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# Job Outlook 2016

November 2015



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND EMPLOYERS**

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# About the *Job Outlook* 2016 Survey

The *Job Outlook* survey is a forecast of hiring intentions of employers as they relate to new college graduates. Each year, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) surveys its employer members about their hiring plans and other employment-related issues to project the market for new college graduates for the current class and to assess a variety of conditions that may influence that market.

From August 5, 2015, through September 13, 2015, data were collected for the *Job Outlook 2016* survey. A total of 201 surveys were returned—a 20.1 percent response rate.

Of those responding, 12.4 percent of respondents were from the West, 22.4 percent were from the Northeast, 31.8 percent were from the Southeast, and 33.3 percent were from the Midwest. For a list of respondents by industry and size, and a partial list of organizations that supplied data for this report, see the Appendix.

**Totals throughout the report may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.**

NACE expects to provide a formal update of job market information once more in the 2015-16 academic year: The *Job Outlook 2016* Spring Update survey (data collected in February – March) will give NACE members a final update on hiring for 2015-16 graduates. Results will be available in early April 2016.

## Research Team

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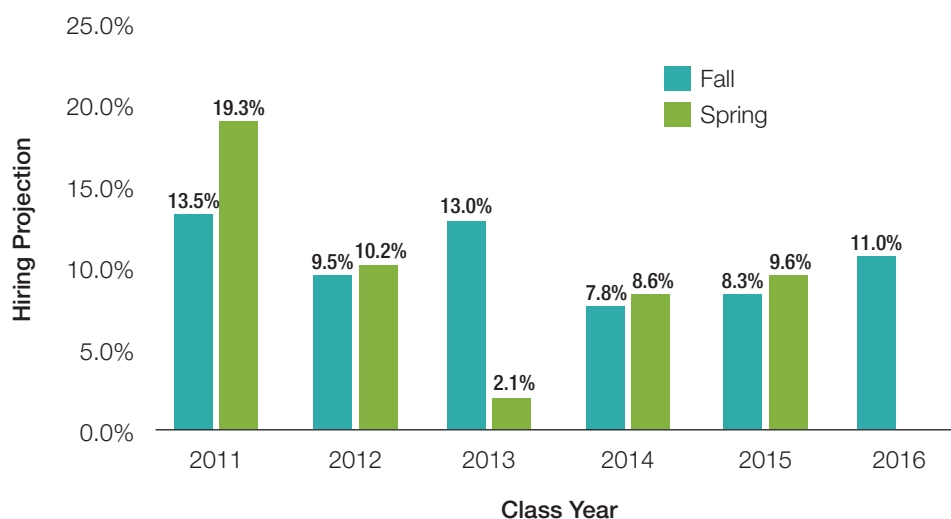
# U.S. College Hiring to Increase 11 Percent

The hiring outlook for college graduates continues to improve as employers plan to hire 11 percent more new college graduates for their U.S. operations from the Class of 2016 than they did from the Class of 2015.

In comparison, in spring 2015 through NACE's *Job Outlook Spring 2015 Update*, employers indicated they would hire approximately 10 percent more new graduates from Class of 2015 than they had hired from the Class of 2014. (See Figure 1.)

Not only is U.S. hiring going to increase for Class of 2016 graduates, but the one-quarter of respondents that recruit college graduates for positions outside of the United States also expect to increase hiring; these employers anticipate increasing hiring for international positions by 5.2 percent. This, too, is an improvement over 2014-15 when respondents planned just a 3.2 percent increase for international hiring of Class of 2015 graduates. Total hiring (both U.S. and international students for both U.S. and international positions) for the Class of 2016 is also expected to increase overall by 10.9 percent.

Figure 1  
**Job Outlook hiring projections, 2011 – 2016\***



\*Years 2014, 2015, and 2016 are the hiring projections for U.S. locations only. Prior years' projections are shown for informational purposes only, and should not be compared to the 2014-16 projections.

While the overall increase in U.S. college hiring in 2015-16 shows positive movement over the 2014-15 cycle, it is important to note that not all—or even a majority—of respondents project increases. (See Figure 2.)

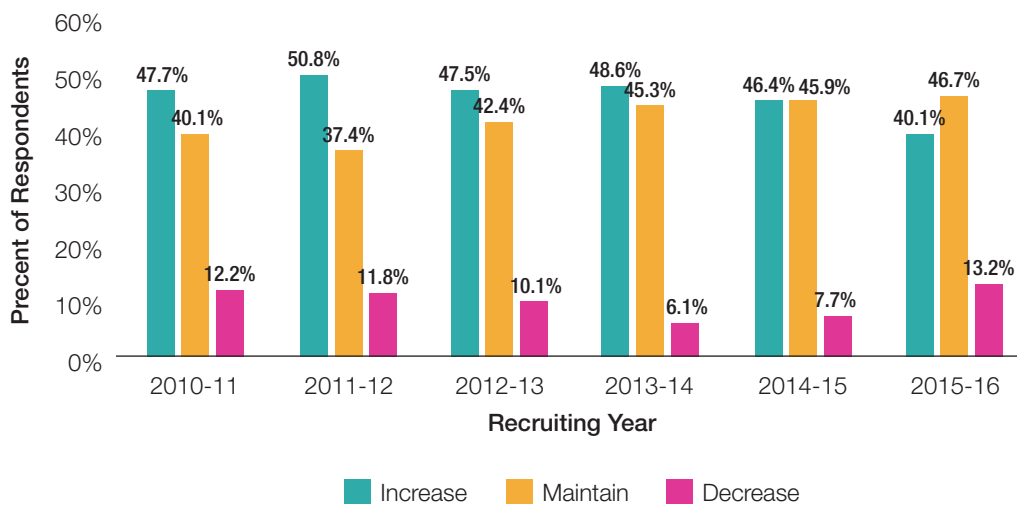
In fact, slightly more than 40 percent of respondents expect to increase their hiring. These employers cite company growth as the key behind their plans for increased hiring, with organizations looking to new college graduates to build their talent pipelines.

Nearly 47 percent of respondents expect to maintain hiring at last year's levels—the largest group to do so since 2010-11. This is a positive result, reflecting both steady and consistent growth within their organizations (thus prompting them to continue to hire) and high retention of new college graduates (thereby offsetting the need to increase hiring). It also points to the ability of these respondents to plan their college hiring headcount successfully year over year, negating the need to adjust numbers.

However, more than 13 percent of respondents plan to cut back on hiring; that's a sharp increase over the 7.7 percent who projected cut backs in 2014-15, and the 6.1 percent who planned to trim hiring rolls in 2013-14. Although some employers planning to reduce college hiring blamed smaller budgets and company restructuring, the largest group—42 percent—cited lower oil prices as the cut-back driver.

Figure 2

### Employers' hiring expectations



EMPLOYERS  
PLAN TO HIRE  
**11%**  
MORE NEW  
COLLEGE  
GRADUATES

## Available vs. Unfilled Positions for New College Graduates

How are employers doing in filling their open positions?

According to respondents, just 2 percent of their available jobs went unfilled in 2014-15, a vast improvement over the 5.6 percent that remained empty in 2013-14. (See Figure 3.) *(Note: From 2012-13 to 2013-14, the number of available positions nearly doubled, which may account for the large number of unfilled positions.)*

Of course, these data are highly dependent upon the specific respondents to the survey each year. However, the improvement in unfilled positions may point to employers' being better prepared in 2014-15 to handle their recruiting needs; in fact, NACE's *Recruiting Benchmark Survey* found an increase in the number of recruiting staff for the 2014-15 recruiting cycle.

Figure 3

### Available vs. unfilled positions for new college graduates

| Recruiting Year | Total Number of Available Positions | Average Number of Available Positions | Total Number of Unfilled Positions | Average Number of Unfilled Positions | Percent of Unfilled to Available Positions |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 2014-15         | 34,294                              | 230                                   | 670                                | 5                                    | 2.0%                                       |
| 2013-14         | 46,609                              | 251                                   | 2,591                              | 14                                   | 5.6%                                       |
| 2012-13         | 24,834                              | 171                                   | 1,126                              | 8                                    | 4.5%                                       |
| 2011-12         | 24,854                              | 152                                   | 855                                | 5                                    | 3.4%                                       |
| 2010-11         | 24,356                              | 148                                   | 1,172                              | 7                                    | 4.8%                                       |

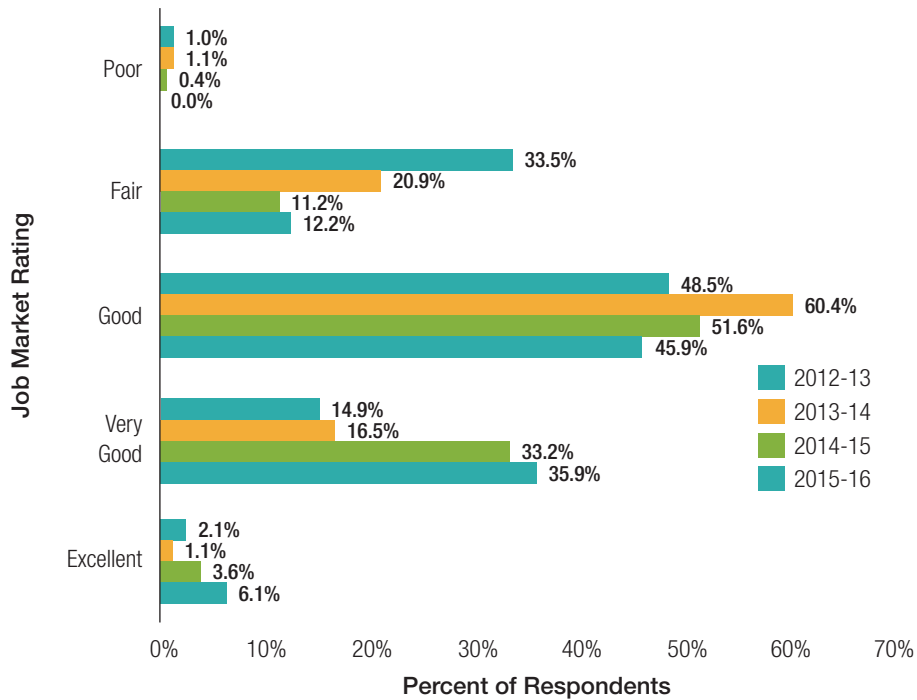
## Job Market Ratings

The largest group of respondents rated the overall job market as "good," as has been the case the last three years. (See Figure 4.) However, this year's ratings by respondents paint the brightest picture thus far:

- First, no respondents rated the overall job market as "poor," and the group that rated the overall market as "excellent" has grown to more than 6 percent.
- The group rating the job market as "very good" has also risen, with more than one-third of respondents characterizing the job market in this way.
- The percent of respondents giving the job market a "fair" rating held nearly even.

