



Wisdom to make a difference.

Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

Class of 2009 Survey

In October 2014, Keene State College surveyed alumni who received bachelor's degrees in fiscal year 2009. The purposes of the survey were to determine how many recent graduates are employed or pursuing further education, whether their employment or further education is related to their undergraduate studies at KSC, and how well their KSC experiences prepared them for transitions their lives. The survey was conducted online with email invitations and follow-up reminders. A \$100 Amazon gift cards was offered as an incentive for participation.

There were 895 unduplicated bachelor's degree recipients in fiscal year 2009, and the college had valid contact information with permission for email contacts on 541 of these (60% of the class). While one would hope to have valid email addresses for a larger portion of the class, it is not surprising that the percentage for whom the college has contact information declines over time. Email survey invitations were sent to these 541 alumni, and usable responses were received from 187 respondents, for an overall response rate of 35%. This is a very high response rate for this type of survey.

KEY FINDINGS

- Five years after graduation, 96% of the respondents are either employed or engaged in further education.
- Ninety-four percent of the respondents reported that they are employed; 2% indicated that they are not employed by choice (for example, to care for family members or enroll in graduate study), and the remaining 4% reported that they are unemployed and seeking work.
- Among those who are employed, 77% reported that their current position is closely related or somewhat related to their studies at KSC, 83% of those reported that KSC had prepared them well or very well for their current work.
- The median annual salary range for those who are currently employed is \$40,000-\$44,999.
- Forty-seven percent of the respondents reported that they had enrolled in one or more programs of further education at some point after graduating from Keene State College, most pursuing master's degrees.
- Among those who have engaged in further education, 79% reported that their programs were closely related or somewhat related to their studies at KSC, and 87% of those judged that KSC had prepared them well or very well for this next step in their education.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Employment

The great majority of the respondents (94%) indicated that they were employed in some capacity at the time of the survey, in the following types of employment:

- 85% full-time regular employment
- 8% part-time regular employment (1/3 of these were also engaged in further education)
- 1% paid internship
- 1% unpaid internship (and also enrolled in further education)
- 2% not employed by choice (e.g., in school, travelling, or caring for family)
- 4% not employed and looking for work

Among those who are employed, 77% reported that their current position is closely related or somewhat related to their studies at KSC, and 83% of these indicated that KSC had prepared them well or very well for this employment. The median annual salary range for those who are currently employed is \$40,000-\$44,999, and 7% of those who responded to this question indicated that they earn salaries of \$80,000 per year or higher.

Further Education

Nearly half of the respondents (47%) reported that they had enrolled in further education at some point since graduating from Keene State College, with most of these seeking master's degrees. The most commonly reported general field of study for these advanced degrees and certificates was education (17%). Most enrolled in institutions in New Hampshire or surrounding states in New England or the Northeast. However, some enrolled farther away, including one who studied in Costa Rica. Among those alumni who have engaged in further education, 79% reported that their programs were closely related or somewhat related to their studies at KSC, and 87% of those judged that KSC had prepared them well or very well for this next step in their education.

What Else Are Alumni Doing?

The survey asked respondents, "Besides employment and further education, what else are you doing that is meaningful to you five years after graduation?" Common themes are listed below, along with sample comments for each.

Marriage/Family

I am now married and starting a family.

I have married in 2012, a man I met while at KSC in 2007, and we are now expecting our first child.

Currently, I will be marrying another KSC Alumni from the class of 2008 next July.

Raising two boys under the age of 3 with my husband.

I've become a father and am enjoying that as my second full time job...

Sports/Coaching/Fitness

I coach youth and high school lacrosse.

I have begun running road races with my wife. We run around one a month and it is an opportunity for her and I to have something of our "own".

I coach field hockey and work as a sports and nature specialist for special needs kids and adults during the summer.

Trained for and ran twice in the Boston Marathon

I'm ... starting to get back into my exercise routine. Not super exciting, but still important to me.

I spend most of my free time outdoors (skiing, hiking, beach) with family and friends.

Home Ownership

Saving for a house

Bought a house

Preparing to buy a house in the next year or two.

Becoming a homeowner

Community Service

I have volunteered in several different capacities trying to make the world a better place.

I volunteer at a wildlife refuge.

Becoming more involved in my church and seeking more ways to serve others in need, whether in the community or beyond.

Although technically part of my employment I am very proud of my work with our school's Key Club. Key Club is a student led service organization sponsored by the Kiwanis. I serve as the advisor to a wonderful and very active group at our school.

What Part of the KSC Experience Remains Meaningful?

The survey asked, "What experience did you have at KSC - inside or outside the classroom - that has proved most valuable for whatever you are doing now in your life? Common themes in the responses are listed below, with sample comments.

Courses/Programs/Faculty

My minor in Holocaust and genocide studies taught me compassion at the most basic levels.

My psychology classes gave me the information to be effective and knowledgeable in my current position

The capstone class for my safety studies major provided the most leadership opportunities and valuable workplace experience. Though I am not currently working in the field; these leadership and teamwork skills have given me the confidence to be a stronger employee and supervisor.

Crisis Communication Class was so important - the most hands on class I ever took.

The art department and faculty at KSC were and still are the most amazing group of intelligent, interesting, engaging, and caring people that I had the pleasure of learning from. Although I am technically not using my BA in studio art the education that I received at KSC was rich and diverse and I will cherish for the rest of my life

I took two classes my senior year that I really loved. One was a Counseling course, it was great prep for my career path. I also took art and play therapy class that I loved and learned a ton from. I minored in Art and had a great professor within those classes too.

