

Hiring Today's Forestry Students for Industry Careers

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Outline

- ▣ Students
- ▣ Curriculum
- ▣ Faculty
- ▣ Industry Approaches

Today's Students



Today's Students

- ▣ UGA admissions are competitive – 20% of freshman applicants admitted
- ▣ Increasingly Urban Populations
- ▣ Best K-12 programs in urban areas
- ▣ 27 of 30 top sending high schools in Atlanta

Today's Students

- ▣ Warnell is ~50% female, forestry ~20%
- ▣ Wildlife – “bunny huggers” outnumber the “hook & bullet” crowd
- ▣ Job placement – 100% FORS, 71% WILD
- ▣ Forestry – permanent > grad > temporary
- ▣ Wildlife – temporary > grad > permanent

The Program



Recruiting & Advising

- ▣ Our staff have typically not been foresters
- ▣ We proactively “educate” them – they have misconceptions that are not their fault
- ▣ Tours of mills and visits to key employers, send them to GFA Annual Meeting to make friends
- ▣ Our recruiting now targets non-wildlife majors
- ▣ Tell success stories and include diverse faces

Curriculum

- ▣ Summer Course with Industry/Mill Visits?
- ▣ Harvesting course – current & well taught?
- ▣ Procurement course – same issues
- ▣ Are they required? Encouraged electives?
- ▣ Business concentrations or minors available?

Master's Options

- ▣ Non-Thesis Masters – MFR forest business
- ▣ >35% are not forestry undergraduates
- ▣ Many wildlife graduates who also want forestry credentials or decide to change
- ▣ Roughly half forestry, half MBA courses
- ▣ SAF accreditation is pending

Faculty

- ▣ Do you know the faculty?
- ▣ How many have work experience?
- ▣ Interest or focus on industry issues?
- ▣ Encouraged to work with industry or just chase government contracts?
- ▣ What is faculty tone about industry?

Administrators

- ▣ Do you know them? Do they know you?
- ▣ Is your company on their advisory board?
- ▣ Are you providing input? Do they listen?
- ▣ Strategic plans? Faculty searches?
- ▣ Are you willing to support them politically inside and outside the university?

Industry Approaches



Relationships

- ▣ Be proactive and build relationships
- ▣ Student organizations
- ▣ Host field trips and do it well – meals, gifts
- ▣ Creates interest among students
- ▣ Compare to what it costs you to hire one employee and train them?

Internships

- ▣ Make them win-win for you and student
- ▣ Focus on leadership, communication, entrepreneurial skill sets, not just GPA
- ▣ Diversity – no one likes “tokens” so do not *create* them.

Internships

- ▣ Come early to have more options to hire
- ▣ Call faculty and/or employer references
- ▣ Pay them well – up front/ending bonus, housing help
- ▣ Give them real work and autonomy – *test drive your future employees*
- ▣ End of summer presentations / evaluations

Permanent Hires

- ▣ Vet future graduates with internships
- ▣ You're hiring people who were likely raised in urban areas and expect reliable internet service.
- ▣ Think about where you ask them to live – be flexible if possible – what is another 30 minute drive?
- ▣ Placement is now 100% - you must engage the process early to be competitive

Some Recent Employers

- ▣ Georgia-Pacific
- ▣ Plum Creek
- ▣ Westervelt
- ▣ Interstate Paper
- ▣ Rayonier
- ▣ International Paper
- ▣ Interfor
- ▣ Timbervest
- ▣ Drax Biomass
- ▣ Klausner
- ▣ RMS
- ▣ Forest Investment Associates
- ▣ F&W Forestry Services
- ▣ Forest Resource Consultants
- ▣ Middle Georgia Timber
- ▣ Sanders Logging LLC
- ▣ Timberland Investment Resources
- ▣ Timber-Mart South
- ▣ Hancock
- ▣ Forisk Consulting LLC

Summary

- ▣ This is still about relationships that need to be maintained during job market highs and lows – just like customer relationships.
- ▣ Students
- ▣ Faculty
- ▣ Administrators