Figure 4

### Employers rate the job market for 2015-16 graduates



**LARGEST  
GROUP  
RATED  
THE JOB  
MARKET  
AS GOOD**

### Reassessing Hiring Plans

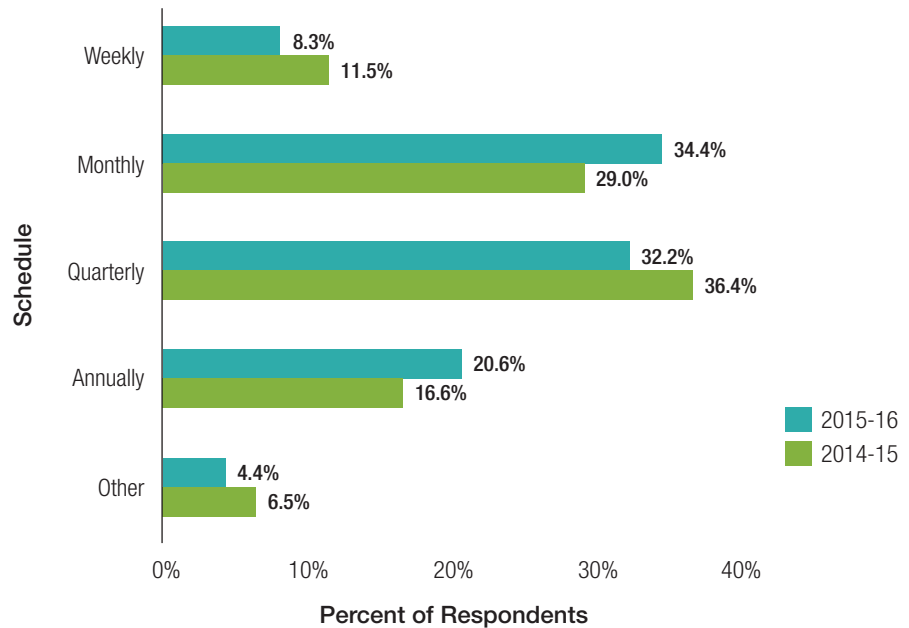
Among current respondents, the largest group plan to reassess their college hiring on a monthly basis. In comparison, a quarterly reassessment was favored by 2014-15 respondents. (See Figure 5.)

Overall, the majority of current respondents will reassess their needs on a quarterly or monthly basis. This year, fewer respondents plan to reassess weekly than was the case a year ago.

## EMPLOYERS FAVOR THE FALL RECRUITING SEASON

Figure 5

### Employers' plans to reassess hiring needs



Employers appear to favor the fall recruiting season for conducting their college recruiting. This year's respondents plan to conduct an average of 71 percent of their college recruiting in the fall, with the remaining 29 percent in the spring. (See Figure 6.)

Figure 6

### Percentage of college recruiting conducted in fall vs. spring, 2012-2016

| Job Outlook Survey Year | Fall | Spring |
|-------------------------|------|--------|
| 2016                    | 71%  | 29%    |
| 2015                    | 66%  | 34%    |
| 2014                    | 62%  | 38%    |
| 2013                    | 68%  | 32%    |
| 2012                    | 65%  | 35%    |

Spring 2016 recruiting plans also look promising, with two-thirds of respondents reporting firm or tentative plans in place to recruit then. (See Figure 7.) While employers plan to conduct more than 70 percent of their total college recruiting in fall, slightly more than 19 percent will fulfill all of their recruiting needs in fall 2015 and will not be on campuses in spring 2016. This group of respondents is nearly identical to those responding to last year's survey. This year, slightly more respondents are unsure of their spring 2016 recruiting plans, but those that are not hiring and won't be on campus in spring 2016 remains largely unchanged.

Figure 7

**Spring 2016 recruiting plans**

| Recruiting Plans         | Spring 2016 | Spring 2015 |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Firm recruiting plans    | 41.3%       | 47.0%       |
| Tentative plans in place | 25.7%       | 23.7%       |
| All recruiting in fall   | 19.6%       | 19.2%       |
| Unsure                   | 12.3%       | 9.1%        |
| Not hiring               | 1.1%        | 0.9%        |

**Recruiting Methods**

This year's survey respondents continue the trend of focusing on technology in how they will recruit 2015-16 grads. More than half of the respondents to this year's survey plan to use more social networks and/or more technology in general in their recruiting methods. (See Figure 8.)

The increased use of technology may affect those respondents that indicated that they expect to attend fewer career fairs, as that group has grown from fewer than one-quarter of last year's respondents to more than 30 percent of respondents this year. Also, the percentage of recruiters planning to travel less is up—reaching almost 23 percent. Although this isn't a large bump over last year, it is up almost 5 percent from 2012.

Figure 8

**Change in recruiting methods, 2012-2016, by percentage of respondents**

| Change                           | % of 2016 Respondents | % of 2015 Respondents | % of 2014 Respondents | % of 2013 Respondents | % of 2012 Respondents |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Using more social networks       | 54.2%                 | 64.7%                 | 50.9%                 | 57.3%                 | 57.1%                 |
| Using more technology in general | 58.1%                 | 60.9%                 | 48.5%                 | 59.6%                 | 58.3%                 |
| Change in branding               | 37.4%                 | 42.4%                 | 38.2%                 | 34.8%                 | 41.7%                 |
| Attending more career fairs      | 34.2%                 | 32.1%                 | 33.3%                 | 39.3%                 | 42.3%                 |
| Attending fewer career fairs     | 30.3%                 | 23.9%                 | 23.6%                 | 24.7%                 | 27.4%                 |
| Less travel                      | 22.6%                 | 20.1%                 | 21.8%                 | 21.3%                 | 18.3%                 |
| More travel                      | 19.4%                 | 19.6%                 | 18.2%                 | 21.9%                 | 22.3%                 |
| Other                            | 6.4%                  | 13.0%                 | 14.5%                 | 18.5%                 | 13.1%                 |

# TWO-THIRDS OF 15 INDUSTRIES REPORT OVERALL INCREASES

## Hiring by Industry

Figure 9 shows the changes in hiring for U.S. positions within the industries. Of the 15 industries having at least five respondents, two-thirds are reporting overall increases in college hiring, with the remaining one-third reporting decreases.

Respondents in the accounting services industry not only report the highest total number of 2016 projected hires, but they also are reporting an increase in hiring of almost 20 percent. In addition, seven of the nine total respondents in this sector are reporting increases to their individual college hire numbers, with the remaining two respondents maintaining their numbers.

Employers in the oil and gas extraction industry are reporting the poorest outlook for Class of 2016 college graduates. The overall decrease reported is nearly 60 percent, and six of their nine total industry respondents are decreasing their individual college hire numbers, with the remaining three maintaining their numbers. This does not come as a big surprise, as lower oil and gas prices have a direct impact on this particular industry.

*(Please note: Industry projections for Class of 2016 graduates should be examined with caution as some sectors contain a very small number of respondents. Only industries with five or more respondents are listed. Additionally, due to the small number of respondents in some industries, overall percentages may be skewed by one or two respondents.)*

Figure 9

### Total change in hiring, by industry\*

| Industry                          | # of 2016 Projected Hires | # of 2015 Actual Hires | % Change | # of Respondents |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|----------|------------------|
| Oil & Gas Extraction              | 330                       | 784                    | -57.9%   | 9                |
| Utilities                         | 553                       | 594                    | -6.9%    | 7                |
| Construction                      | 587                       | 407                    | 44.2%    | 8                |
| Food & Beverage Mfg.              | 292                       | 312                    | -6.4%    | 6                |
| Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.    | 1,648                     | 1,898                  | -13.2%   | 14               |
| Computer & Electronics Mfg.       | 1,548                     | 1,497                  | 3.4%     | 13               |
| Misc. Mfg.                        | 583                       | 530                    | 10.0%    | 13               |
| Retail Trade                      | 2,103                     | 1,555                  | 35.2%    | 12               |
| Transportation                    | 788                       | 702                    | 12.3%    | 5                |
| Information                       | 1,149                     | 666                    | 72.5%    | 5                |
| Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate | 9,338                     | 8,847                  | 5.5%     | 23               |
| Accounting Services               | 13,117                    | 10,977                 | 19.5%    | 9                |
| Engineering Services              | 749                       | 768                    | -2.5%    | 8                |
| Management Consulting             | 412                       | 395                    | 4.3%     | 5                |
| Misc. Prof. Services              | 813                       | 592                    | 37.3%    | 9                |

\*Hiring projections are for U.S. locations only. (Only industries with 5 or more respondents are represented here.)

