



# 2025 NACE Awards Program



**WINNERS +  
HONORABLE  
MENTIONS**

# About NACE

## **ABOUT THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND EMPLOYERS**

Established in 1956, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) is a professional association that connects nearly 17,600 college career services professionals, early talent recruiting professionals, and the business solution providers that serve this community. NACE is the leading source of information on the employment of the college educated, and forecasts hiring and trends in the job market; tracks starting salaries, recruiting and hiring practices, and student attitudes and outcomes; and identifies best practices and benchmarks. NACE provides its members with high-quality resources and research; networking and professional development opportunities; and standards, ethics, advocacy, and guidance on key issues.

**Learn more at [naceweb.org](https://naceweb.org).**



## Business Affiliate Innovation Award

### CAREER FORGE | WINNER

#### David Nicol, Hussain Frosh, Chris Dunkel

Career Forge is driven by a commitment to innovation that strengthens, rather than replaces, the human relationships central to career services. Every feature is designed in partnership with career center professionals to solve real-world challenges—supporting meaningful student engagement through flexible workflows, integrated coaching tools, and intuitive design. Our platform reflects a philosophy that true innovation in career technology enhances personal connection and empowers staff to do their most impactful work.

## Career Readiness Excellence Award

### CAREER READINESS INITIATIVE | WINNER

#### University of Minnesota – Twin Cities – College of Liberal Arts

#### Judith Anderson, Maggie Bergeron, Ascan Koerner, Amy Lee, Colin McFadden

A liberal arts education provides students a diverse intellectual experience to succeed, adapt, and advance professionally and personally. However, graduates often find it challenging to recognize and articulate the applicability of their education to professional roles. To address this, the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) adopted a competency framework and a comprehensive readiness initiative designed to impact students from admission through graduation by helping students to:

- Accelerate competency development through experiences inside and outside the classroom
- Navigate and plan the steps in their career development journey
- Articulate the “liberal arts advantage” to graduate/professional schools and employers

**CAREER SERVICES EXCELLENCE AWARD |  
SMALL COLLEGE WINNER**

**Furman University's Four-Year Pathway  
Furman University**

**Lauren Payne, Kristin Irwin**

Central to Furman University's approach to career readiness is the Four-Year Pathway. It begins with the Pathways Program, a two-year advising program for first- and second-year students that integrates advising and mentoring with a comprehensive curriculum that helps students transition to college and develop a plan for their academic and career goals. The Purposeful Pathways Program follows, with a designated faculty member from each academic department partnering with the Center for Career Engagement to develop discipline-specific career support for juniors and seniors within their majors. This creates a fully integrated, developmentally appropriate Four-Year Pathway for all Furman students.



**CAREER SERVICES EXCELLENCE AWARD |  
LARGE COLLEGE WINNER**

Work+ UConn  
**Center for Career Readiness and Life Skills,  
University of Connecticut**

**Eran Peterson, Nancy Bilmes, Kristen Soprano**

UConn Work+ weaves career readiness into on-campus employment, helping over 200 student employees and 40 supervisors build skills through real work aligned with NACE Career Competencies. With results like a 93% increase in competency awareness and a 67% rise in students' comfort seeking help, Work+ is shaping a workplace culture of growth, support, and career-focused learning.

**CAREER SERVICES EXCELLENCE AWARD |  
LARGE COLLEGE HONORABLE MENTION**

Career Clarity Retreat  
**Santa Clara University**

**Vania Tong, Myriam Bartz, Victor Lemus,  
Bich Nguyen-Hamilton**

The Career Clarity Retreat is a multi-department collaboration and response to urgent student mental health concerns. Recognizing that there is a strong correlation between a student's mental health and their career confidence and outlook on their future, the SCU Career Center re-envisioned the traditional Jesuit-style "vocation discernment" retreat and rebranded it as a "Career Clarity Retreat." In collaboration with Campus Ministry and Counseling and Psychological Services, the program seamlessly weaves together career development, spirituality, and mental health across two powerful and inspiring days.



## **CHEVRON INNOVATION AWARD WINNER**

### **Engaging Families in Career Support Arizona State University – Career Services**

#### **Safali Patel**

ASU Career Services and ASU Family have developed a strategic approach to engaging families in student career success. Through targeted communications, digital platforms, and resources, ASU has created an ecosystem where thousands of families actively support their students' career development.

