



Staten Island Advance

THURSDAY, MAY 17, 2012

PUBLISHED SINCE 1886 | \$1.00

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NEWS

CURSE OF CAMELOT STRIKES



Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s estranged wife, Mary Richardson Kennedy, who had fought drug and alcohol problems, is found dead at the family property in Westchester. She was 52. **PAGE A 14**



Everything you need to know to celebrate Van Duzer Days, Maifest, 'Top Chef: The Tour,' Touch-a-Truck and Uncorked! this weekend. **ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE INSIDE**

SPORTS

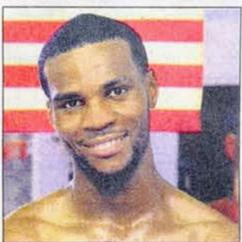
DEVILS RALLY PAST RANGERS



The Devils avenge their Game 1 loss to the Blueshirts with a 3-2 win to even the Eastern Conference championship series. **PAGE B 1**

SPORTS

A HERO'S WELCOME



Clifton's Marcus Browne, fresh from earning a spot in the Summer Olympics boxing tournament, comes home for a workout and a celebration. **PAGE B 1**

NEWS

CELEBRATING CULTURE



It promises to be once again the premier Staten Island social event of the season — cocktails, a music and art exhibit, a spectacular lineup of professional entertainment, and a gala dinner. It's the Neptune Ball at Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden on June 2. And the day's program is built so you can purchase tickets for the parts of the evening's events you'd like to attend: Carol Benanti spells it all out in today's Inside Out column. **PAGE A 7**

DATA SHOWS IMPROVED CAREER CHANCES FOR ISLAND'S CLASS OF 2012

FLICKERS OF HOPE FOR JOB-HUNGRY GRADS

By DEBORAH YOUNG / STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

After spending their college years being knocked around by bleak economic news, students stepping from the coddling halls of academia into the "real world" have come to understand the piece of paper they will hold in their hands — a college degree — is not necessarily a ticket to a comfortable career.

But there is hope for the Class of 2012, as job prospects for recent college graduates seem to be improving, according to national data and college counselors who track the success of their students after graduation.

"All the students attending four-year colleges are doing the right thing; it is really a requirement in today's work force," said Denise Hopkins, executive director of career services at St. John's University. "In terms of the actual job outlook for college educated students, it's improving."

Eighty-nine percent of the 2011 graduates from Staten Island's St. John's University campus landed a job or were in school six months after graduation she said, citing the school's most recent statistics.

That was up by 6 percent from the previous year, when the job market was still in the contractions of the recession. Among the 2011 graduates who were working, 86 percent said it was in their field of choice.

The National Association of Colleges and Em-

More on the web

For video of the graduates go to silive.com/video.

ployers found the picture is even brighter this year.

A survey sent out by the not-for-profit organization to employers nationwide found that 10 percent more employers this spring, compared to last year, said they would be hiring recent college grads.

THE NEW REALITY

Even so, the jobs landscape is nothing like it was a decade ago.

"It has definitely become tougher for students to be coming out of college," said Victoria Chrispo, assistant director of career development at Wagner College, describing the sea change during the 10 years she's been a career counselor.

These days, jobs are rarely landed by sending out resumes cold and internships are key to landing a paying job, she said.

SEE GRADS, PAGE A 6

WITH A LITTLE LUCK



Eileana Deschamps, 22, is graduating from the College of Staten Island.

Eileana Deschamps will spend the summer after graduating from the College of Staten Island applying for jobs that draw on her education as a psychology major and communications minor. She'll prepare for an upcoming internship at a borough elementary school and put in a good bit of time researching graduate programs.

"I've spoken with a couple of professors who said if I get a job in the field I would be lucky, even with a master's. You need a PhD to work as a psychologist," said the Rosebank 22-year-old.

But unless she finds a job in corporate communications within the next year, more school is likely in her future.

"My parents are very supportive of school," she said, musing on the years it will take to earn a PhD in psychology, if she wishes to pursue her dream of a career in mental health counseling. "Maybe a couple of years ago, it may have been easier, especially with a master's degree to find a job. It's really scary, that's why you need to better round yourself and have a back up plan. And keep your options open."

CONTINGENCY PLANS



Gideon Omagbemi, 29, is graduating from the College of Staten Island.

Finding intellectually and economically sustaining work with only a high school degree is no easy feat, Gideon Omagbemi, 29, learned as working full-time that ranged from security to home health care to pay for his education at the College of Staten Island.

"You need a degree to begin to survive," said Omagbemi, who will graduate with a bachelor's in economics. "It's really tough out there."

Omagbemi recently moved back into his parents' Port Richmond home to save money — a choice that makes sense as he saves money for his upcoming marriage and, potentially, also graduate school down the road.

The New Dorp High School graduate said he hopes one day to be a financial planner with a big bank or institution, where he can manage financial portfolios.