Plans for on-campus recruiting in spring 2016 and job market ratings by industry—shown in Figures 10 and 11—also concur with the overall college hiring picture by industry. Accounting services employers have the best outlook for Class of 2016 graduates, with two-thirds of respondents having firm or tentative plans for spring 2016 on-campus recruiting. The remaining one-third are conducting all of their college recruiting in fall 2015. In addition, they report the highest job market rating specific to their industry.

On the other hand, 22 percent of oil and gas extraction employers have firm or tentative plans in place for spring 2016 on-campus recruiting, as more than three-quarters of these respondents are doing all of their recruiting in fall 2015. In addition, oil and gas extraction employers' job market rating specific to their industry stands numerically at 1.78 on a 5-point scale, between poor and fair.

Figure 10

**Spring 2016 on-campus recruiting plans, by industry**

| Industry                             | Firm plans<br>In place | Tentative<br>plans | All recruiting<br>in Fall 2015 | Not<br>hiring | Unsure | # of<br>Respondents |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|--------|---------------------|
| Oil & Gas Extraction                 | 11.1%                  | 11.1%              | 77.8%                          | 0.0%          | 0.0%   | 9                   |
| Utilities                            | 71.4%                  | 0.0%               | 14.3%                          | 0.0%          | 14.3%  | 7                   |
| Construction                         | 62.5%                  | 0.0%               | 37.5%                          | 0.0%          | 0.0%   | 8                   |
| Food & Beverage Mfg.                 | 33.3%                  | 16.7%              | 16.7%                          | 0.0%          | 33.3%  | 6                   |
| Chemical<br>(Pharmaceutical) Mfg.    | 20.0%                  | 13.3%              | 26.7%                          | 6.7%          | 33.3%  | 15                  |
| Computer &<br>Electronics Mfg.       | 35.3%                  | 35.3%              | 23.5%                          | 0.0%          | 5.9%   | 17                  |
| Misc. Mfg.                           | 33.3%                  | 33.3%              | 13.3%                          | 6.7%          | 13.3%  | 15                  |
| Retail Trade                         | 53.8%                  | 30.8%              | 7.7%                           | 0.0%          | 7.7%   | 13                  |
| Transportation                       | 33.3%                  | 50.0%              | 0.0%                           | 0.0%          | 16.7%  | 6                   |
| Information                          | 33.3%                  | 50.0%              | 0.0%                           | 0.0%          | 16.7%  | 6                   |
| Finance, Insurance,<br>& Real Estate | 42.3%                  | 26.9%              | 19.2%                          | 0.0%          | 11.5%  | 26                  |
| Accounting Services                  | 55.6%                  | 11.1%              | 33.3%                          | 0.0%          | 0.0%   | 9                   |
| Engineering Services                 | 50.0%                  | 37.5%              | 12.5%                          | 0.0%          | 0.0%   | 8                   |
| Management<br>Consulting             | 20.0%                  | 40.0%              | 40.0%                          | 0.0%          | 0.0%   | 5                   |
| Misc. Prof. Services                 | 54.5%                  | 36.4%              | 9.1%                           | 0.0%          | 0.0%   | 11                  |

Figure 11

**Job market rating, by industry**

| Industry                         | Average Rating | # of Respondents |
|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Accounting Services              | 4.11           | 9                |
| Computer & Electronics Mfg.      | 4.00           | 17               |
| Information                      | 4.00           | 6                |
| Management Consulting            | 4.00           | 5                |
| Misc. Professional Services      | 3.73           | 11               |
| Retail Trade                     | 3.64           | 14               |
| Finance, Insurance & Real Estate | 3.62           | 26               |
| Wholesale Trade                  | 3.60           | 5                |
| Utilities                        | 3.43           | 7                |
| Construction                     | 3.38           | 8                |
| Engineering Services             | 3.38           | 8                |
| Food & Beverage Mfg.             | 3.33           | 6                |
| Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.   | 3.33           | 15               |
| Transportation                   | 3.17           | 6                |
| Misc. Mfg.                       | 3.07           | 14               |
| Motor Vehicle Mfg.               | 3.00           | 5                |
| Oil & Gas Extraction             | 1.78           | 9                |

*\*5-point scale, where 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Very good, 5=Excellent*

## Hiring by Region

While three of the four geographic regions show increases in college hiring this year, these projections are directly related to the reporting industries located within each region. (See Figure 12.)

The West region is showing the only projected decrease in hiring, but this region also has the largest percentage of total respondents that are decreasing their hires. (See Figure 13.) Also, one particular respondent in the West region is planning a large decrease in hiring—a drop of 85 percent. Without this respondent, the regional projection changes dramatically, from a decrease in hiring of 3.9 percent to an increase of 3.7 percent.

As expected, the Northeast region shows the largest increase in overall hiring, but it also has no respondents that are planning to decrease their hiring numbers. Furthermore, several of its respondents are in industries that have the brightest outlook for Class of 2016 graduates, e.g. accounting services, and finance, insurance, and real estate.

Spring 2016 recruiting plans are fairly equal among the regions, as all have more than 60 percent of respondents reporting firm or tentative plans in place for on-campus recruiting next year. (See Figure 14.) Oddly enough, while the Northeast region has the highest overall increase planned for the Class of 2016, it also has the largest group of respondents that are unsure of their on-campus recruiting plans for the spring. In addition, the West region has the lowest percentage of respondents that are unsure of their spring 2016 on-campus recruiting plans, and not a single respondent reported that it won't be on campus because it isn't hiring.

Figure 12

**Total change in hiring, by region**

| Region    | # of 2016 Projected Hires | # of 2015 Actual Hires | % Change | # of Respondents |
|-----------|---------------------------|------------------------|----------|------------------|
| Northeast | 16,671                    | 14,509                 | 14.9%    | 33               |
| Southeast | 5,764                     | 5,244                  | 9.9%     | 54               |
| Midwest   | 10,950                    | 10,094                 | 8.40%    | 56               |
| West      | 1,664                     | 1,731                  | -3.9%    | 18               |

Figure 13

**Hiring expectations by region, by percent of respondents**

| Region    | Region | Maintain | Decrease |
|-----------|--------|----------|----------|
| Northeast | 35.1%  | 64.9%    | 0.0%     |
| Southeast | 41.7%  | 38.3%    | 20.0%    |
| Midwest   | 41.3%  | 47.6%    | 11.1%    |
| West      | 40.9%  | 36.4%    | 22.7%    |

Figure 14

**Spring 2016 recruiting plans, by region**

| Region    | Firm plans in place | Tentative plans | All recruiting in Fall 2015 | Not hiring | Unsure |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------|
| Northeast | 43.2%               | 27.0%           | 13.5%                       | 0.0%       | 16.2%  |
| Southeast | 40.7%               | 27.1%           | 18.6%                       | 1.7%       | 11.9%  |
| Midwest   | 37.7%               | 24.6%           | 24.6%                       | 1.6%       | 11.5%  |
| West      | 50.0%               | 22.7%           | 18.2%                       | 0.0%       | 9.1%   |

# BACHELOR'S DEGREE IS PREFERRED

## Who is in Demand?

**Respondents continue to show a preference for hiring college graduates at the bachelor's degree level.**

Nearly all respondents say they will hire graduates who will receive bachelor's degrees in 2016. (See Figure 15.) In the other degree level categories, the overall percentage of respondents hiring and the composition of their total hires is nearly identical to last year.

Figure 15

### Hiring expectations, by degree level

| Degree Level                    | Average % of New College Hires in 2015-16 | # of Respondents Hiring 2015-16 | % of Total Respondents Hiring in 2015-16 | Average % of New College Hires in 2014-15 | # of Respondents That Hired in 2014-15 | % of Total Respondents That Hired in 2014-15 |
|---------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Associate                       | 2.4%                                      | 32                              | 18.9%                                    | 2.2%                                      | 31                                     | 17.9%  |
| Bachelor's                      | 81.1%                                     | 167                             | 98.8%                                    | 82.0%                                     | 172                                    | 99.4%  |
| Master's                        | 14.2%                                     | 130                             | 76.9%                                    | 13.8%                                     | 129                                    | 74.6%  |
| Doctorate                       | 1.9%                                      | 32                              | 18.9%                                    | 1.5%                                      | 33                                     | 19.1%  |
| Professional (J.D., M.D., etc.) | 0.4%                                      | 12                              | 7.1%                                     | 0.5%                                      | 14                                     | 8.1%   |

As in last year's survey, employers were once again asked to report on their hiring intentions for all broad categories of majors, individual majors, and degree levels. (*Note: Responding employers were also asked to provide salary projections, which serve as the basis of NACE's upcoming Winter 2016 Salary Survey report. The report will be released in January 2016.*)

Regardless of degree level, graduates of the business, engineering, and computer and information sciences categories are once again most in demand. (See Figure 16.) At the associate, bachelor's, and master's degree levels, the same is also true. (See Figure 17.) At the doctorate degree level, engineering graduates top the list, with math and sciences, and computer and information sciences being the top three fields in demand.