## **CHEVRON INNOVATION AWARD | HONORABLE MENTION**

### **My Career Path The University of Iowa, Pomerantz Career Center**

#### **Matt Augeri, Susie Regan, Amanda McFadden**

In 2024, the University of Iowa launched My Career Path to address inequities in career preparation by providing 24/7 access to career services through a web-based platform and Canvas-based learning content. The tool offers over 80 career activities and modules, giving students customized, data-driven guidance to advance their career milestones. My Career Path aims to establish clear career pathways, increase engagement with high-quality content, and close gaps in career milestone completion.

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION  
EXCELLENCE AWARD | COLLEGE WINNER**

**The Career Center at the University of Illinois  
Urbana–Champaign**

**Jennifer Neef and the entire team at  
The Career Center at the University of Illinois  
Urbana–Champaign**

The heart of The Career Center's efforts toward inclusion is acknowledgment that many underrepresented minority and marginalized students, along with international students, face unique challenges in accessing tailored career development support, and may lack career clarity or confidence due to limited exposure or awareness of career options. A significant milestone in our inclusion efforts was a shift in our organizational structure two years ago to create the Inclusion team. By reallocating existing resources, the newly created functional team provides strategic leadership and dedicated bandwidth designed to address the specific career development needs. Centralizing leadership for the services, programs and resources that center diversity, equity, and inclusion in this new functional team has amplified the scope and impact of our effort toward meeting the unique needs of specific student populations.

### **RECRUITING EXCELLENCE AWARD | SMALL EMPLOYER WINNER**

#### **Moss Adams Summer Internship Experience Moss Adams LLP**

##### **Leanne Lutkus**

The Moss Adams Summer Internship Experience offers an immersive eight-week experience for students pursuing careers in accounting and related consulting fields. Interns engage in hands-on projects, gaining practical skills and industry insights. The program places strong emphasis on mentorship, offering guidance and support throughout the interns' journey.

### **RECRUITING EXCELLENCE AWARD | SMALL EMPLOYER HONORABLE MENTION**

#### **University Recruiting + Garver Launch University Recruiting Staff + Launch Committee, Garver**

##### **Shelby Sajdak, Harley Penney, Sydney Clifford, Whitney Gorseger, Alejandro Aristizabal, Abby Barone, Brett Noble, Maddie Stressman, Deb Tran, Katie Whitehead**

To combat a national and extensive industry workforce shortage, engineering firm Garver's Recruitment Team has crafted a dedicated university recruiting program, which ultimately serves as a pipeline for eventual full-time employees. This program is focused on the recruiting and hiring of college students to fill internship and entry-level positions while also supporting brand recognition and awareness among college students nationwide. Once the students are "through the door," the firm's robust internship program, Garver Launch, then fosters the development and retention of interns to cultivate full-time employees.

**RECRUITING EXCELLENCE AWARD |**  
**LARGE EMPLOYER WINNER**

Campus Recruitment Team  
**Verizon**

**Lauren Portner**

We find it so important to showcase our culture and who we are on day 1. We start this from when we recruit our talent to when they start. Bringing them into our HQ to immerse them in what being a V-Teamer truly means has been rewarding for both Verizon and the candidate.

**RECRUITING EXCELLENCE AWARD |**  
**LARGE EMPLOYER HONORABLE MENTION**

KPMG Career Catalyst and Talent<sup>2</sup>  
**KPMG LLP**

**Malana White**

The KPMG Career Catalyst Program (KCCP) job simulation and Talent<sup>2</sup> virtual event allow us to expand outreach to an underserved, untapped, and racially diverse market of potential candidates. As a professional services firm that requires well over half of their hires to possess an accounting degree, the current market is challenging due to high competition, a decrease in accounting majors, and an overall lack of demographic diversity. The current economic climate also reduced our ability to be in-person at many colleges; therefore, these two virtual programs, one of which is on-demand, allow KPMG to significantly increase our brand awareness and the overall industry opportunities to a new group of students.

## **RECRUITING EXCELLENCE AWARD | LARGE EMPLOYER HONORABLE MENTION**

### **Intern Performance & Feedback Dashboard Protiviti**

**Kaitlyn Adlerman, Jackie Blankenship, Casey Jo Chapman, Hannah Cromwell, Anika Hitt**

Protiviti created a PowerBI dashboard to compile all feedback in one location from a number of sources, enabling decisions to be made at the conclusion of the internship based on accurate and comprehensive data. This tool assisted recruiters to easily identify interns who had not received feedback to ensure a consistent experience for all and addressing performance concerns in real-time. The dashboard provided comprehensive and easily digestible performance data to leadership teams to make informed, educated, and unbiased recommendations for potential full-time offers.

