



**METRO STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

# Elevate Career Success

Career Center 2023 Annual Review



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# Letter from the Director

Bill Baldus

Colleagues,

As I write this in early May, I am reflecting on our spring Alumni Career Experience (ACE) event held yesterday. Seeing our students in action and how warmly they were received by our employer partners was moving. There was this sense that people were excited to be at an in-person event and clearly that intangible “human element” was at work as people forged new relationships and practiced some of their power skills.

When I asked a few of the employers how the students did, they spoke at length and from the heart about how truly amazing they think Metro State students are and how much they love coming to campus. Powerful testimony and a powerful way to close the school year.

This year, we achieved a number of milestones in our work to elevate our students’ career success. Probably like you, we sometimes find our work difficult to measure. Compiling these Annual Reports has become an important exercise for the Career Center team. We find that it makes us sweep together all of our programs, pilots, and projects from the year into one place. The effect is usually—“Wow, look at what we did this year!” As the director of the Career Center, I am pleased with how far we’ve come and elated about where we’re heading. Know that we do not see these successes as a result of our work alone, we see them as a collective effort that includes all of you.

So, thank you kindly for your continued support. I can’t wait to see where the next year takes us.

Bill Baldus  
Career Center Director

# We're on a Mission:

## Elevating Career Success for our Students

There is a convergence of big ideas that we think could change what it means to be a Metro State student and improve our students' career trajectories in a dramatic way. Call it data triangulation, call it planned happenstance, call it big, hairy audacious goals. Yes, all of it is very exciting!

## Student Journey Mapping

Remember the consultants from brightspot strategy? After exhaustive probing into the Metro State student experience, they came up with six recommendations, two of which are directly related to career development. Students want more "career in the classroom" and opportunities to network with employers.

## Career Readiness Project

An inclusive and diverse cross-curricular Career Readiness Project strives to build programs and processes that integrate career preparation throughout the Metro State student journey. The framework provides a way for faculty, advisors, and students to reflect from multiple points of view in an intersectional fashion on how coursework, internships, advising discussions, admissions processes, professional connections, student life and leadership (in short, the entire university experience) prepares students for professional journeys. Career Readiness and the associated career competencies provide a shared language to help students develop the mindset and tools to pursue their career aspirations with clarity and confidence.

## Career High Impact Practices (CHIPs)

The insights from our participation in the National Alumni Career Mobility (NACM) survey include six career-related High Impact Practices. Of these, **three appear to help close equity gaps**. This is work we are already doing in different ways. We plan to repackage some of our work in this CHIP framework. There is synergy between High Impact Practices too: bringing an employer into the classroom, for example, will not only be an opportunity for students to expand their networks, but the employer can speak to career opportunities in their field and in their organization.

1. **Help students understand career opportunities.**
2. **Help students create a plan for their career.**
3. **Help students network with employers.**
4. Provide helpful career advice, specifically from employers or faculty.
5. Encourage internships related to career goals.
6. Teach critical thinking/problem solving.

## Faculty Employer Liaison Pilots

The Career Center often provides an initial entryway for outside organizations. Some of the most exciting—and challenging—work for us is the increasing number of employers seeking to more intentionally partner with Metro State. A short list of these employers includes 3M, Best Buy, Mayo Clinic, Ramsey County, the State of Minnesota, Target, and US Bank.

Faculty-led stewardship of these relationships is providing an innovative path to facilitating wider connections across the university community for some of our employer partners. The benefits of stronger organizational relationships include recruiting more of our graduates and building pathways for potential funding and scholarship opportunities. This year, we identified a number of faculty who are reaching out to connect with key representatives in creative ways: making introductions to others on campus, coordinating case studies, and generally building the relationship: Best Buy, Ming Lo; Children’s Minnesota, Fatuma Kotile; Fastenal, Tori Sadler and Margaret Vaughn; and Mayo Clinic, Vadhi Rao and Aber Elsaleiby.

## Internships and Apprenticeships

Everyone is familiar with internships and their potential as a High Impact Practice. In NACE’s 2021 Brief, Inequity in Internships, there is evidence that internships are not distributed equitably: “historically marginalized groups are underrepresented in paid internships, overrepresented in unpaid internships, and more likely not to have participated in any internship.” As employers rely less on 4-year degrees, and more on related experience, the role of the internship becomes even more important for our racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse students who are often trying to find their career footing in a new field. With the Career Center taking on internship coordination in 2023, we are rethinking what internships could look like at Metro State. We have been in active listening and learning mode.