Figure 16

**Top degrees in demand, by broad category**

| Broad Category                  | # of respondents that will hire | % of total respondents (n=180) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Business                        | 136                             | 75.6%                          |
| Engineering                     | 124                             | 68.8%                          |
| Computer & Information Sciences | 106                             | 58.9%                          |
| Math & Sciences                 | 58                              | 32.2%                          |
| Communications                  | 43                              | 23.9%                          |
| Social Sciences                 | 38                              | 21.1%                          |
| Humanities                      | 18                              | 10.0%                          |
| Agriculture & Natural Resources | 12                              | 6.7%                           |
| Healthcare                      | 10                              | 5.6%                           |
| Education                       | 10                              | 5.6%                           |

Figure 17

**Top degrees in demand, by degree level and broad category**

| Associate | Broad Category                  | # of respondents that will hire | % of total respondents (n=180) |
|-----------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|           | Business                        | 7                               | 3.9%                           |
|           | Engineering                     | 4                               | 2.2%                           |
|           | Computer & Information Sciences | 3                               | 1.6%                           |
|           | Communications                  | 2                               | 1.1%                           |
|           | Humanities                      | 2                               | 1.1%                           |
|           | Agriculture & Natural Resources | 1                               | 0.6%                           |
|           | Education                       | 1                               | 0.6%                           |
|           | Math & Sciences                 | 1                               | 0.6%                           |
|           | Healthcare                      | 0                               | 0.0%                           |
|           | Social Sciences                 | 0                               | 0.0%                           |

**DEMAND FOR  
BUSINESS,  
ENGINEERING,  
AND  
COMPUTER &  
INFORMATION  
SCIENCES  
DEGREES**

| Bachelor's | Broad Category                  | # of respondents that will hire | % of total respondents (n=180) |
|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|            | Business                        | 125                             | 69.4%                          |
|            | Engineering                     | 120                             | 66.7%                          |
|            | Computer & Information Sciences | 104                             | 57.8%                          |
|            | Math & Sciences                 | 50                              | 27.8%                          |
|            | Communications                  | 40                              | 22.2%                          |
|            | Social Sciences                 | 35                              | 19.4%                          |
|            | Humanities                      | 17                              | 9.4%                           |
|            | Agriculture & Natural Resources | 10                              | 5.6%                           |
|            | Healthcare                      | 9                               | 5.0%                           |
|            | Education                       | 3                               | 1.6%                           |
| Master's   | Broad Category                  | # of respondents that will hire | % of total respondents (n=180) |
|            | Business                        | 59                              | 32.8%                          |
|            | Engineering                     | 57                              | 31.7%                          |
|            | Computer & Information Science  | 51                              | 28.3%                          |
|            | Math & Sciences                 | 27                              | 15.0%                          |
|            | Social Sciences                 | 7                               | 3.9%                           |
|            | Communications                  | 4                               | 2.2%                           |
|            | Agriculture & Natural Resources | 3                               | 1.6%                           |
|            | Healthcare                      | 2                               | 1.1%                           |
|            | Humanities                      | 0                               | 0.0%                           |
|            | Education                       | 0                               | 0.0%                           |
| Doctorate  | Broad Category                  | # of respondents that will hire | % of total respondents (n=180) |
|            | Engineering                     | 19                              | 10.6%                          |
|            | Math & Sciences                 | 10                              | 5.6%                           |
|            | Computer & Information Science  | 9                               | 5.0%                           |
|            | Agriculture & Natural Resources | 2                               | 1.1%                           |
|            | Business                        | 1                               | 0.6%                           |
|            | Communications                  | 1                               | 0.6%                           |
|            | Social Science Majors           | 1                               | 0.6%                           |
|            | Education                       | 0                               | 0.0%                           |
|            | Healthcare                      | 0                               | 0.0%                           |
|            | Humanities                      | 0                               | 0.0%                           |

This year’s list of majors most in demand at the bachelor’s degree level is heavily composed of business majors. The top three individual bachelor’s degree majors in demand are accounting, computer science, and finance. (See Figure 18.) At number five on the list, mechanical engineering is the highest specific engineering degree in demand, while electrical engineering is eighth most in demand.

Figure 18  
Top degrees in demand (bachelor’s degree level)

| Major                          | # of respondents that will hire | % of total respondents that will hire |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Accounting                     | 98                              | 54.4%                                 |
| Computer Science               | 97                              | 53.9%                                 |
| Finance                        | 91                              | 50.6%                                 |
| Business Administration/ Mgmt. | 86                              | 47.8%                                 |
| Mechanical Engineering         | 83                              | 46.1%                                 |
| Information Sciences & Systems | 75                              | 41.7%                                 |
| Management Information Systems | 73                              | 40.6%                                 |
| Electrical Engineering         | 71                              | 39.4%                                 |
| Logistics/Supply Chain         | 67                              | 37.2%                                 |
| Economics                      | 64                              | 35.6%                                 |
| Marketing                      | 64                              | 35.6%                                 |

Individual major detail is provided for the top seven broad categories in demand at the bachelor’s degree level in Figures 19 through 25. Some of the main findings are:

- Almost eight in 10 employers that are hiring business majors will hire specific accounting graduates. Seven of the individual majors will be targeted by at least half of respondents hiring business degrees. (See Figure 19.)
- Mechanical engineering and electrical engineering majors will also be targeted by more than half of respondents that will hire engineering majors. (See Figure 20.)
- Of students earning degrees in the social sciences, those earning economics degrees will be targeted by 94 percent of respondents that will be hiring social sciences graduates. (See Figure 24.)
- Within the humanities disciplines, liberal arts/general studies majors are most in demand, with 94 percent of respondents indicating they will hire these graduates. (See Figure 25.)

TOP  
3  
ACCOUNTING  
COMPUTER  
SCIENCE  
FINANCE

Figure 19

**Top business degrees in demand**

| Major                          | # of respondents that will hire | % of respondents hiring business degrees (n=125) |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Accounting                     | 98                              | 78.4%  |
| Finance                        | 91                              | 72.8%  |
| Business Administration/Mgmt.  | 86                              | 68.8%  |
| Management Information Systems | 73                              | 58.4%  |
| Logistics/Supply Chain         | 67                              | 53.6%  |
| Economics                      | 64                              | 51.2%  |
| Marketing                      | 64                              | 51.2%  |
| Human Resources                | 57                              | 45.6%  |
| Sales                          | 56                              | 44.8%  |
| International Business         | 31                              | 24.8%  |
| Actuary                        | 18                              | 14.4%  |
| Hospitality Management         | 15                              | 12.0%  |

Figure 20

**Top engineering degrees in demand**

| Major                                | # of respondents that will hire | % of respondents hiring engineering degrees (n=120) |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Mechanical Engineering               | 83                              | 69.2%   |
| Electrical Engineering               | 71                              | 59.2%   |
| Computer Engineering                 | 53                              | 44.2%   |
| Industrial/Manufacturing Engineering | 52                              | 43.3%   |
| Chemical Engineering                 | 45                              | 37.5%   |
| Software Engineering                 | 45                              | 37.5%   |
| Civil Engineering                    | 44                              | 36.7%   |
| Engineering Technology               | 31                              | 25.8%   |
| Systems Engineering                  | 30                              | 25.0%   |
| Materials Engineering/Science        | 25                              | 20.8%   |
| Environmental Engineering            | 22                              | 18.3%   |
| Aerospace/Aeronautical Engineering   | 15                              | 12.5%   |
| Biomedical Engineering               | 9                               | 7.5%  |
| Nuclear Engineering                  | 6                               | 5.0%  |
| Petroleum Engineering                | 6                               | 5.0%  |

Figure 21

**Top computer and information science degrees in demand**

| Major                          | # of respondents that will hire | % of respondents hiring computer & information science degrees (n=104) |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Computer Science               | 97                              | 93.3%  |
| Information Sciences & Systems | 75                              | 72.1%  |
| Software Applications          | 62                              | 59.6%  |

Figure 22

**Top math and science degrees in demand**

| Major                       | # of respondents that will hire | % of respondents hiring math & science degrees (n=50) |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Mathematics/Statistics      | 40                              | 80.0%   |
| Biology/Biological Sciences | 14                              | 28.0%   |
| Environmental Science       | 10                              | 20.0%   |
| Chemistry                   | 9                               | 18.0%   |
| Geology/Geological Sciences | 8                               | 16.0%   |
| Construction Science        | 7                               | 14.0%   |
| Physics                     | 7                               | 14.0%   |

Figure 23

**Top communications degrees in demand**

| Major            | # of respondents that will hire | % of respondents hiring communications degrees (n=40) |
|------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Communications   | 40                              | 100.0%  |
| Public Relations | 23                              | 57.5%   |
| Advertising      | 19                              | 47.5%   |
| Journalism       | 19                              | 47.5%   |

Figure 24

**Top social sciences degrees in demand**

| Major                                     | # of respondents that will hire | % of respondents hiring social sciences degrees (n=35) |
|---|---------------------------------|--|
| Economics                                 | 33                              | 94.3%  |
| Psychology                                | 14                              | 40.0%  |
| Political Science/International Relations | 12                              | 34.3%  |
| Sociology                                 | 11                              | 31.4%  |
| Social Work                               | 7                               | 20.0%  |

Figure 25

**Top humanities degrees in demand**

| Major                         | # of respondents that will hire | % of respondents hiring humanities degrees (n=17) |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Liberal Arts/General Studies  | 16                              | 94.1%   |
| English Language & Literature | 8                               | 47.1%   |
| History                       | 6                               | 35.3%   |
| Foreign Language & Literature | 5                               | 29.4%   |
| Visual & Performing Arts      | 5                               | 29.4%   |
| Philosophy                    | 3                               | 17.6%   |
| Area & Gender Studies         | 1                               | 5.9%  |

This year, demand at the master's degree level has shifted more toward STEM graduates. While finance majors were in top demand last year and M.B.A. graduates were in most demand two years ago, this year's list is topped by computer science, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, and information sciences and systems majors. (See Figure 26.)

