

How to get a great job in two years

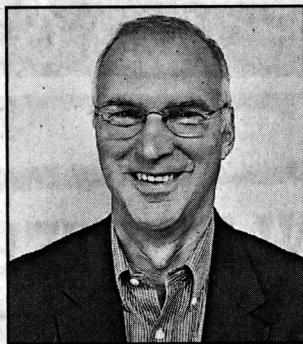
We all know how hard it is for young people to find a good job. Not nearly as easy as when their parents and grandparents were entering the workforce.

Jobs as a barista or a waiter seems to be the future for today's college graduates. Plus, record-high student debt. What a mess.

What if what everybody knows about how hard it is for young people is wrong. What if there were an easy way, two years after college, to get a job paying \$52,000 and only have \$7,500 in student loans to repay? Might as well believe in Yoda and the Easter Bunny.

As Yoda once said, "Always pass on what you have learned." Here's what I've learned. You can get a great job in Florida, with only two years of college and minimal student debt.

Let's take one of Florida's great, local community colleges as an example. South Florida State College serves places like Highlands and DeSoto as part of their geographic reach. Go to South Florida State College and get two-year associates of science degree. Starting



INK IN MY VEINS

David Dunn-Rankin pay is \$52,700.

State College of Florida which covers Sarasota and Manatee two-year associate of science graduates earn \$47,200, and Florida Southwestern State College associate of science graduates earn \$46,300. AS degrees include (paramedic, EMT, registered nurse, computer networking, paralegal).

Let's compare the wages of two-year associate of science graduates from our 28 exceptional Florida community colleges to the average four-year university graduate's pay of \$42,000. The two-year associates of science degree holder, on average,

earns \$9,000 more than the average four-year graduate of a Florida university. Higher wages, half the years in college,

Lower wage earners are the four-year university liberal arts graduates from Florida's universities who earn on average \$34,400. If we combine the AA and AS two-year community college graduates, they earn, on average \$34,300. Almost the same as a four-year graduate. Two more years of college and two more years of student debt gets you very little extra in starting salary.

Here's an interesting twist. Our community colleges also have four-year degree programs. The median first-year earnings of a four-year graduate from one of Florida's community colleges was \$41,000 versus just \$34,400 for graduates of Florida's public universities.

Here are some real world examples of starting pay after four years in college. University of Florida, \$34,700; Florida State, \$31,600; University of South Florida \$35,100. Compare that to FSW

\$43,000 and State College \$54,300.

We also often hear from our older readers about how they don't teach "shop class" anymore. Not all kids are cut out for college. True.

In Florida, there is something called district technical centers. There are 48 vocational centers that offer certification in a variety of technical programs. The average graduate from a Florida DTC makes just under \$28,000 a year. Compare that to the median first-year earnings for an English major from one of Florida's 12 large public universities — \$28,800.

As Yoda said, "You must unlearn what you have learned." You can get a great job in just two years of college, with an excellent starting salary and low student debt. It is happening right here in Florida.

Share your thoughts.

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