We would like to expand workplace-based learning from traditional internships to include an exciting model that most are only vaguely familiar with: apprenticeships. This “earn and learn” model is different in that the student is hired at the organization from the beginning, then works almost full time while earning their degree, while tuition is typically covered through grant funds, and there is an open-ended full-time position waiting for them at the end of their degree program. It’s a win-win-win for everyone involved: students win because they have a clear career path and no debt; the employer wins because it has a happy, dedicated new hire; and Metro State wins because we helped students connect their learning to their career goals, we retained them, and they have great career outcomes.

**Our Vision:** all students and alumni will have the mindset, skills, and opportunities to achieve their career goals.

**Visit:** [metrostate.edu/career](https://metrostate.edu/career) **Call:** 651.793.1528 **Email:** [career.center@metrostate.edu](mailto:career.center@metrostate.edu)

# Staff Profiles



## Bill Baldus, Director

**A few words about my work:** It's such an honor to do this work. Working with our talented team to shape and implement the Career Center vision is a joy and seeing our amazing students find work they love is incredibly rewarding.

**For fun:** Lake swimming in the summer, cross country skiing in the winter!



## Emily Johnson, Internship and Apprenticeship Coordinator

**A few words about my work:** My favorite part of my new role in the Career Center has been connecting with many people across campus! I welcome the opportunity to collaborate for the betterment of our students' internship and career prospects.

**For fun:** My biggest hobbies are reading and working out. The best is when I can do both at the same time by listening to an audio book!



## Marisa Kelly, Office Manager

**A few words about my work:** I really enjoy talking with students as well as supporting our Career Center team. It's great to feel like we're helping our students in their journeys. I also enjoy working with other departments in the university as part of my supporting of the Career Center. It keeps me feeling connected.

**For fun:** Spending time with my grandkids. We love to explore parks around the metro area!



## LaBarre Spence, Career Readiness Coordinator

**A few words about my work:** I have the pleasure and satisfaction of supporting students and alumni in career development with a focus on the Asian American community. I also work to connect students with alumni partnering with Alumni Relations in utilizing and promoting the Metro State Connect mentoring platform.

What I like about my role is the opportunity to help students and alumni recognize strengths and experiences in themselves that will help them in seeing new possibilities and help them in pursuing and achieving life goals.

**For fun:** A fun hobby is playing tenor saxophone in the Northern Lights Community band. It's so fun to work to make great music together that also brings enjoyment to others.





# Career Center Data

Data collected from July 1, 2022 to May 31, 2023

## Handshake Accounts

**760**

New undergraduate activations

**59**

New graduate activations

**60**

New alumni activations

**369**

Students who attended at least one event or fair via Handshake

**656**

Students who applied to at least one job application via Handshake

**1,676**

Unique student logins

**5,997**

Job applications

## Jobs Applied to by Industry Category



## Appointments Based on Type



Résumé and cover letter review



Explore career options



Job search strategies



Interview prep and practice

## Handshake Employer Data

New employers approved **2,176**  
Total number of employers **17,185**

## Student Job Postings

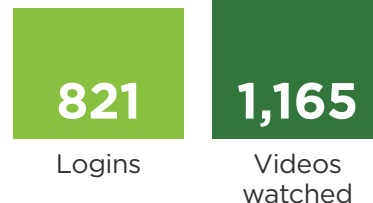
Job **25,689** Volunteer **139**  
Internship **4,544** Graduate school **39**

## Online Tools Usage

### FOCUS



### Candid Career



### Metro State Career Center LinkedIn group members

**1,279**

# Recap of Significant Events:

Collaboration was a theme for events this year. Departments, advisors, alumni, employers, and others collaborated with the Career Center to host a wide variety of events for students, alumni, faculty, and staff.