Figure 26

**Top degrees in demand (master's degree level)**

| Major                          | # of respondents that will hire | % of total respondents who will hire |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Computer Science               | 49                              | 27.2%                                |
| Electrical Engineering         | 35                              | 19.4%                                |
| Mechanical Engineering         | 34                              | 18.9%                                |
| Information Sciences & Systems | 33                              | 18.3%                                |
| M.B.A.                         | 32                              | 17.8%                                |
| Accounting                     | 29                              | 16.1%                                |
| Finance                        | 28                              | 15.6%                                |
| Software Applications          | 28                              | 15.6%                                |
| Computer Engineering           | 24                              | 13.3%                                |
| Management Information Systems | 24                              | 13.3%                                |

Like the master's degree level, demand at the doctorate degree level consists entirely of majors in the STEM disciplines. (See Figure 27.)

Figure 27

**Top degrees in demand (doctorate degree level)**

| Major                                | # of respondents that will hire | % of total respondents who will hire |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Electrical Engineering               | 12                              | 6.7%                                 |
| Computer Science                     | 9                               | 5.0%                                 |
| Software Engineering                 | 8                               | 4.4%                                 |
| Computer Engineering                 | 7                               | 3.9%                                 |
| Mechanical Engineering               | 7                               | 3.9%                                 |
| Chemical Engineering                 | 6                               | 3.3%                                 |
| Math/Statistics                      | 5                               | 2.8%                                 |
| Systems Engineering                  | 5                               | 2.8%                                 |
| Industrial/Manufacturing Engineering | 4                               | 2.2%                                 |
| Physics                              | 4                               | 2.2%                                 |

Figures 28 through 31 provide the top bachelor's degrees in demand by geographic region.

**STEM**  
GRADUATES  
**TOP**  
DEMAND

Figure 28

**Top five undergraduate majors – Northeast**

| Major                         | # of Northeast respondents that will hire | % of Northeast respondents who will hire | % of total respondents that will hire |
|-------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| Finance                       | 23  | 51.1%                                    | 50.6%                                 |
| Business Administration/Mgmt. | 22  | 48.9%                                    | 47.8%                                 |
| Accounting                    | 21  | 46.7%                                    | 54.4%                                 |
| Economics                     | 21  | 46.7%                                    | 35.6%                                 |
| Logistics/Supply Chain        | 18  | 40.0%                                    | 37.2%                                 |

Figure 29

**Top five undergraduate majors – Southeast**

| Major                         | # of Southeast respondents that will hire | % of Southeast respondents that will hire | % of total respondents that will hire |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Computer Science              | 36  | 56.3%                                     | 53.9%                                 |
| Accounting                    | 32  | 50.0%                                     | 54.4%                                 |
| Business Administration/Mgmt. | 30  | 46.9%                                     | 47.8%                                 |
| Mechanical Engineering        | 29  | 45.3%                                     | 46.1%                                 |
| Electrical Engineering        | 28  | 43.8%                                     | 39.4%                                 |

Figure 30

**Top five undergraduate majors – Midwest**

| Major                          | # of Midwest respondents that will hire | % of Midwest respondents that will hire | % of total respondents that will hire |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Accounting                     | 37                                      | 55.2%                                   | 54.4%                                 |
| Computer Science               | 36                                      | 53.7%                                   | 53.9%                                 |
| Finance                        | 35                                      | 52.2%                                   | 50.6%                                 |
| Mechanical Engineering         | 31                                      | 46.3%                                   | 46.1%                                 |
| Management Information Systems | 28                                      | 41.8%                                   | 40.6%                                 |

Figure 31

**Top five undergraduate majors – West**

| Major                          | # of West respondents that will hire | % of West respondents that will hire | % of total respondents that will hire |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Electrical Engineering         | 12                                   | 48.0%                                | 39.4%                                 |
| Information Sciences & Systems | 10                                   | 40.0%                                | 41.7%                                 |
| Computer Science               | 9                                    | 36.0%                                | 53.9%                                 |
| Mechanical Engineering         | 9                                    | 36.0%                                | 46.1%                                 |
| Accounting                     | 8                                    | 32.0%                                | 54.4%                                 |

Demand for the top five majors at the bachelor's degree level is spread somewhat evenly by industry. (See Figure 32.) The demand by industry is highly correlated to the specific major, e.g. accounting services employers having a high demand for accounting majors, and manufacturing respondents with high demand for mechanical engineering majors.

Figure 32

**Who is hiring, by industry (bachelor's degree level)**

| Major                                | Most interested industries        | % of industry respondents |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Accounting</b>                    | Accounting Services               | 100%                      |
|                                      | Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate | 67%                       |
|                                      | Misc. Manufacturing               | 67%                       |
| <b>Computer Science</b>              | Information                       | 71%                       |
|                                      | Misc. Professional Services       | 69%                       |
|                                      | Computer & Electronics Mfg.       | 67%                       |
| <b>Finance</b>                       | Accounting Services               | 67%                       |
|                                      | Food & Beverage Mfg.              | 67%                       |
|                                      | Retail Trade                      | 67%                       |
| <b>Business Administration/Mgmt.</b> | Retail Trade                      | 80%                       |
|                                      | Information                       | 71%                       |
|                                      | Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate | 63%                       |
| <b>Mechanical Engineering</b>        | Misc. Manufacturing               | 93%                       |
|                                      | Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.    | 75%                       |
|                                      | Food & Beverage Mfg.              | 67%                       |

Of the four regions, employers in the Midwest region show the most interest in three of the top five majors in demand at the bachelor's degree level. (See Figure 33.)

Figure 33

**Who is hiring, by region (bachelor's degree level)**

| Major                                | Most interested industries | % of respondents by region |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Accounting</b>                    | Midwest                    | 55%                        |
|                                      | Southeast                  | 50%                        |
|                                      | Northeast                  | 47%                        |
|                                      | West                       | 32%                        |
| <b>Computer Science</b>              | Southeast                  | 56%                        |
|                                      | Midwest                    | 54%                        |
|                                      | West                       | 36%                        |
|                                      | Northeast                  | 36%                        |
| <b>Finance</b>                       | Midwest                    | 52%                        |
|                                      | Northeast                  | 51%                        |
|                                      | Southeast                  | 41%                        |
|                                      | West                       | 28%                        |
| <b>Business Administration/Mgmt.</b> | Northeast                  | 49%                        |
|                                      | Southeast                  | 47%                        |
|                                      | Midwest                    | 40%                        |
|                                      | West                       | 28%                        |
| <b>Mechanical Engineering</b>        | Midwest                    | 46%                        |
|                                      | Southeast                  | 45%                        |
|                                      | West                       | 36%                        |
|                                      | Northeast                  | 31%                        |

## International Student Hiring Plans

The group of respondents with plans to hire international students has leveled off somewhat this year, with less than one-third of respondents reporting plans to hire these particular graduates. (See Figure 34.)

Figure 34

**International student hiring plans, 2011 – 2016**



Nearly 70 percent of the industries that responded to this survey report some interest in hiring international graduates from the Class of 2016. Computer and electronics manufacturers show the most interest, with two-thirds of respondents having plans to hire international graduates. (See Figure 35.)

Figure 35

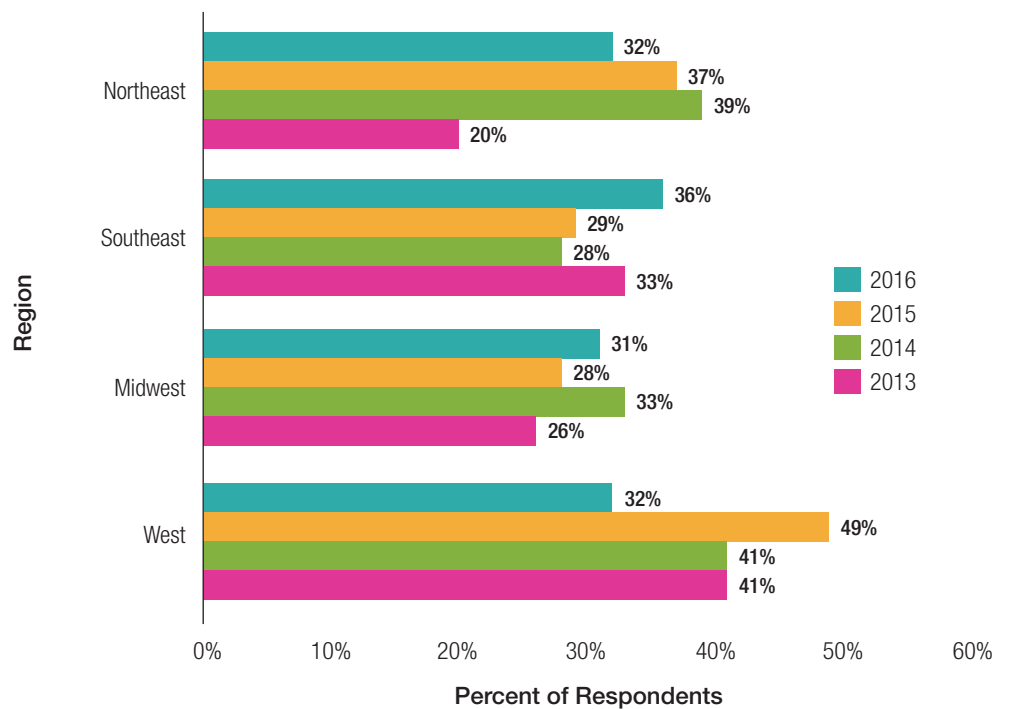
**International student hiring plans, by industry**

| Industry                          | % of respondents that plan to hire international students |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Computer & Electronics Mfg.       | 66.7%   |
| Information                       | 57.1%   |
| Construction                      | 44.4%   |
| Engineering Services              | 44.4%   |
| Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.    | 43.8%   |
| Misc. Prof. Services              | 38.5%   |
| Retail Trade                      | 35.7%   |
| Motor Vehicle Mfg.                | 33.3%   |
| Accounting Services               | 33.3%   |
| Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate | 26.7%   |
| Oil & Gas Extraction              | 22.2%   |
| Misc. Mfg.                        | 20.0%   |
| Food & Beverage Mfg.              | 16.7%   |
| Wholesale Trade                   | 16.7%   |
| Transportation                    | 16.7%   |
| Utilities                         | 11.1%   |

