

NEWS RELEASE

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B.C. University Grads Have Proven Ability To Prosper

VANCOUVER – There are no guarantees in an uncertain economy but the surest path to career success begins with a university education, says a comprehensive study of student outcomes released today by B.C.'s six research universities.

The second annual report of *Putting Degrees to Work* underlines the importance of a university degree in today's economy. The evidence shows graduates get the jobs they want, in the regions where they want to work and are paid competitive salaries that escalate over the course of their careers.

"This report will be of interest to students and parents everywhere; it shows the importance of a university education in today's job market," said Andrew Petter, President of Simon Fraser University. "Research universities are helping to drive B.C.'s dynamic and diversified economy by providing the highly-educated and skilled workforce we need."

The report makes a number of key findings:

- Two years after graduating, the median salary for the Class of 2012 – the most recent surveyed – was \$50,000 per year, well above the average for other young people entering the workforce.
- Ninety-two per cent of university graduates are satisfied or very satisfied with their education and 93 per cent give top marks to the quality of instruction they received.
- A significant majority of graduates from B.C.'s regional research universities choose to stay in the communities where they were educated.

This report represents five years of data collected by BC Stats. Students are surveyed two years after graduation and are asked about their employment, their salary, where they choose to live and whether their education is relevant to their careers.

“These graduates are working in every corner of B.C. as nurses, engineers, architects and business leaders,” said Dr. Martha Piper, Interim President of the University of British Columbia. “Our economy is being bolstered by these talented professionals.”

Dr. Allan Cahoon, President of Royal Roads University, added: “B.C. has a very successful, differentiated post-secondary system that serves the province’s economic needs and responds well to the unique local, regional and provincial economies.”

“The dynamic knowledge, flexible skills and creativity fostered in university is a recipe for success – even during times of economic uncertainty,” said Professor Jamie Cassels, President of the University of Victoria. “In survey after survey, our students report to us how their education has contributed importantly to their success.”

With B.C.’s workforce aging, and many employees on the brink of retirement, it has never been more important to educate the leaders for tomorrow.

“The challenge for B.C. is to support a workforce in every region of the province with the right skills, training and education to meet the growing demands,” said Dr. Daniel Weeks, President of the University of Northern British Columbia. “That’s exactly what the research universities are doing.”

“The overall message to students, parents and all British Columbians is one of optimism,” said Dr. Alan Shaver, President of Thompson Rivers University. “B.C. is meeting the needs of today’s increasingly competitive global economy with highly trained and skilled workers who are driving innovation and diversifying our economy.”

Putting Degrees to Work, Second Annual Report, is available by visiting The Research Universities’ Council of British Columbia website at <http://www.rucbc.ca/>

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