker College of Business School of Accountancy for taking the time to put the virtual career fair together for those of us who wanted to attend the accounting career fair."

Newbold has attended an in-person career fair in the past and felt at ease in the virtual environment.

"I felt so much more comfortable to speak or, in this case, type about myself and what I wanted to know," stated Newbold. "I feel like this experience helped me with developing the right questions to ask and learning how to keep the conversation going. Just as you are getting to know the company, they are getting to know you."

Job recruiter Rachel Booth of Aprio in Atlanta attended the event, which was her first experience recruiting virtually. Thanks to the career fair, she is going to be busy with interviews in the coming weeks.

She believes that due to the virtual nature of the event it will take longer to schedule interviews and follow-up conversations than it would in traditional settings, but she also thinks the platform allowed students to learn a lot from each other and from the recruiters.

"For the next virtual career fair, I would like to be able to see the students and to have conversations with them," said Booth. "I think this would benefit the students, as well. The students asked good questions in the chat, and it was easier to talk to multiple students at once, as lots of students tend to have similar questions. I think they were able to learn more about Aprio."



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**Michael C.
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Tim Pearson, Ph.D., director of the School of Accountancy, said hosting virtual events helps students keep up with networking and career opportunities.

“Before COVID-19, we typically had 25-30 employers and around 100 students attend Accounting Day,” stated Pearson. “This virtual technology is our new normal, and this event is critical in keeping that connection open for students to plug in and find what job opportunities are available to them.”

Pearson is scheduling another virtual career fair on Aug. 26 for the annual Meet the Firms networking event in order to keep up with the demand for accounting students.

“The job market for accounting is very good but slow,” said Pearson. “One of the firms talked about being busy with the Paycheck Protection Program loan compliance work; new opportunities are surfacing every day. We need students to get their resumes and other candidate materials up-to-date and vetted through the Office of Career and Professional Development and their new platform, Handshake, so they can put their best foot forward.”

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