Demand for international students has grown in two of the four geographic regions this year. (See Figure 36.) Respondents in the Southeast and Midwest regions now have a larger percentage of respondents with plans to hire international grads. This may be due to the fact that more than half of responding computer and electronics manufacturers are located within these two regions, and they exhibit the most interest in hiring these students.

Figure 36

**International student hiring plans, by region**



# Employers' View of Candidates

## GPA Cutoff

The percentage of employers that plan to screen graduates by GPA has crept up for the second consecutive year, with 69.3 percent of respondents saying they will screen candidates from the Class of 2016. (See Figure 37.)

Slightly more than 70 percent of employers that plan to screen by GPA use a cutoff of 3.0. Typically, the remaining respondents are equally divided above and below the 3.0 GPA cutoff ; this year, however, slightly more will use cutoffs that fall below 3.0.

Nearly all industries report a median GPA cutoff of 3.0; food and beverage manufacturers, however, use a slightly lower GPA cutoff of 2.9. (See Figure 38.)

**69.3%**  
**SCREEN**  
**GPA's**

Figure 37

Screen candidates by GPA, by percent of respondents

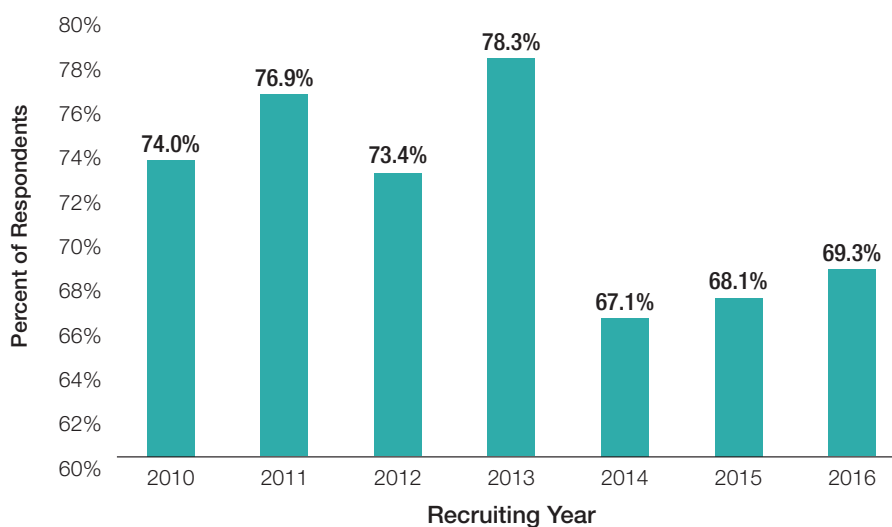


Figure 38

**Screen candidates by GPA, by industry**

| Industry                         | % of Respondents | GPA Cutoff<br>(Reported Median) |
|----------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Transportation                   | 100.0%           | 3.0                             |
| Utilities                        | 100.0%           | 3.0                             |
| Accounting Services              | 88.9%            | 3.0                             |
| Finance, Insurance & Real Estate | 82.6%            | 3.0                             |
| Computer & Electronics Mfg.      | 81.3%            | 3.0                             |
| Management Consulting            | 80.0%            | 3.0                             |
| Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.   | 73.3%            | 3.0                             |
| Engineering Services             | 71.4%            | 3.0                             |
| Retail Trade                     | 69.2%            | 3.0                             |
| Information                      | 66.7%            | 3.0                             |
| Oil & Gas Extraction             | 66.7%            | 3.0                             |
| Misc. Mfg.                       | 64.3%            | 3.0                             |
| Construction                     | 50.0%            | 3.0                             |
| Food & Beverage Mfg.             | 40.0%            | 2.9                             |
| Misc. Prof. Services             | 40.0%            | 3.0                             |

## Key Skills and Attributes

After candidates pass the GPA screening, employers will scrutinize their resumes for certain items. The top two attributes they are seeking are evidence of leadership and their ability to work in a team. (See Figure 39.)

For the most part, the order of the list has not changed year to year, but last year, the group of employers that were seeking candidates' ability to work in a team jumped to 77.8 percent. Nearly 80 percent will look for teamwork skills in Class of 2016 graduates, while written communication skills and problem-solving skills are also highly valued.

Figure 39

**Attributes employers seek on a candidate's resume**

| Attribute                                     | % of respondents |
|---|------------------|
| Leadership                                    | 80.1%            |
| Ability to work in a team                     | 78.9%            |
| Communication skills (written)                | 70.2%            |
| Problem-solving skills                        | 70.2%            |
| Communication skills (verbal)                 | 68.9%            |
| Strong work ethic                             | 68.9%            |
| Initiative                                    | 65.8%            |
| Analytical/quantitative skills                | 62.7%            |
| Flexibility/adaptability                      | 60.9%            |
| Technical skills                              | 59.6%            |
| Interpersonal skills (relates well to others) | 58.4%            |
| Computer skills                               | 55.3%            |
| Detail-oriented                               | 52.8%            |
| Organizational ability                        | 48.4%            |
| Friendly/outgoing personality                 | 35.4%            |
| Strategic planning skills                     | 26.7%            |
| Creativity                                    | 23.6%            |
| Tactfulness                                   | 20.5%            |
| Entrepreneurial skills/risk-taker             | 18.6%            |

Academic major leads in terms of what influences an employer's candidate preference. (See Figure 40.) Leadership skills are also highly influential in the hiring decision, and a high GPA and participation in extracurricular activities also have strong influence, but other attributes continue to have little influence on employers' hiring decisions.

Figure 40

**Influence of attributes**

| Attribute   | 2016 Average Influence Rating* | 2015 Average Influence Rating* |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Major   | 4.0                            | 3.9                            |
| Has held leadership position  | 3.9                            | 3.9                            |
| Has been involved in extracurricular activities (clubs, sports, student government, etc.) | 3.6                            | 3.6                            |
| High GPA (3.0 or above)   | 3.5                            | 3.6                            |
| School attended   | 2.9                            | 2.8                            |
| Has done volunteer work   | 2.8                            | 2.8                            |
| Is fluent in a foreign language   | 2.2                            | 2.4                            |
| Has studied abroad  | 2.0                            | 2.1                            |

\*5-point scale, where 1=No influence at all, 2=Not much influence, 3=Somewhat of an influence, 4=Very much influence, and 5=Extreme influence.

When asked to rate the importance of candidate skills/qualities shown on the list in Figure 41, employers rated verbal communications skills highest this year. In contrast, last year, teamwork and the ability to make decisions and solve problems tied for the top spot. The remainder of the list has not changed at all in terms of order compared to last year. The one difference this year is that more of the skills/qualities were rated just below “4.0”—the very important rating—than last year. (Just two skills/qualities were rated below “4.0” last year—ability to create and/or edit written reports and the ability to sell or influence others.)

Figure 41

**Employers rate the importance of candidate skills/qualities**

| Skill/Quality  | Weighted average rating* |
|--|--------------------------|
| Ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization | 4.63                     |
| Ability to work in a team structure  | 4.62                     |
| Ability to make decisions and solve problems                                     | 4.49                     |
| Ability to plan, organize and prioritize work                                    | 4.41                     |
| Ability to obtain and process information  | 4.34                     |
| Ability to analyze quantitative data   | 4.21                     |
| Technical knowledge related to the job   | 3.99                     |
| Proficiency with computer software programs                                      | 3.86                     |
| Ability to create and/or edit written reports                                    | 3.60                     |
| Ability to sell or influence others  | 3.55                     |

\*5-point scale, where 1=Not at all important; 2=Not very important; 3=Somewhat important; 4=Very important; and 5=Extremely important

Although conventional wisdom suggests that new college graduates lack key abilities necessary for entering the work force, current results indicate otherwise. In fact, current respondents appear to be generally pleased with the skills and attributes of their new graduate recruits. (See Figure 42.)

While last year’s respondents rated teamwork at just a “B,” this year’s group gave teamwork the highest grade of “A-.” Also, the lowest grade this year is a “B” for just one skill/attribute, where last year’s lowest grade was a “B-” for the same skill—written communication skills.