## Significant Career Events:

### Weekly on Wednesdays: Résumé Drop In (in partnership with the Writing Center)

- Fall Semester: METR 310 Reimagining Your Career: Job Search Framework and Strategies with Mayo Clinic, 2 credit class taught by LaBarre Spence
- 9/14/2022: The Hiring Revolution: A Guide to Disrupt Racism + Sexism in hiring (sponsored by Bremer Bank)
- 9/14/2022: Workforce Recruitment Program Info Session (in partnership with Center for Accessibility Resources)
- 9/15/2022: Career Day (Info Sessions hosted with 3M, Best Buy, General Dynamics IT, JP Morgan, and Ramsey County)
- 9/19 and 9/22: Preparing for Success at the Diversity Networking and Job Fair (in partnership with TRIO)
- 9/21/2022: MN Cyber Career Expo
- 9/29/2022: Diversity Networking and Job Fair
- 10/12/2022: Labor Market Information Training, presented by DEED
- 10/12/2022: Law Enforcement Opportunities Fair
- 10/19/2022: NACE Webinar: Managing Career Readiness and Equity During a Pandemic with Denise Williams, Susan Hilal, and Bill Baldus
- 10/26/2022: Mayo Clinic's Bold Forward 2030 Strategy with Kindra Ramaker
- 10/28/2022: Government and Nonprofit Fair
- 11/2/2022: Career One Stop visits to Metro 101 courses
- 11/8/2022: Career Day [Info Sessions hosted by: Baker Tilly, Fastenal, MN Chamber of Commerce, and UpTurnships]
- 11/17/2022: Rock your Résumé: with Public and Nonprofit Leadership
- 1/5/2023: Alumni Career Experience
- Spring Semester: METR 310 Reimagining Your Career: Job Search Framework and Strategies with the State of Minnesota, 2 credit class taught by Bill Baldus
- 2/9/2023: Rock Your Résumé: Public and Nonprofit Leadership
- 3/6/2023: Rock your Résumé: Urban Ed
- 3/15/2023: AAPI Student, Faculty, Staff Gathering
- 3/28/2023: Internship Info Session
- 3/29/2023: Networking Skills for AAPI Students with Nathan Perez
- 3/29/2023: NACE Career Competencies Conference
- 3/30/2023: Minnesota Education Fair
- 4/5/2023: Career Ideas Festival with Gorick Ng
- 4/6/2023: World Café: an Introduction to Public Sector Careers
- 4/13/2023: Best Buy Merchandise and Demand Planning Info Session
- 5/10/2023: Alumni Career Experience

Brenda Merrill, associate professor in nursing, shared that a student left the following note on her résumé after receiving feedback at Résumé Drop In as part of NURS 645 assignment:

“ FYI I have a few notes listed on the bottom of this résumé to remind me of changes that I need to include before submitting this for a job application. These are mostly based on feedback I received from the lovely people at the Career and Writing Centers. ”

“ The Public Sector World Café significantly broadened my horizons to the career opportunities available in the public sector. By getting to meet and connect with representatives from different state and local agencies, I was able to gain a valuable insight on current and upcoming positions that would be a good fit for me. I'm better equipped to navigate my job search and know who I can reach out to for more information at the agencies I connected with. ”

—Drake Aparicio, '24  
Business Administration student



# Success Story

Saima Kashif

**Major:** Business Administration

**Graduation:** May 2024

**New Title:** Products and Business Solutions Intern

**Organization/Company:** Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC



I received an email from the Career Center about a job fair that was going to be held last September. I was immediately interested in the companies and their employee value propositions. There were so many companies to choose from. After researching the companies listed, I selected eight and booked the 10-15-minute time slots. I had only a little idea of how to interact with them so, I booked a meeting with Emily Johnson, the internship and apprenticeship coordinator at the Career Center. She willingly guided me through the process. One very effective tool she taught me is called polishing the pitch. I used her advice and practiced. Now, I was ready to meet with my selected companies.

I was excited about the day because I was prepared and ready for my meetings. The first three interviews went well, but it was the fourth one which really grabbed my attention. The interviewer encouraged and motivated me by her positivity, and how she spoke about her team. I began to see more and more potential for myself as a part of her team, because of her positivity. When she asked me about myself, I knew exactly what I wanted to say and what questions I needed to ask her because of my meeting with Emily. She told me that she needed only four interns and that I should submit my résumé. I did and got a call for an interview the next week. I will start my internship at Ameriprise. Even better, this person will be my line manager.

The Career Center continued to guide me during the long interview process. Emily continued to advise me. One of the most valuable things she helped me understand is that the entrepreneur experience is a job experience and how can I transfer my entrepreneurial skills into my job experience. I am extremely thankful for all the suggestions and encouragement Emily and others in the Career Center gave me. They helped me learn how to prepare for an interview using a variety of strategies and how to make a positive impression during the interview. They also showed me how to respond to “Do you have any questions?” and how to follow up after the interview they helped me figure out how to negotiate pay effectively.

I am appreciative of the help I received from the Career Center staff and especially from Emily. I couldn't have done it without them. I advise current students interested in career planning and placement to make the Career Center their first stop and then to go back for help at every step of the planning and placement process.

# Career Readiness Project Update

The National Association of Colleges and Employees (NACE) identifies **career competencies** as a group of knowledge, skills, and abilities that broadly prepare the college educated for success in the workplace and lifelong career management.

By Career Readiness, we mean the process by which students come to achieve a level of proficiency at and ownership in articulating their career competencies through their education.