He has a similar type of job now — all commission based, where much of the work, is just finding clients.

"I may end up going back to school for a master's," said Omagbemi, musing about how a MBA would open up opportunities and provide some measure of career stability. "For now, I will see how it goes."

'I JUST WANT TO WORK'



Kiri Kaszubski, 21, graduated recently from St. John's University.

Kiri Kaszubski, 21, enjoyed the four years she spent at St. John's University. But she has no interest in returning to the quiet life of academia after she graduates.

"Hospitality is one of those fields where you can always find a job doing something," said the Westerleigh resident with a hopeful smile.

Still, she is yet to be proven right, as she looks for work.

She has applied for a few jobs on-line without big results, but hopes her luck will change when she steps up her search next month, after graduation.

"It's surreal that graduation is coming," said Ms. Kaszubski, most of whose friends are heading to graduate school in nursing, accounting, teaching and law.

"I don't want to go to graduate school," she said. "I just want to work."

INDEX

ADVICEC 5 LOTTERIESA 2
CLASSIFIEDA 17-18 MOVIESAWE 13-14
COMICSC 4-5 OBITUARIESA 14-15
CROSSWORDC 6 SPORTSB 1
EDITORIALA 16 TODAY IN HISTORYA 4
INSIDE OUTA 7 YOUNG ADVANCEC 6

COMING SUNDAY



DOING IT HIS WAY

In this week's Parade, actor Kevin Costner opens up about raising kids in his 50s, his late friend, Whitney Houston, and what he prays for.

WEATHER WATCHER



JORDAN DAVIS, 2, NEW BRIGHTON

Sunny to partly cloudy and pleasant; high of 73
PAGE B 8



Flickers of hope for job-hungry grads

And sometimes it takes as long as nine months after graduation day to find something solid, she said.

To be sure, people with bachelor's degree have a solid leg up over their peers with only a high school education in the quest for a living wage. According to 2012 data from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, college graduates earned a median weekly wage of \$1,158. High school graduates, by comparison, earned a median wage of \$653 a week during in the first quarter of this year.

With the interest rate on the popular Stafford federal student loan program is set to double in July, after the Senate could not reach agreement this week on how to keep it at 3.4 percent, that salary edge is vital, career counselors agree.

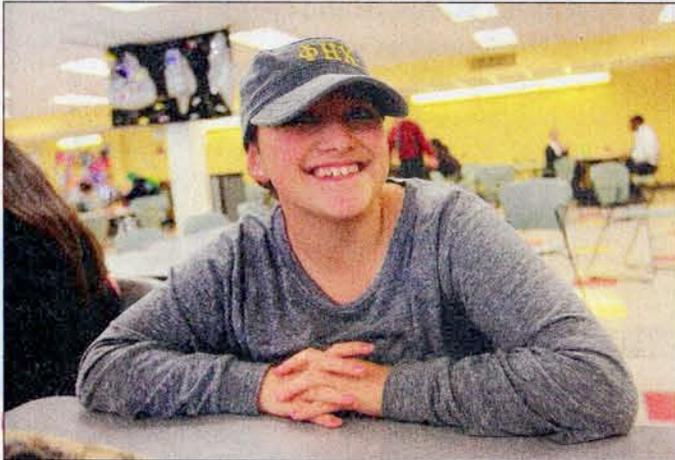
Even so, wages for those with bachelor's degrees are down nationally from 2000, after technological changes eliminated many mid-level jobs, such as bank tellers. In recent years, many college graduates have been forced to settle for lower paying

jobs in the service sector just to bring in a paycheck.

But as the economy recovers, that trend is being countered by new white collar jobs getting carved out in information technology and also in health services — where recent college graduates are finding work in billing, benefits administration, customer service and other administrative areas, jobs watchers say.

"In terms of college grads, we're seeing financial services finally starting to pick up, especially with the technology boom in New York," said Daryl Pigat, metro market manager for New York City for the staffing agency Robert Half International. "There is a whole non clinical side of health care we're seeing huge opportunity in. It might not have been an area people went to college for, and thought they work in, but it's a good foot in the door kind of a job. We tell candidates to get internships, more companies are bringing on interns as a job program to see where the talent is.

ASPIRATIONS SCALED BACK



Joanna Caruselle, 21, is graduating from St. John's University.

When she started out as an education major at St. John's University, Joanna Caruselle figured by the time she graduated she would be well on her way toward a solid career in teaching.

But two years of pedagogy classes and working with children gave the 21-year-old from Richmond enough experience to know that teaching was not for her.

"I didn't want to be one of those people who was in a job I didn't like. The kids were great and it wouldn't have been fair to them. I wanted to do something that felt right for me," she said.

Sociable and interested in fashion, food and service, she discovered hospitality as a major, and began to dream big.

