



REPORT: SCAD ALUMNI EMPLOYMENT STUDY

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“In an economy characterized by the convergence of globalized commerce, widely available information and rapid technological progress, innovation and entrepreneurship are crucial.”

- REBECCA O. BAGLEY IN FORBES MAGAZINE

In a post-recession economy, parents of college-age students want to feel confident that their children's college education will result in employable skills and the critical thinking capabilities to drive career advancement.

A report released by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (“Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success,” April 10, 2013) reveals that employers prioritize “critical thinking, communication, and complex problem solving skills.”

The strongest schools integrate these principles into the curriculum and the spirit of the educators who oversee it. They provide a holistic environment by ensuring that students from different disciplines work together on projects that create opportunities to work in the “real world” with commercial clients who have real objectives and deadlines. They offer a learning experience that extends beyond the classroom walls and around the globe by providing opportunities to study and work in international markets. They prepare students to be employable and entrepreneurial.

For 36 years, the Savannah College of Art and Design has used these criteria to define its mission to prepare talented students for professional careers, with a focus on providing authentic engagement in the world and workplace. This global, collaborative, forward-thinking, challenging environment has produced more than a generation of artists and designers that thrive in a constantly changing job market.

- **Mir Zafar Ali** (B.F.A, visual effects, 2003), triple Oscar winning visual effects specialist with credits including “Frozen,” “Life of Pi,” and “The Golden Compass.”
- **Heidi Elnora** (B.F.A., fashion, 2002), “Project Runway” alumna and star of TLC wedding design show “Bride by Design.”
- **Leigh Poindexter** (B.F.A., fashion, 2005), property and set decorator with work on “Glee,” a member of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE).
- **Feifei Sun** (B.F.A., advertising, 2008), fashion editor for TIME, also oversees special issues including Person of the Year and TIME 100. Formerly worked with Vanity Fair.
- **Andrew Robinson** (B.F.A., illustration, 1993), Will Eisner-nominated illustrator of “The Fifth Beatle: The Brian Epstein Story,” which was named to the 2013 New York Times bestseller list.
- **Bryan Godwin** (B.F.A., computer art, 1998) owner of Shade VFX in Los Angeles, creating visual effects for films including “Argo,” “The Muppets” and “Water for Elephants.”
- **Todd Gallopo** (B.F.A., graphic design, 1991), founder of advertisement firm Meat and Potatoes, working with clients from NBC to Simon & Schuster, among others.
- **Wendy White** (B.F.A., fibers, 1993), art exhibit “CURVA” was displayed internationally, reviewed in Artforum, The New York Times, The Huffington Post and more.
- **Michael Mack** (B.F.A., industrial design, 2007), founder of fashion footwear company Michael Grey Footwear.
- **Kati Curtis** (B.F.A., interior design, 1992), founder of Kati Curtis Design, a New York City-based interior design firm.

This small sample of success stories proves the rule – not the exception.

KEY FINDINGS

Ninety-three percent of combined undergraduate and graduate respondents reported being employed, pursuing further education or both within ten months of graduation.

Ninety-six percent of master's degree graduates and 93 percent of bachelor's degree graduates reported being employed, pursuing further education or both.

Of the total number of employed respondents, **86 percent** are working in the industry for which they studied or in a related field.

STUDY OVERVIEW

To get a better understanding of the career paths of recent graduates, SCAD's office of institutional assessment conducted a survey of Spring 2013 alumni using a multi-step process. The key finding of the study demonstrated that 93 percent of graduates were employed, pursuing further education or both within ten months of commencement.

This information is gathered annually by SCAD to ascertain the employment and continuing education information of its graduates with the goal of monitoring alumni career development as well as assisting and advising in the pursuit of employment or further education.

METHODOLOGY

SCAD's alumni follow-up survey is a four-step process beginning at graduation and extending for ten months:

- **May 2013:** Administration of a paper-based commencement survey immediately prior to graduation regarding secured employment and continuing education.
- **Ongoing:** Monitor a variety of internal and external data sources including the university's internal management system, which allows the university

to identify who is coming back to SCAD to pursue a graduate degree or is currently employed at SCAD; the National Student Clearinghouse, an independent organization that tracks national enrollment data and indicates which graduates are pursuing further education at other institutions; LinkedIn, where SCAD alumni share profile and employment information; and the SCAD's career and alumni success database, which tracks student- and alumni-reported employment data.

- **January-February 2014:** Follow-up online survey regarding secured employment and continued education. For this past year, this online survey began in late January 2014 and ran for approximately six weeks.
- **February-March 2014:** Targeted calling of Spring 2013 alumni regarding secured employment and continued education.

RESPONSE RATE

SCAD captured information from 88 percent of the Spring 2013 graduates, a total of 1,374 respondents – undergraduate and graduate students – from Savannah and Atlanta, Georgia; Hong Kong; and eLearning.

Employment rates for individual programs are available upon request. While the aforementioned statistics are unique to this graduation class, they are comparable to recent SCAD placement statistics. Readers should understand that these figures can not be compared with statistics from other institutions, as there is no federal standard as to how information needs to be tracked, thus leaving each individual institution to determine its own methodology.

For more information, contact employmentstats@scad.edu

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