The **core career competencies** at Metro State are:

1. **Professional Communication**
2. **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving**
3. **Ethical Decision Making**
4. **Innovation and Creativity**
5. **Leadership and Followership**
6. **Teamwork and Collaboration**
7. **Cultural Agility, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism**
8. **Community Engagement**
9. **Digital Literacy**
10. **Continuous Learning and Career Management**

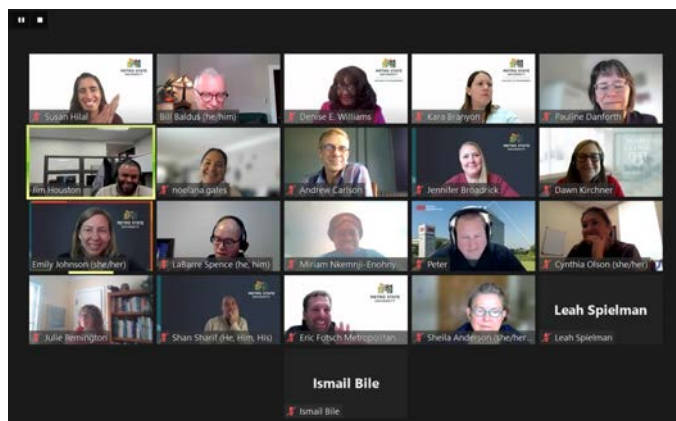
Metro State continually ranks in the top four-year higher education campuses for its impact on students' upward mobility, as shown in [CollegeNet's annual survey](#). In 2022, Metro State increased its social mobility ranking by 1.6% in a national comparison, earning a rank of 22 out of 1,414 schools. Economic and social advancement are the key measurements of this survey, with a paid job after graduation being one of the most impactful to the score. Social mobility is an indicator of our success in fulfilling our mission to serve "underserved groups" and help them drastically improve their ability to earn family-sustaining wages. To sustain and improve these results, Career Readiness is imperative.

In Spring 2023, 14 faculty and the Career Center director met with a U of M team to create a strategic roadmap for Career Readiness Project (CRP) implementation at Metro State. During two strategic sessions, the group agreed that the primary focus should be: How can we take CRP from being primarily a Career Center effort to a university-wide effort? Encouraging faculty engagement and ownership was determined as the next milestone. A guiding assumption of the revised model is that Career Readiness must meet students where they are at physically, in the classroom, and not only in the Career Center (which would be an added investment of time and energy for an already under resourced population). In this way, students unavoidably encounter career competency development as part of their required curriculum, and do so throughout their tenure at Metro State, rather than only in their final semester. Since career competency development must happen in the classroom, and not only in the Career Center, there is an urgent and critical need to support faculty in the integration of competencies into their coursework.

Another outcome of the strategy sessions was the support of the career competencies as defined in 2019. There was a slight modification in the language of the definition of Career Readiness, with the essence of the approach being intentional and explicit integration of the competencies into coursework, since many of these competencies are already implicitly fostered in liberal arts education of any kind.

**A big thank you to faculty for their efforts to keep moving the Career Readiness needle and helping us find a way forward this year:**

Bill Baldus, Career Center  
Jonathan Beller, College of Liberal Arts  
Andrew Carlson, College of Liberal Arts  
Becky Evan, College of Management  
Eric Fotsch, Urban Ed  
Dean Rassule Hadidi, College of Management  
Ismail Bile Hassan, College of Sciences  
Susan Hilal, College of Community Studies  
and Public Affairs  
Dave Jacobson, College of Sciences  
Caitlin Mahoney, College of Community Studies  
and Public Affairs  
Brenda Merrill, College of Nursing and Health Sciences  
Miriam Nkemnji-Enohnyaket, College of Nursing  
and Health Sciences  
Maureen O'Dougherty, College of Liberal Arts  
Kate Ries, College of Sciences  
Denise E. Williams, College of Management



*Screen shot of a Zoom meeting showcasing the members of various Career Readiness Workgroups.*

## Highlights:

- Expanded the faculty workgroup spring semester and held two strategic planning sessions and one discussion on capacity building and future direction with U of M facilitators
- Arranged for a faculty member to participate in the U's Faculty Fellows Kickoff
- Drafted the 'Why Career Readiness, Why Now' statement as a follow up
- Delivered two faculty training sessions in collaboration with the Center for Faculty Development, and a College of Nursing and Health Sciences Lunch and Learn
- Implemented a second fall faculty survey and second pre/post student survey to measure faculty adoption and student self-assessment of competency mastery. Wrote summary/analysis of fall benchmark survey and spring pre/post pilots.
- Faculty Workgroup members Denise E. Williams, Susan Hilal, and Bill Baldus were selected to deliver [two NACE presentations](#) to national audiences, titled *Pivoting the Pandemic: Working the Career Readiness Superpower Toward Equity*.
- Sponsored group of 16 staff and faculty attending NACE's Competency Symposium and follow up discussion
- Coordinated a discussion facilitated by Denise E. Williams with the Employer Career Readiness Workgroup: *Finding and Retaining Diverse Talent* (participants from 3M, Best Buy, Mayo Clinic, the State of Minnesota, and Xcel Energy)
- Finished Faculty [Video Project](#)