**TECHNOLOGY EXCELLENCE AWARD |  
COLLEGE WINNER**

**The Career Development Rewards Program  
Kenyon College**

**Lee Schott, Jon Lawrence, Josh Lisko, Babette Cichanowicz, Alicia Misarti, Karen Leuthold, Lori Gustin, Maureen Tobin, Stephen McGrath, Katelyn Ratajczak**

Kenyon's Career Development Rewards Program gamifies student engagement with career services by assigning points for utilizing resources, creating a positive feedback loop where increased participation unlocks premium benefits like alumni mentors and certification exam reimbursements. This automated system drives students toward the most beneficial services while ensuring all students have equal access to higher touch opportunities by rewarding higher levels of participation. The program efficiently addresses multiple career service challenges through technology integration that requires minimal staff time to maintain.



**TECHNOLOGY EXCELLENCE AWARD |  
COLLEGE HONORABLE MENTION**

**Career Services & Alumni Engagement  
Elon University**

**Brooke Buffington, Kendra Haskins**

Elon University's Student Professional Development Center partnered with Elon's Alumni Engagement office to develop and launch "Elon Q&A {questions + alumni}, an AI-driven networking platform that allows students direct access to career mentoring by alumni. Utilizing Protopia's software, Elon Q&A guides students through an AI-assisted process of formulating an introduction and writing a professional question. The software then utilizes key word logic to identify alumni best suited to answer each question. Alumni receive an email through the system, asking them to be a resource for students. Students receive answers directly from alumni, with the opportunity to engage in further professional mentorship.

**TECHNOLOGY EXCELLENCE AWARD |  
EMPLOYER WINNER**

**GM Financial Early Careers Recruitment Marketing  
GM Financial**

**Kathryn Kwiecien, Marjorie Miller, Ugo Nwankwo,  
Krisha Atreya**

GM Financial's recruitment marketing team developed an intern social media strategy aimed at telling the authentic story of our intern experience and growing our pipeline of students for internships and early career opportunities. With Gen-Z at the forefront, we created mobile-first short-form videos that highlighted key intern experiences authentically. We leveraged our existing channels, plus previously untapped features like Instagram Reels and Handshake's new social feed to showcase our company culture, career growth, and benefits in new and engaging ways.

**TECHNOLOGY EXCELLENCE AWARD |  
EMPLOYER HONORABLE MENTION**

**A New Reality: Incorporating Virtual Reality  
Experiences for Impactful Recruitment  
Johnson & Johnson**

**Damon Albano, Jamil Price, Cody Sumerix,  
Gaby Ferra, Danielle Woodward, Ethan Tackes,  
Paul Altman, Danni Sims, Betsy Birdsong,  
Treana Huntley, Daniela Munoz Castellanos**

We deployed brand new, never-before-seen virtual reality technology as part of our recruitment. Utilizing the Meta 3 headsets, we've developed an interactive learning experience where students can "choose their adventure" and learn about J&J while showcasing our commitment to incorporating innovative technology into all aspects.

Utilizing mobile headsets, we used this experience across a variety of events including large-scale conference career fairs and invitation-only attraction events for both internal and external events.



**CAREER SERVICES CHAMPION AWARD WINNER**

Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez,  
City University of New York

**THE KAUFFMAN AWARD WINNER**

Christopher Carlson, ManTech

**MACKES LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNER**

Christine Routzahn, University of Maryland –  
Baltimore County

**MENTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNER**

Christy Ball, The University of Arizona

**NACE ACADEMY OF FELLOWS INDUCTEE**

Alicia Monroe, Rowan University

**NACE CATALYST AWARD WINNER**

Elizabeth Langemak, Verizon

**NACE RISING STAR AWARD WINNER**

Rachel Zhang, University of Michigan

## 2025 Honors and Awards Committee Members

**Ray Angle**, Co-chair, Gonzaga University

**Jessica Nguyen**, Co-chair, GE Appliances

**Sean Treccia**, Co-chair, KPMG

**Luis Amaro**, Board Advisor, Noviam

**Rabia Baig**, JPMorgan Chase

**Ryan Colvin**, Millsaps College

**Yasmine Farley**, California State University –  
San Marcos

**Jennifer Grauso**, Lime Connect, Inc.

**David Jones**, Morehouse School of Medicine

**Brandon Leavy**, Lockheed Martin

**Julie Nguyen**, formerly from Boston University

**Lisa Randolph**, William & Mary

**Alicia Rodriguez**, University of Miami

**Summer Salazar**, The Etiquette Trainer

**Beth Settje**, University of Connecticut

**Kathy Young**, American Heart Association

**Philip Wilkerson**, George Mason University