Figure 42  
Employers grade their average new graduate recruit on skills/attributes

| Attribute                      | Letter grade | Numerical Average |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Teamwork                       | A-           | 10.68             |
| Problem-solving ability        | B+           | 10.30             |
| Analytical/quantitative skills | B+           | 10.27             |
| Initiative                     | B+           | 10.24             |
| Work Ethic                     | B+           | 10.16             |
| Verbal communication skills    | B+           | 9.75              |
| Leadership                     | B+           | 9.75              |
| Written communication skills   | B            | 9.36              |

Work Experience

Employers also consider work experience when hiring new college graduates. Only 6.3 percent of respondents report that work experience does not factor into their hiring decisions. (See Figure 43.) While that particular group has grown slightly, the group of respondents that prefers relevant work experience has decreased from 72.5 percent last year to slightly more than 64 percent this year. The group that prefers any type of work experience, whether it be relevant or not, has also grown to 27 percent this year.



Figure 43

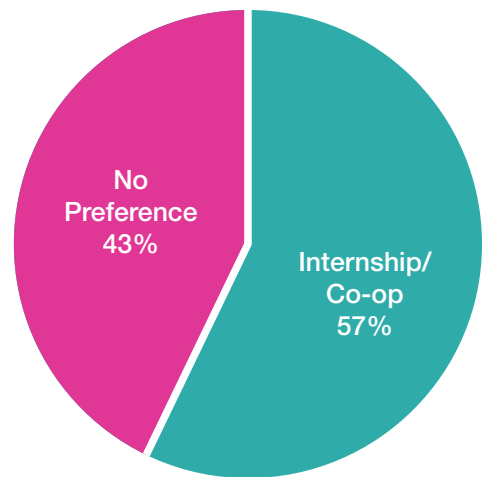
**Employers' hiring preferences relative to experience, by percent of respondents**

| Hiring Preference   | 2016  | 2015  | 2014  | 2013  |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| I prefer to hire candidates with relevant work experience   | 64.2% | 72.5% | 74.1% | 71.0% |
| I prefer to hire candidates with any type of work experience (doesn't matter if it's relevant or not, just some type of experience) | 27.0% | 20.1% | 20.7% | 19.9% |
| Work experience doesn't typically factor into my decision when hiring a new college graduate  | 6.3%  | 3.9%  | 1.1%  | 4.8%  |
| Other   | 2.5%  | 3.4%  | 4.0%  | 4.3%  |

When asked specifically about work experience preferences, the group that prefers experience gained through an internship or co-op has decreased from 60 percent last year to 57 percent this year. (See Figure 44.) The remaining 43 percent of respondents have no preference as to how the work experience was gained.

Figure 44

**Employers' preference as to how work experience was gained, by percent of respondents**



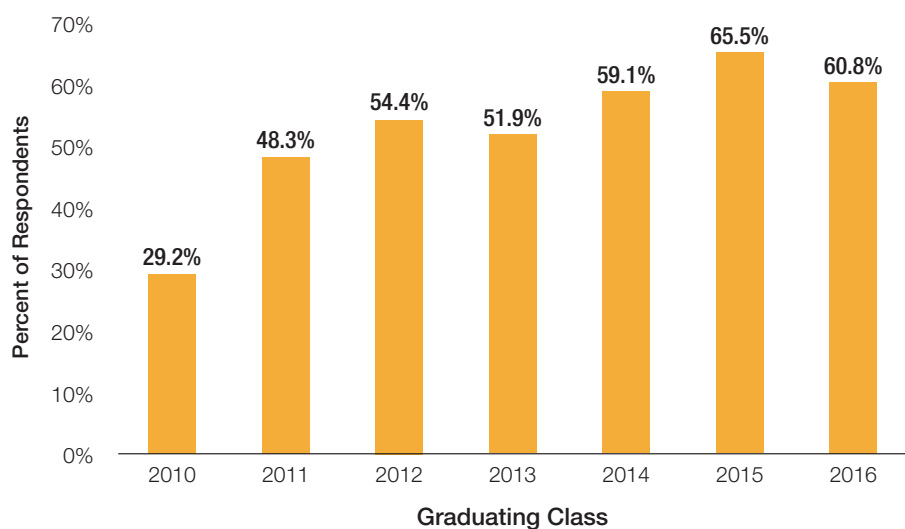
# Compensation and Signing Bonuses

## Starting Salaries

In 2014-15, almost two-thirds of respondents planned to increase salaries to bachelor's degree graduates—an all-time high. However, 2015-16 respondents came a close second; with 61 percent reporting plans to increase salaries. (See Figure 45.)

Overall, the average salary increase amount is 4.9 percent; however, this is skewed by two extremely high projected increases. The median increase of 3.2 percent is much more in line with the 3.6 percent average reported for Class of 2015 graduates.

Figure 45  
Employers with plans to increase starting salaries to bachelor's degree graduates



61  
PERCENT  
TO INCREASE  
SALARIES

By industry, miscellaneous professional services firms are most likely to increase bachelor's degree salaries, with 100 percent of respondents planning to do so. (See Figure 46.)

Figure 46

**Employers with plans to increase starting salaries, by industry**

| Industry                         | # of Respondents with Plans to Increase Bachelor's Salaries | # of Respondents by Industry | % of Respondents by Industry |
|----------------------------------|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Misc. Professional Services      | 5   | 5                            | 100.0%                       |
| Finance, Insurance & Real Estate | 14  | 18                           | 77.8%                        |
| Construction                     | 5   | 7                            | 71.4%                        |
| Accounting Services              | 5   | 7                            | 71.4%                        |
| Oil & Gas Extraction             | 6   | 9                            | 66.7%                        |
| Misc. Manufacturing              | 8   | 13                           | 61.5%                        |
| Management Consulting            | 3   | 5                            | 60.0%                        |
| Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.   | 5   | 11                           | 45.5%                        |
| Computer & Electronics Mfg.      | 3   | 8                            | 37.5%                        |
| Retail Trade                     | 2   | 8                            | 25.0%                        |

Figure 47

**Employers with plans to increase starting salaries, by region**

| Region    | # of Respondents with Plans to Increase Bachelor's Salaries | # of Respondents by Region | % of Respondents by Region | Average projected increase* |
|-----------|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Northeast | 13  | 23                         | 56.5%                      | 4.7%                        |
| Southeast | 17  | 39                         | 43.5%                      | 4.2%                        |
| Midwest   | 35  | 47                         | 74.5%                      | 5.0%                        |
| West      | 8   | 11                         | 72.7%                      | 6.1%                        |

\*Average calculation based only on respondents with plans to increase salaries

## Signing Bonuses for Selected Grads

When compared to members of the graduating classes over the past five years, members of the Class of 2016 have the best chance of being offered signing bonuses, with 51.8 percent of current respondents planning to offer bonuses. (See Figure 48.)

Not all Class of 2016 graduates will receive signing bonuses, however. Nearly two-thirds of those who expect to offer bonuses say that they will offer signing bonuses to selected graduates. Graduates earning degrees in the business, engineering, and computer sciences fields will be most likely to receive these bonuses.

Figure 48

### Employers offering signing bonuses

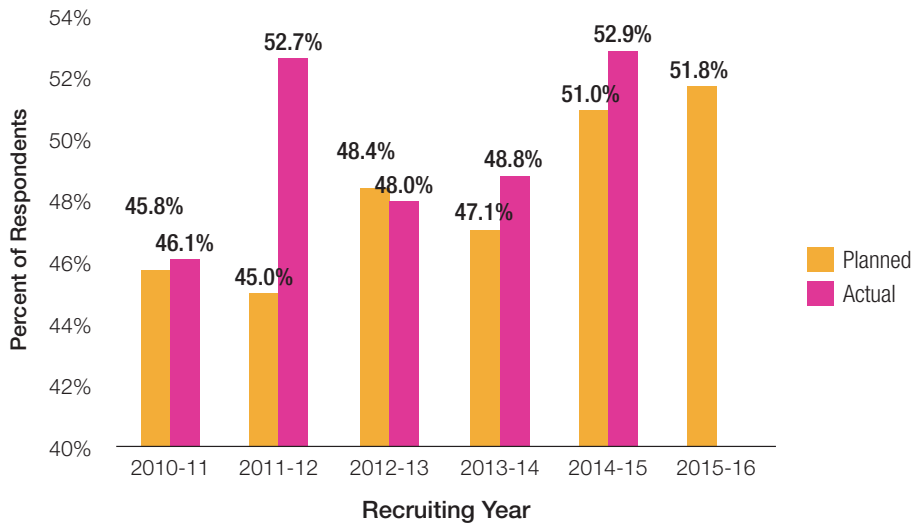


Figure 49

### Percent of employers offering signing bonuses to 2015-16 graduates, by industry

| Industry                         | % offering signing bonuses | # of respondents |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Utilities                        | 100.0%                     | 5                |
| Food & Beverage Mfg.             | 80.0%                      | 5                |
| Finance, Insurance & Real Estate | 66.7%                      | 24               |
| Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.   | 64.3%                      | 14               |
| Retail Trade                     | 64.3%                      | 14               |
| Computer & Electronics Mfg.      | 62.5%                      | 16               |
| Misc. Mfg.                       | 60.0%                      | 15               |
| Information                      | 50.0%                      | 6                |
| Oil & Gas Extraction             | 44.4%                      | 9                |
| Accounting Services              | 44.4%                      | 9                |
| Transportation                   | 40.0%                      | 5                |
| Management Consulting            | 40.0%                      | 5                |
| Misc. Prof. Services             | 40.0%                      | 10               |
| Construction                     | 37.5%                      | 8                |
| Engineering Services             | 12.5%                      | 8                |
| Wholesale Trade                  | 0.0%                       | 5                |

**51.8%**  
**BONUSES**

Figure 50

**Percent of employers offering signing bonuses to 2015-16 graduates, by region**

| Region    | % who plan to offer signing bonuses in 2015-16 | % who planned to offer signing bonuses in 2014-15 |
|-----------|--|---|
| Northeast | 48.6%  | 48.6%   |
| Southeast | 49.1%  | 54.4%   |
| Midwest   | 53.4%  | 51.7%   |
| West      | 60.0%  | 60.0%   |

Figure 51

**Average signing bonus, by major (bachelor's degrees)\***

| Major                       | 2015-16 average bonus (projected) | # of respondents 2015-16 | 2014-15 average bonus (projected) | # of respondents 2014-15 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Accounting                  | \$2,929                           | 7                        | \$3,682                           | 11                       |
| Business                    | \$3,100                           | 5                        | \$3,958                           | 6                        |
| Chemical Engineering        | Not reported                      | 3                        | \$5,250                           | 6                        |
| Computer Science            | \$6,357                           | 7                        | \$4,364                           | 11                       |
| Engineering – not specified | \$5,750                           | 8                        | \$5,107                           | 14                       |

\*Where 5 or more data points were provided.