## Resources:

**2022 Boyer Report:** [ueru.org/boyer2030](http://ueru.org/boyer2030)

**NACE Career Readiness Overview:** [naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined/GELS/](http://naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined/GELS/) **Competencies graphic:** [Career Competencies GELS FINAL.pdf](#)

**Career Readiness Model:** [Career Readiness framework with comments.pdf](#)

**Career Readiness Equity Statement:** [Metro State Career Readiness Project equity statement.pdf](#)



# Growing Employer Relationships

For the first time ever, the Career Center offered METR 310, Reimagining Your Career: Job Search Framework and Strategies, twice in one year. LaBarre Spence taught the fall version with the Mayo Clinic as our organizational partner and Bill Baldus worked with the State of Minnesota to offer it spring semester.

Since LaBarre's work is focused on managing the PAC program thanks to our AANAPISI grant, we decided to try to assemble a class of students who identify as Asian American. We plan to do the same with the fall 2023 version with Best Buy. While everyone is welcome to register for it, this innovative course has a special focus on supporting Asian American Pacific Islander students in their career development. As our organizational partner, Best Buy will work closely with students who will have opportunities to meet and learn from Best Buy team members including alumni.

## What does it mean to be an organizational partner for METR 310?

Typically, we've invited our contacts to come in for a few guest lectures on a range of topics: organizational culture, bringing your whole self to work, opportunities and how to apply, handling interview questions and navigating the hiring process. We have also taken tours and met onsite with our organizational partners.

## Who has served as organizational partners for the class?

Past partners have included 3M, Mayo Clinic, the State of Minnesota, Target, and Xcel Energy.

A special thanks to Jackie VanOverbeke ('11 graduate, Social Science), Enterprise Recruitment Consultant, Minnesota Management and Budget and Dawn Swiers, Diversity Recruitment Specialist, Mayo Clinic.

## Finding and Retaining Diverse Talent: A Listening Session with Employer Partners

A discussion with some of our employer partners was facilitated by Denise E. Williams. As we see our role in working with our employer partners to help them create environments that are welcoming, inclusive, and supportive as possible for our graduates, we organized a discussion immediately following this year's Career Ideas Festival.

The discussion was beneficial for our strategic initiatives as we addressed topics including: understanding corporate challenges, processes for recruiting, and assessment of strengths and areas of development for Metro State learners, which was particularly insightful given the alumni participation in this process. You can hear the [recording](#) of our discussion here and read Williams' [summary](#) here.

## Thank you to the following employer partners for joining us:

- Peter Reinhardt, 3M
- Leah Spielman, Best Buy
- Jackie VanOverbeke, State of Minnesota
- Noelana Gates, Ramsey County
- Jim Houston, Xcel Energy

“Students who have studied Finance at Metro State are looked at by our hiring managers as coming in with both strong academic credentials as well as the kind of real world professional experience it takes to be competitive candidates.”

—Kindra Ramaker, Senior Manager at Mayo Clinic

# Career Ideas Festival—April 5, 2023

## Speaker Gorick Ng

Every year, the Career Center taps a subject matter expert as the Career Ideas Festival keynote speaker to inject some new career thinking and energy into the campus community.

This year’s speaker was Gorick Ng, a career adviser at Harvard University, specializing in coaching first-generation, low-income students. He was a first-generation college student and a graduate of Harvard and Harvard Business School. He talked about key concepts from his top-selling book, “The Unspoken Rules”.

### What are the Unspoken Rules?

For most people, you have to learn on your own how to navigate your first day in a new role. No one tells you how to take ownership, manage expectations, or handle workplace politics. And, how can you know how to get promoted? These are the unspoken rules—the specific ways of doing things that managers expect but don’t explain and that top performers do but may not know they are tried and true rules. The rules aren’t taught in school but are passed on through family/friend connections or mentor to mentee—the insiders—while the outsiders have to learn on their own, step by step, by trial and error.

Knowing how important these skills are to be successful in the workplace, Ng wanted to help. He distilled the wisdom he gathered from more than 500 interviews with professionals across industries and job types about both the biggest mistakes people make at work and how to have a successful career. Working hard and hoping to get noticed is not a strategy for long term success.

