

# HIGHER ED MATTERS

Utah System of Higher Education, September 2011

## “Back to Class” Edition:

### Student Involvement, Internships and the Community

College students are extremely busy throughout the school year, often times, even trying to squeeze in a job—but how often is that job related to a student’s educational path? Would that job ever lead to a lucrative career?

Enter the summer internship, an on-the-job learning opportunity where students learn the ropes of a potential occupation. Eight Utah students interning this summer at the Utah-based Management & Training Corporation sat down for a candid discussion on how **summer internships are not only good for students and their futures but also for the entire community.**

Prior to their internships many of these students didn’t know what they wanted to do, but all wanted practical work experience. Jared, a Criminal Law major from Weber State University expressed, “I’ve enhanced my learning with experience beyond a university setting.” Becky, a Utah State University student majoring in international business agrees, “I have learned to stand on my own two feet, and the upper hand on those who do not have a degree or certificate.”

**Internships help bridge experience with knowledge, even to those who are working toward high-level degrees.** Chris, a University of Utah doctorate candidate in Public Administration and Political Science agreed with the others, “When I was an undergrad, I was interested in private sector business and now with that background I can blend the two and learn how we are involved with the government in general. It’s that



Students at Centerville’s Management & Training Corporation participate in roundtable interview about what college and degrees mean personally and professionally.

melding that helps me to understand how business, politics and government are all interconnected.” Chris also mentioned that internships also help students to “become provocative citizens.”

As their summer continued, these students found they were receiving practical employment experience with an added benefit — giving back to society. Says Chris, **“We are helping to rehabilitate, develop and grow the community. Even as a student, I am proud that I have helped to achieve that in a small way.”**

At the end of the day, all of the students agreed that having a college degree is a necessity. Several said, **“You can’t even get a job without a BS; college is critical!”** Because of higher education, the world is a better place, and this discussion shows that today’s college students are working hard to provide for the best possible future.

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## **New study shows degree or certificate has personal, social impact**

According to a survey released last month by Utah's Prosperity 2020 movement, higher education has an impact that extends beyond just the individual degree or certificate holder. This 2011 Dan Jones & Associates poll gives evidence that Utahns who earn a postsecondary degree or certificate earn more money, live happier lives and are a greater benefit to the community as a whole. That's a whole lot of bang for your buck!

**Plus, there's even more evidence to show the societal benefits of not only attending, but also completing a postsecondary degree or certificate.**

### **Degree or certificate holders are...**

- ... 11% more likely to have good health.
- ... 50% more likely to have voted in the last state election.
- ... 57% more involved in their communities.
- ... 2.6 times more likely to work in salaried, rather than hourly, jobs
- ... 75% higher in mean annual compensation than non-degree holders

### **Also...**

... People whose parents and/or siblings hold degrees are more likely to complete one themselves!



For more facts and figures, as well as the whole August 2011 Prosperity 2020 study presentation visit [prosperity2020.com/blog](http://prosperity2020.com/blog)