"I would love to be an event planner, wedding, conferences," she said, her eyes growing wide as she described a perfect job planning elegant parties at swank Manhattan or Brooklyn venues.

But after spending months sending out resumes, petitioning family friends in the hospitality business to help her get her foot in the door, and working with counselors at the school's career center, she said she has scaled back her expectations, for now.

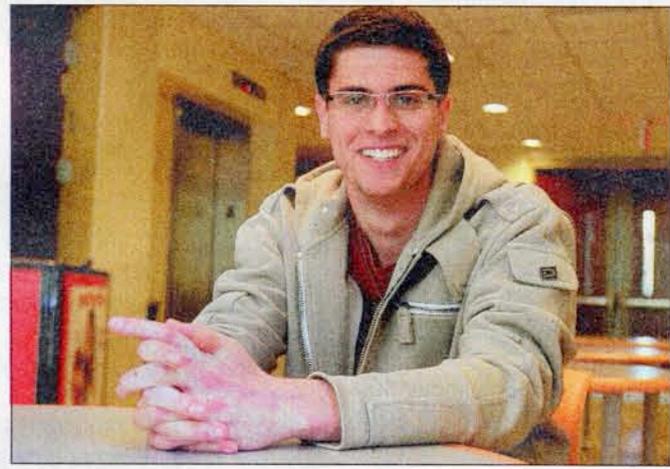
She has a part time job as a receptionist at an Island catering hall, and may notch up her hours after graduation.

"It's not quite a grown up job," she admitted. Still, it is a start, said Ms. Caruselle, who will continue to live in her childhood home until she finds solid, full-time work, or lands a second job as a bartender so she can afford her own place.

"I love my field. I love it I just want a job in it," said Ms. Caruselle.

And, she said, with a smile, there is always Plan B: Culinary school.

HUNDREDS OF RESUMES



STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE PHOTOS/JAN SOMMA-HAMMEL

Troy Savino, 22, is graduating from Wagner College.

Troy Savino views personal finance as a fascinating puzzle, with real world solutions.

"What I like is to take an allotment of money, and through work, research and resourcefulness, figuring out how to make that money grow," said the 22-year-old Wagner student.

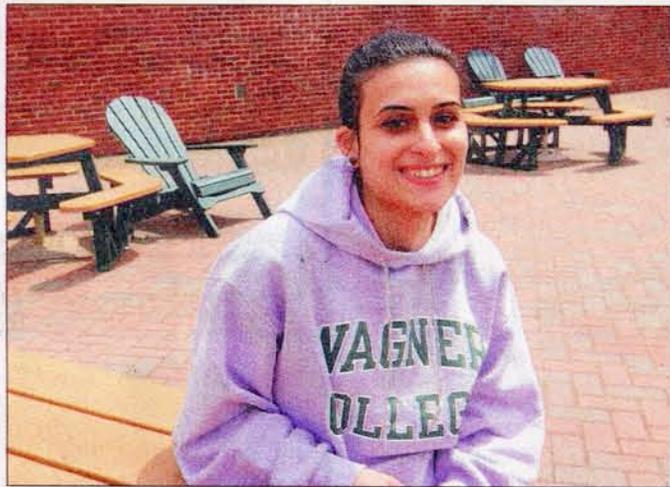
Savino's older sister graduated from college with a liberal arts degree about a decade ago, when jobs were out there for the taking, and worked her way into a high-powered job in finance.

With his graduation approaching, the Prince's Bay economics major understands he is entering a different jobs landscape in the industry. He estimates he has already sent out at least 200 resumes, and only gotten a handful of interviews.

"I have a couple of prospects," said Savino, who for now, has a job at a borough bank branch, and hopes an internship may lead to something more permanent.

"There are definitely jobs, but probably entry level jobs and the question is how to get them," said Savino, who hopes to work in the heart of Wall Street and move to Manhattan. "I definitely think the economy is recovering. My friends who graduated a few years ago went right into graduate programs because they couldn't find anything."

A DIFFERENT PATH



Victoria Felix, 21, is graduating from Wagner College.

As her friends scramble to figure out what they're going to do after the robes and mortarboard come off, Victoria Felix has it all mapped out: Graduate school.

The 21-year-old Wagner College psychology major is headed to Louisiana Tech University to pursue a PhD in cognitive behavioral therapy in the fall. It will be the first time the Dongan Hills native has lived anywhere outside Staten Island, but the school's program fits her academic interests, she said. And she will not have to pay tuition because she'll be doing clinical and teaching work in exchange for school.

"A lot of my friends are trying to find jobs, or thinking about graduate school but taking a year off," she said. "In psychology if you don't have your PhD it's horrible," said Ms. Felix who started out at Wagner as pre-med, but realized she felt happiest in classes that explored what shapes behavior. "This is exactly what I want to be doing."