My professors in both Economics and Geography majors were sticklers for punctuality, consistency, and professionalism. All of these qualities and more prepared me for the real-world, and I am very grateful for them....

Glowing letters of recommendation from professors who cared a great deal about my continued success....

I was encouraged faculty to go beyond the boundaries of the traditional classroom experience and make my education richer and more fulfilling.

Student Leadership Opportunities/Student Organizations

... I'm not sure I can point to one singular experience, but rather the whole experience has proved to be valuable in my everyday life. Everything from, working as an Orientation Leader, a member of Student Government, my involvement with the College Democrats, participating in Habitat for Humanity Global Village, to being a tutor at the Center for Writing and working summers in the Student Center. And when I really think about it there is so much more. But, it is the combination of all of those experiences with rich in class experiences that made my four years at KSC truly valuable.

During my time at KSC, I was part of Circle K. This club helped me grow as a person, give back to the community, and make new friends. For my junior and senior year of college, I was [in a leadership position]. This position improved my interpersonal skills, brought me out of my shell, and helped me to excel in my career now.

I think that my time [in a major campus-wide leadership position] is still the most memorable and the most valuable thing I did at Keene. Not only did I make lasting friendships ..., but the experience working as a team leader and learning communication skills with outside professionals is key to life after college.

Participating in Student Gov not only opened opportunities to me that might not have otherwise happened, but it helped teach me to deal with working within a team and handling conflict resolution.

I do believe that my time as an RA taught me great things about time management, supervising others, working as a team, among other things that I have used in the work place.

Student Teaching/Internships/Practica

My student teaching experience was amazing. You can never learn more than being in an actual classroom working with students. I ended up teaching at a school very similar to my student teaching placement, and I love it!

My clinical psychology practicum class helped me decide that I wanted to become a school psychologist.

Practicums, Methods, and Student Teaching were the most valuable experiences.

Student teaching gave me the real life experience I needed to prepare me for what I do now.

The summer internship opportunities provided through local businesses and the KSC Health & Safety program. The internship experience gave me a head start in applying what I learned in the classroom to the real world work environment.

The internships I completed while in my senior year directed me towards HR, the field I'm in now!

Friendships

The relationships made while at Keene have meant and will continue to mean the most to me.

My relationships with the friends I made at Keene continue to be the very best friends I have today. Those friendships have gotten me through good and bad times and I wouldn't trade the experiences and times we had for anything in the world.

The social aspect of both the teachers and students. Everyone was close and you could speak your mind which helped me develop into an adult/professional.

The friendships I made remain at Keene are the strongest and most meaningful thing to me. I remain very close to the friends I met at college and am most thankful for them and the experiences we shared.

I am SO close with my friends from KSC- all three of my bridesmaids are KSC alum from different parts of my life there. Many of my friends understand my career and the hurdles I have to jump through in the academic world because they are teachers themselves or have so many friends who are teachers

Confidence/Maturity

Self-confidence and belief that I know what I'm doing

Keene State College allowed me to mature into an adult and showed that if I applied myself I could be successful. Without that confidence than I probably would not have enrolled in law school.

That [Communications] class built my confidence in public speaking and socializing in general and it was a very good kind of rigor.

I love Keene State. Keene allowed me to transition from being a teenager to an adult in a safe welcoming community.

Living away from home, learning how to balance school work, personal life, and work.

I learned time management, self-discipline and how to work toward and achieve goals.

The most valuable thing I learned at KSC was how to balance class time and time with friends so that I could have a social life and still be effective. This has helped dramatically in my work/ life balance. I know when it's time to focus on work and when it's time to relax and socialize.

Knowing who I am as a person.

I learned how important time management skills are and how to really work and prioritize for what I want to achieve. My experiences in my teaching classes have helped me greatly in the profession of coaching as well.

Community Service

Volunteering through different organizations on campus.

During my sophomore year I travelled with a group of students to volunteer in Mississippi after the devastation of hurricane Katrina. That experience was so eye opening and more than I could have ever imagined it would be. I was already motivated to work to help others but the experience of spending 10 days living and working with people hit by such tragedy really turned that motivation into a passion for service. My role as Key Club advisor at my school is a big way which I fulfill that every day.

I participated in a lot of community service opportunities that opened my eyes to the world around me. Local and international community service continues to be a guiding principle in my life- I'm saving up for an international trip next summer!

Preparation for Life's Changes

The survey asked, "How well did your KSC education prepare you for the transitions in your life in the past five years?" Seventy percent of respondents answered *Well* or *Very Well*. The survey then followed up with two open response questions.

The first was, "What aspects of your KSC experience helped the most in moments of change in your career or your life?" The responses to this question fell into the same categories as outlined above, concerning what remains meaningful today: courses/majors/faculty, student leadership/student organizations, student teaching/internships/practica, friendships, and community service. The correspondence between that

question and this one was found at the level of the individual respondent, since respondents often cited their previous answers in answering this question.

The second open-response question about life transitions was this: “Is there anything we could have done better to help you prepare for an unpredictable future?” The most common responses to this question focused on career preparation/job placement assistance and life skills education (such as learning tax preparation and Excel). Other responses were very program-specific and will be shared with the affected departments, as appropriate.