Ng shared these hidden rules and provided frameworks and models with the audience of students, staff, faculty, and corporate partners to enable them to move forward in their career more confidently and stand out from their peers.



Photo of Gorick Ng

### Students Fireside Chat

Following his presentation, students were treated to a “fireside chat” opportunity to ask questions and go deeper into the unspoken rules. Students expressed that they were concerned about work and life balance, not knowing where to start, imposter syndrome, networking, and finding a career direction. As a result of their time with Ng, students said they learned that it’s never too early to make connections and opportunities are all around and need to be uncovered. They appreciated Ng’s optimism, insights, and willingness to help first-generation students learn how to be successful in the world of work.



# PAC (ANNAPISI) Grant

In 2021, Metro State University received an award from the U.S. Department of Education for its commitment to equity and inclusion. The university was recognized as an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI), the only four-year institution in the Minnesota State system to receive this grant. The grant of \$1.48 million over five years is being used to improve and expand Metro State’s capacity to serve Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander students.

The goals of the grant include Promoting cultural awareness and competency, Advancing career readiness, and Connecting graduates and students—PAC program. The university is sponsoring cultural and career events, outreach to community organizations and schools with Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students, and providing cultural competency training for staff and faculty. Career readiness is being enhanced through mentorship, financial literacy training, and career support. And the university is working to develop strong connections with graduates through ongoing programs.

## Highlights:

**Metro State Connect (MSC) mentoring platform**—like Metro State’s own LinkedIn site, MSC launched in the summer initially to alumni and then to students. Currently MSC has more than 300 members, with two-thirds being alumni and one-third being students.

**National Alumni Career Mobility (NACM) survey**—In its third year the NACM program surveys alumni career outcomes at the 5- and 10-year mark after graduation. It provides insights on career preparation, satisfaction, and economic mobility.

Metro State continues to be one of the top schools in the nation for career and economic mobility. For the first time, the data was analyzed by race where specific equity gaps were identified. As more data is collected, these insights will become clear.

**PAC Fellows**—A group of AAPI students will provide invaluable insights and support for implementing the PAC grant programs. The paid positions will help the Career Center with promoting, organizing, and implementing AAPI career events, networking gatherings, and guest speakers. In addition to serving as ambassadors to help us reach out to students and alumni, PAC Fellows will be project leads on the many initiatives the Career Center is delivering as part of the PAC program. In addition, the PAC Fellows will have AAPI mentors to help them achieve their academic and professional goals.

**AAPI Career Videos**—The power of video to communicate and influence is being harnessed through recording AAPI alumni and AAPI corporate representatives sharing experiences and recommendations related to career choice, path, and progression. Target Corporation Asian Business Council representatives are featured. The videos will be utilized in presentations, for email distribution, and on the Career Center website.

**Student Leadership Training**—Karen and Hmong student group leaders will participate in facilitated sessions consisting of teambuilding, strategic planning, and individual leadership development experiences. Participants will identify their values, strengths, and areas of growth as student leaders. They will reflect on how cultural identity shapes their student organization participation and strategize an action plan for their organization based on their collective values, purpose, and goals.



Students, faculty, and staff attending Asian American gathering.





# METR 310

## Reimagining Your Career: Job Search Framework and Strategies

In Fall 2022 and Spring 2023, the Career Center delivered METR 310, which is a deep dive into the lifelong skills of looking for work. This two-credit, seven-session course was ideal for those close to graduating and/or looking for more fulfilling work. Students learned about the world of work and a process for mastering skills required of a job search. Specific deliverables included:

### Building key career skills

- Introducing yourself
- Networking conversations
- Handling interview questions

### Developing job search tools

- Strong résumé and cover letter
- LinkedIn profile
- Targeted organizations list

A special feature in this course is the participation of our partner organizations. The spring partner organization was the State of Minnesota with graduate Jackie VanOverbeke serving as our key contact and the fall partner was Mayo Clinic with Dawn Swiers serving as our partner representative. Past partner organizations have included 3M, Target, and Xcel Energy. Our organizational partner this fall will be Best Buy. These organizations like getting to know a group of our students and also raise their profile on campus. With this shared experience, we forged deeper connections with each organization. In addition, employers have suggested METR 310 should be a required course.

An integral participant in multiple class sessions, each organization shared its insights on organizational culture and hiring practices, networking, and provided staff who conducted mock interviews with students. Students received “insider knowledge,” hearing directly from recruiters about what they look for in candidates and what matters most in the interview process.

