

Attention graduates. The world awaits you

By Heather Boulger

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June is graduation month in the Berkshires, but this year recent graduates have plenty of job opportunities that are available to them.

PITTSFIELD — Graduation season is a time to celebrate your achievements, share your memories, and embrace the exciting possibilities that await you.

It's also that time of year where hundreds of recent graduates will be heading into the labor force. Job markets in every industry have faced drastic challenges over the last few years, and 2023 graduates are heading into a changing workforce.

Starting your post-grad life can be the most exciting and scary time, but this year the outlook looks good for recent grads. Whether you are graduating from high school or college, there are many job opportunities in our region. Berkshire County's [unemployment rate](#) dropped to 3.0 percent in April and thousands of opportunities in every industry and occupation are listed in the region.

The members of the class of 2023 are resilient, and should be prepared for the job search process to ensure that they find a job that sets them on their desired career path. Here are some tips to help people entering the workforce for the first time or who are considering a new opportunity:

- MassHire Job Quest — The internet is a wonderful place to find job opening. Sites like Indeed and LinkedIn are flooded with new jobs every day. In Massachusetts, we have a system called JobQuest, which is a launching pad for new jobs and careers. It connects Berkshire County job seekers and employers and serves as a central hub linking all public and private stakeholders in the state workforce system. You can post your resume on JobQuest and search for jobs at no cost.

- Be open to new things —Although you just graduated, your education is far from over. Be open to new ideas and adventures. Get involved, volunteer, and continue to grow yourself as a person. The workplace is a rapidly changing, dynamic environment, and whatever you find yourself doing today, most likely will not be what you find yourself doing a few years down the road. Embrace growth and a learning mindset and you will become a valuable resource for your employer.

- Highlight your skills and how they translate — The job market in the United States is exploding. Because of the talent shortage, businesses are more than willing to entertain hiring nontraditional applicants. People are shifting between business sectors, so it is a good idea to highlight your skills and how they translate. A “can-do” attitude is important. Change is the new normal.

- Ask questions — Don’t be afraid to ask them. Everyone starts somewhere. Speak up and be honest. Employers appreciate those willing to learn who are honest.

- Be true to yourself, stay humble and know your value — Employers are looking at your skill set and experience, but they also want someone who will work well within their culture. Being yourself is essential in making sure you end up in the right place for both you and the company. Be confident but remember to be humble and remain grounded.

- Network and interview with confidence — Learn from everyone and tell them you are seeking employment. Remember every moment is an opportunity to learn. Focus on opportunities you are passionate about that will help keep you sharp, help you grow, and maintain your relevance in the market. Interview often. Experience is everything and putting yourself out there by interviewing will make you more comfortable and confident in the process to help land that right job.

Job opportunities will continue to be in ample supply almost everywhere for candidates who are flexible, proactive and ambitious. Companies are looking for critical thinkers, problem solvers, team players, willingness to learn, and strong communicators.

As tables have turned and the power has shifted to employees, companies are strategizing how to recruit, retain and engage talent. Keep an open mind, network and evaluate your next steps. Identify your goals and motivational factors and select a profession that aligns with your core values. Revisit your skills and gaps. Take this time to reinvent yourself and your definition of success. Don't be afraid to network

Finally practice the three fundamentals of success: Be consistent. Take the time to show up and invest in yourself as you would for your employer. Stay curious, don't be afraid to ask questions, and remain open to change. Stay confident which will gleam a positive attitude and attract positive outcomes.

Congratulations to all the recent high school and college graduates out there. There's plenty of opportunity, all you have to do is go for it. If you need additional support, MassHire Berkshire is here to help.

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