Figure 52

**Average signing bonus, by major (bachelor's degrees)\***

| Major                       | 2015-16 average bonus (projected) | # of respondents 2015-16 | 2014-15 average bonus (projected) | # of respondents 2014-15 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| M.B.A.                      | \$9,929                           | 7                        | \$20,250                          | 8                        |
| Computer Science            | Not reported                      | 3                        | \$5,125                           | 8                        |
| Engineering – not specified | \$6,100                           | 5                        | \$7,500                           | 5                        |

\*Where 5 or more data points were provided.



## **Updates for The Class of 2016**

The *Job Outlook 2016 Spring Update* survey (data collected in February – March) will give NACE members a final update on hiring for 2015-16 graduates. Results will be available in early April 2016.

The first report of starting salaries for the Class of 2016 will be published in January 2016, when the *Winter 2016 Salary Survey* is released.

# Appendix

Figure 53

**Respondents by size of department/business unit**

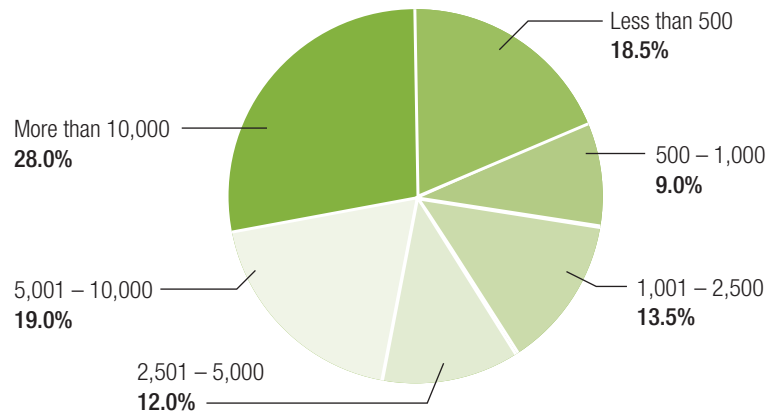


Figure 54

**Respondents by industry**

| Industry                         | # of respondents | % of respondents |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Agriculture                      | 1                | 0.5%             |
| Oil & Gas Extraction             | 9                | 4.5%             |
| Utilities                        | 9                | 4.5%             |
| Construction                     | 9                | 4.5%             |
| Food & Beverage Mfg.             | 6                | 3.0%             |
| Chemical (Pharmaceutical) Mfg.   | 16               | 8.0%             |
| Computer & Electronics Mfg.      | 18               | 9.0%             |
| Motor Vehicle Mfg.               | 7                | 3.5%             |
| Misc. Mfg.                       | 15               | 7.5%             |
| Wholesale Trade                  | 6                | 3.0%             |
| Retail Trade                     | 15               | 7.5%             |
| Transportation                   | 6                | 3.0%             |
| Messaging & Warehousing          | 1                | 0.5%             |
| Information                      | 7                | 3.5%             |
| Finance, Insurance & Real Estate | 30               | 14.9%            |
| Accounting Services              | 9                | 4.5%             |
| Engineering Services             | 9                | 4.5%             |
| Management Consulting            | 5                | 2.5%             |
| Misc. Prof. Services             | 13               | 6.5%             |
| Social Services                  | 3                | 1.5%             |
| Recreation & Hospitality         | 1                | 0.5%             |
| Misc. Support Services           | 3                | 1.5%             |
| Government                       | 3                | 1.5%             |

## Participating Organizations

Below is a list of the organizations that responded to the *Job Outlook 2016* survey.  
(Please note: Although 201 organizations responded, the list below includes 147, as 54 organizations preferred not to be listed.)

|   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Aetna Inc.  | Chicago Trading Company               |
| American Axle & Manufacturing Holdings, Inc.        | Chrysler Group LLC                    |
| AmeriHealth Mercy Family of Companies               | Citrix Systems, Inc.                  |
| Anadarko Petroleum Corporation                      | Con Edison                            |
| ARAMARK   | ConAgra Foods, Inc.                   |
| ArcelorMittal USA                                   | ConocoPhillips Company                |
| Ascend Performance Materials                        | Continental AG                        |
| Asurion Corporation                                 | Continental Resources, Inc.           |
| BBVA Compass  | Cree, Inc.                            |
| Bechtel Bettis, Inc.                                | Crowe Horwath LLP                     |
| Black & Veatch Corporation                          | Cymer Inc.                            |
| Blue Cross and Blue Shield of IL, MT, OK, NM and TX | Dell, Inc.                            |
| BreitBurn Energy                                    | Delphi Corporation                    |
| Briggs & Stratton Corporation                       | Dick's Sporting Goods                 |
| Burlington Stores                                   | Direct Energy                         |
| Burns & McDonnell Engineering Co. Inc.              | DuPont                                |
| C&S Wholesale Grocers, Inc.                         | Dynetics Inc.                         |
| California State Auditor                            | Ecolab Inc.                           |
| Cambridge Associates LLC                            | Edward Jones                          |
| CBRE Group, Inc.                                    | ELS Educational Services              |
| Cemex, Inc.   | Enterprise                            |
| CenterPoint Energy, Inc.                            | Equinix                               |
| CGI Federal   | EthosEnergy                           |
| Chevron Corporation                                 | ExxonMobil Corporation                |
|   | Fifth Third Bank                      |
|   | Fluor Corporation – Global Recruiting |
|   | FMC Technologies, Inc.                |

|                                   |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Freeport-McMoRan, Inc.            | MAVERICK Technologies               |
| Fugro, Inc.                       | McCarthy Holdings, Inc              |
| General Electric Company          | Meaden & Moore                      |
| GoDaddy.com                       | Medical Mutual of Ohio              |
| Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Company | Minnetronix Inc.                    |
| Gulf Interstate Engineering       | Modern Woodmen of America           |
| Hazen and Sawyer P.C.             | Mondelz International               |
| HNTB Companies                    | NetSuite                            |
| Hormel Foods Corporation          | Numerica Corporation                |
| Huntington National Bank          | Olin Chlor Alkali Products          |
| Huron Consulting Group            | Owens Corning                       |
| Infinera                          | Pacific Gas and Electric Company    |
| International SOS Assistance Inc. | Parsons Corporation                 |
| J.B. Hunt Transport Inc.          | Phillips-Medsize Corporation        |
| kCura                             | PPL Corporation                     |
| KPMG LLP                          | PriceKubecka, PLLC                  |
| L-3 Mission Integration           | PrimeSource Building Products, Inc. |
| Lake Shore Cryotronics, Inc.      | Procter & Gamble Co.                |
| Lennox International Inc.         | Protiviti Inc.                      |
| Liberty Mutual Insurance Company  | PSEG                                |
| Linbeck Corporation               | Questar Corporation                 |
| Linde                             | Rockwell Collins                    |
| Macy's, Inc.                      | Rosetta                             |
| MasterCard                        | Ross Stores Inc.                    |
| Mattress Firm                     | SanDisk                             |

|                                   |                                 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| SapientNitro                      | The Pep Boys – Manny Moe & Jack |
| Savannah River Nuclear Solutions  | The PFM Group                   |
| Save-A-Lot                        | The Rehmann Group               |
| Sealed Air Corporation            | The Schwan Food Company         |
| Sears Holdings Corporation        | The Timken Company              |
| Selden Fox LTD                    | The Vanguard Group              |
| Sensata Technologies              | Tindall Corporation             |
| Shadow Financial Systems, Inc.    | TMX Finance                     |
| Shaw Industries, Inc.             | Toys “R” Us, Inc.               |
| South Jersey Industries           | True Partners Consulting, LLC   |
| Southern California Edison        | Turner Construction Company     |
| Southwestern Energy Company       | U.S. Postal Service             |
| Speedway LLC                      | Unimin Corporation              |
| Spredfast                         | Union Pacific Railroad Company  |
| STAPLES Inc.                      | Unum                            |
| Sterling Jewelers                 | Valero Energy Corporation       |
| Sundt Construction Inc.           | Verso Corp.                     |
| SWIFT                             | Wawa Inc.                       |
| Synchrony Financial               | WESCO International, Inc.       |
| TD Bank                           | Woolpert LLP                    |
| Teradata Corporation              | Zachry                          |
| Texas Instruments Incorporated    |                                 |
| Texas Parks & Wildlife Department |                                 |
| The Bozzuto Group                 |                                 |
| The Northern Trust Company        |                                 |

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