Students found great value from the METR 310 class. Evaluation comments noted the value and importance of hearing directly from recruiters about the application process, appreciation for learning about networking and how to build professional connections, improvements to their résumés and LinkedIn profile, and feeling greater confidence in preparing to interview.



*Metro State University's Saint Paul campus*



# Success Story

Long Xiong

**New Title:** Case Manager

**Organization/Company:** Thomas Allen

**Tell us how you landed your job. What was your process? Was there a magic moment or turning point?**

I took a little break after graduation but I soon applied to two positions in my field. I got interest from both companies to interview and one even said they were impressed. I believe this was from knowledge extracted from the METR 310 Reimagining Your Career class. In my interview, towards the very end when asked if I had any questions, after some filler questions, I asked, “are there any reasons why I wouldn’t get this job?” They were shocked and admitted that was the first time they heard that question. Shortly after, I got offered that position.

**What advice would you offer students and alumni who are still looking?**

For a long time, one of my pre-conceived thoughts was that I’m all alone and I had to figure it out by myself. One of the biggest things I’ve learned from METR 310 is that people want to help other people. As a Human Services major, this idea of people wanting to help other people was also echoed and after talking with professionals in the field and being in the field, I am convinced that this is true. I am also convinced because when I can help other people and it benefits them, that makes me happy. Networking is something I had heard about in the past and how beneficial it can be, but I had no idea about what, how, when, where, and why. There are steps to networking, things that should be said and done during and after. METR 310 walked me through all of it and I am much more confident in my knowledge of networking because of this class.



# Alumni Career Experience

In efforts to create programing specifically geared toward supporting our graduates, the Career Center (in partnership with Alumni Relations) created a conference called the “[Alumni Career Experience](#).” After a trial run of this workshop in Summer 2022, the event was overhauled to take over campus for a half day conference.

Hosted on January 5 and May 10, 2023, nearly 70 Metro State graduates and students near graduation gathered on campus to learn about everything from networking to interviewing.

Attendees had the opportunity to have their résumé reviewed, complete a mock interview, and have a

professional headshot taken by Kathleen Ambre, our very own talented Digital Marketing Strategist.

This event is a true celebration of the Metro State community. In addition to gathering our graduates to help ignite a successful job search, alumni joined the event to share their experiences and wisdom. Our “Ask a Recruiter” panel has been made up of alumni who are recruiting our grads. Local employer partners also join to expose our attendees to opportunities and organizations they may not have been familiar with.

This event garnered some exceptional feedback we would love to share!

“It was truly inspiring to hear from accomplished professionals. Their experiences and advice have left a lasting impression on me, and I feel more motivated than ever to pursue my goals. I would also like to extend my appreciation to the guest speakers and program leaders who graciously shared their time and expertise. Their valuable insights and willingness to mentor and guide aspiring professionals like me are greatly appreciated. Once again, thank you for organizing such a remarkable event. I am grateful for the connections I made and the knowledge I gained.”

—Hellen Fikadu



*Employer Panel question and answer session at May 2023 Alumni Career Experience Event*



*Representative from Robert Half speaking on LinkedIn profiles*

Received from an event volunteer when asked if they were trying to convince someone to attend what would they say:

“Employers are essentially giving you the secrets for getting a job that no one else has.”



*Employer Panel question and answer session at January 2023 Alumni Career Experience Event*

# The National Alumni Career Mobility Survey (NACM)

## Insights from Metro State's Alumni

We are amassing an impressive pool of alumni data. There is now a collection of feedback from the classes of 2010, 2011, 2015, and 2016—in a few months, we will add 2012 and 2017. What we like about this research is that it looks at graduates (over 50 schools across the country, including Metro State) who have been out of school for 5 and 10 years and asks a range of questions about career satisfaction, debt, earnings—but also what those graduates did while they were with us: whether they had an internship, who they received career advice from at the time, and when they decided on their path.

The Career Leadership Collective did an [in-depth study](#) for us and we learned a lot about our graduates and how we might improve the Metro State experience and career outcomes for our current students.

**They developed a framework called the Career Mobility Index.**

**It looks at the combination of 3 measures:**

- Career Pathway Preparation (Do they feel like they have the skills to do the job?)
- Career Satisfaction (How happy are they with their work?)
- Economic Mobility (Are they earning more than the family in which they grew up?)

So, another way to look at their equation, Skills + Satisfaction + Salary = Career Mobility Index

## A few highlights that caught our eye:

Compared to other NACM schools across the country, Metro State's students are strongly motivated by career aspirations.

**The top three motivations for obtaining a degree are:**



**What does this mean:** Our students came to us primarily to improve their career options. We can harness the power of these motivations by integrating Career Readiness into curricular and co-curricular experiences.

**Only 16% saw the Institution as investing in their careers.**

**What does this mean:** We need to demonstrate to our students that we are thinking about their careers right along with them.



**58% of Asian, Black, and Latinx graduates still see their education debt as overwhelming compared to 35% White graduates.**

**What does this mean:** We need to think more about student debt and the number of years it takes our graduates to make payments. What are some ways we can reduce the debt they carry as part of their higher ed experience?

**Alumni (35%) who receive career advice find it helpful. They received career advice most often from faculty and academic advisors.**

**What does this mean:** Faculty and academic advisors are the ones who students see the most often and they are doing a great job providing helpful career advice. This also indicates an opportunity to increase resources to these individuals to ensure more students receive helpful career advice.

**Three Career High Impact Practices are key to narrowing equity gaps according to the 2021 national findings.**



**What does this mean:** We could leverage these new Career High Impact Practices relatively easily to dramatically improve students' perceptions and career outcomes with minimal investment.

## National Data Spotlight:

**Significance testing indicated a hierarchy of impact for internship experiences:**



Of our responding alumni, 33% indicated they had an internship and that those internships were related to their major and career goals at the time.

**What does this mean:** If we can double that number, many more graduates will experience this important High Impact Practice and key pathway into their newly chosen field.

# Upcoming Events for 2023-24

| <b>Date and time:</b>     | <b>Event:</b>                                     |
|---------------------------|---|
| Every Wednesday           | Résumé Drop In (virtual)                          |
| 9/14/2023, 9-10 a.m.      | Career Think Tank (in person, details below)      |
| 9/28/2023, 3-6 p.m.       | Diversity Networking and Job Fair (DNJF, virtual) |
| 11/3/2023, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. | Government and Nonprofit Career Fair (in person)  |
| 1/11/2024, 1-5 p.m.       | Alumni Career Experience (ACE) (in person)        |
| 3/28/2024, TBA            | Career Ideas Festival (virtual? TBD)              |

## Internship Info Sessions

| <b>Fall Sessions (virtual)</b> | <b>Spring Sessions (virtual)</b> |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 9/12/2023, Noon                | 9/9/2024, Noon                   |
| 9/25/2023, 5 p.m.              | 9/22/2024, 5 p.m.                |
| 10/10/2023, Noon               | 2/13/2024, Noon                  |
| 10/23/2023, 5 p.m.             | 2/26/2024, 5 p.m.                |
| 11/14/2023, Noon               | 3/12/2024, Noon                  |
| 11/27/2023, 5 p.m.             | 3/25/2024, 5 p.m.                |
| 12/12/2023, Noon               | 4/9/2024, Noon                   |



*Metro State University's Saint Paul campus*





# Career Think Tank:

## Minnesota's Changing Workforce

**As Minnesota's population becomes more diverse, so will its workforce.**

Join us on campus for our fall Career Think Tank to learn about workforce trends from Minnesota Compass Project Director Allison Liuzzi. Minnesota Compass was developed when leaders from across Minnesota voiced a desire to have credible, easy-to-access data about their communities. Wilder Research worked with advisors representing business, government, nonprofit, and philanthropy to develop and implement Minnesota Compass as a statewide resource for reliable data.

Given Minnesota's changing demographics combined with a worker shortage, we will also explore an innovative approach to recruiting, training, and retaining new hires and incumbent workers. Leslie Philmon and LaRohn Latimer, Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) field representatives, will describe Registered Apprenticeship, a time-tested training system that combines technical instruction with structured on-the-job learning experiences. Apprenticeship prepares Minnesota workers to compete in a global 21st century economy and develops highly trained, skilled, and motivated employees.

Hiring employees across meaningful lines of difference is just the tip of the iceberg. What lurks beneath the surface is the ability to retain a heterogenous workforce. We are all striving to make our organizations more inclusive, supportive, and welcoming—please join us and feel free to bring your colleagues.

**Thursday, September 14, 9-10 a.m.**

**Location:** In person, Saint Paul Campus, Library 308

**Who:** Faculty, Staff, and Employer Partners

[RSVP for the Career Think Tank](#)

Thank you for reading our Annual Review. Please let us know if you have any questions, ideas, or suggestions!

“The ideal of being a lifelong learner is no longer a platitude. It has become an economic necessity, and the academic community is only beginning to understand that traditional teaching methods and curricula must be adapted to develop a twenty-first-century workforce and citizens of an increasingly complex world.”

—Buck Goldstein and Holden Thorp, Editor, Science, Boyer 2030 Commissioner