Mission

The mission of USC Dornsife Career Pathways parallels the central mission of the University of Southern California to cultivate and develop the human mind and spirit. Career Pathways works to align students’ academic interests with individual career and professional pathways through exploration and engagement in curricular and co-curricular opportunities. Career Pathways works in collaboration with academic advisors, career counselors, Faculty, and alumni to provide a network of resources to address students’ professional aspirations.

Services & Programs

◊ Curricular and co-curricular advisement and planning | Career exploration
◊ Resume, cover letter, & CV review | Mock interviews | Internship search
◊ Career newsletters & career readiness programs

Career Pathways Advisors

Octavio Avila
Director | Humanities

Cynthia Kossan
Social Sciences

Vivi Nordstrom
Natural Sciences

Career Advising Appointments

Walk-In Schedule

Post Job/Internship Opportunities:
USC Dornsife Career Pathways
USC Career Center

213.821.4728 | GFS 320
JEFF RICH
B.S., Astronomy, Minor in Russian | Ph.D., Astronomy
Astronomer/ Outreach Coordinator, Observatories of the Carnegie Institute of Science

Jeff Rich studied Astronomy at the University of Southern California. He then pursued graduate studies in Astronomy at the University of Hawai’i from 2005 to 2012, completing an MS and PhD in Astronomy while working as a research assistant, teaching assistant, and running the graduate education and outreach program. From 2012 through 2016 he worked as a postdoctoral researcher on several projects at the Carnegie Observatories, Caltech, and the NASA Infrared Processing and Analysis Center (IPAC). He continued research work as an observational astronomer and, in 2016, took a new position running the outreach and education program at the Pasadena Carnegie Observatories. His research includes observing nearby galaxies to study galaxy formation and evolution with the Las Campanas TYPHOON project, measuring the properties of variable stars and working with the Chicago-Carnegie Hubble Program, aiming to measure the rate of expansion of the universe to great precision. His outreach work includes a variety of programming throughout the Pasadena and greater Los Angeles area, aiming to share their work with the public and raise awareness of Carnegie Observatories.

ERIN DENNY
B.S., Biology | Ph.D., Molecular and Cellular Biology
Senior Licensing Manager, Amgen

Erin is currently a Senior Licensing Manager at Amgen in the Business Development department. In her current role, she is responsible for search and evaluation of oncology partnering opportunities. Erin graduated with her PhD in Molecular and Cellular Biology from the City of Hope where she studied mechanisms of drug resistance in breast cancer. Erin received her B.S. in Biology with a minor in Biotechnology from USC. While at USC, she co-founded the Healthcare in Business Club to provide the life sciences and business students professional, academic and social activities.

ADITY KHANNA
B.S., Biology, Minor in Psychology | M.S., Genetic Counseling
Clinical Science Liaison, Invitae

Adity Khanna has over 15 years of professional experience, the bulk in clinical prenatal genetic counseling and a little in cancer/adult genetics. The last 4+ years, she’s held the title of Medical Science Liaison with the companies, Sequenom and Celmatix. She recently transitioned and is working for Invitae as a Clinical Science Liaison. She has an undergraduate degree from USC and received a Masters in Genetic Counseling from CSUN.
ROB MIKA
B.S., Chemistry | M.S., Electrical Engineering
*System Engineering & Business Development Consultant, Boeing*
Rob Mika has worked 36 years in the Aerospace industry and has been tasked with a variety of challenging assignments, including: manufacturing process engineer, system engineering for airborne and spaced based radar, Electro Optical Missile Sensors and Multi sensor mission aircraft. In addition to System Engineering, he has had experience as a Program Manager, Chief Engineer, New Business Capture Lead, and Engineering Director.

KIREN BANSAL
B.A., Environmental Studies | M.A., Global Affairs
*Associate Vice President, Populations Media Center*
Kiren currently oversees Population Media Center’s development team, charged with shaping the strategy for contributed income as the organization strives to triple business operations by 2025. She has over 15 years of nonprofit management experience including business and development operations, program management, branding and fundraising for local, regional, and international organizations. Kiren holds a Master in Global Affairs from George Mason University with a specialization in Culture and Society and a BA in Environmental Studies from University of Southern California Environmental Studies.

ALISON PUGASH
B.S., Environmental Studies
*Planning & Economic Development Deputy, City of LA, Office of Councilmember Blumenfield*
As Councilmember Blumenfield’s Planning and Economic Development Deputy, Alison is responsible for a variety of land use issues and applications, overseeing community redevelopment projects, researching policy issues, and assisting economic initiatives. Prior to joining Team Blumenfield, Alison worked with LA Sanitation on their renewable energy, climate change adaptation, and environmental policy efforts. She also worked for a variety of LA-based non-profits, including Global Inheritance, City Plants, and Water LA. Alison graduated magna cum laude from USC with a B.S. in Environmental Studies in 2015.
RENEE WANG
B.S., Geological Sciences
Ph.D. Candidate for Geochemistry

Renée Wang is a second year PhD student in Geochemistry at Caltech, funded by an NSF GRFP fellowship, where she applies Earth Science techniques to traditional Earth Science questions, like the evolution of photosynthesis over geologic time, and non-traditional Earth Science questions, like chronic bacterial infections in humans. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from USC in May 2016 with her B.S. in Geological Sciences, and as a Discovery Scholar.

Renée is also passionate about increasing the number of underrepresented minorities in STEM and volunteers for Project Scientist, a nonprofit that puts on science summer camps for girls ages 4-12. Renée intends to continue to work as a research scientist after Caltech, either in research & development at a biotech company, at a national lab, or as an academic professor.

JUSTIN PEARCE
B.S., Environmental Studies | M.E.M. (Environmental Management)
Project Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

At 19, Justin moved from Fort Lauderdale, FL to Los Angeles to pursue a career in the music industry. After working at several various entertainment companies, he wasn't feeling satisfied. So in 2011, Justin decided to go back to school in hopes of changing careers. He started taking classes at Los Angeles City College, before transferring to the University of Southern California (USC) and earning a Bachelor’s of Science in Environmental Studies. USC really opened his eyes to the career opportunities that exist in the management and conservation of our natural resources. More specifically, the role of the federal government had in recovery, restoration, and conservation of those resources. After lots of investigation, he decided the best course of action to get leadership roles in the federal government, was to pursue a master’s degree after he finished his work at USC. The next fall, Justin enrolled in the Master’s of Environmental Management degree program the Duke University’s Nicholas School of the Environment. There, he focused on coastal environmental management. Following graduation, Justin took a contractor role with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) working on the management of swordfish, tuna, and shark populations on the West Coast of the United States. Due to the uncertainty of his contract with NMFS, he pursued more a more permanent federal role. In February of 2018, Justin began his current role as a regulatory project manager with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In this role, he’s been able to explore his interests in wetlands as well as using much of his education on the management of our coastal resources.
ANDREW P. MORRIS

Analyst, Cornerstone Research

Andrew Morris graduated from USC in May 2017 with a double-major in Cognitive Science and Math, and a minor in Spanish. His time at USC was defined by the friends for life he met, major study, Math research, the Thematic Option program, experiences as a Residential Adviser (RA), and Study-Abroad student at a university in Bilbao, Spain. Currently, he is working in Downtown L.A. as an Analyst at Cornerstone Research, an economic consulting firm where he develops expert witness reports and economic models for Corporate litigation. Thus far, his work at Cornerstone has proven rewarding because of the coworkers he collaborates with daily, the complexity and challenges associated with the casework they do there, and the bevy of quantitative and qualitative skills he’s been able to develop on the job.

JUAN ARMANDO GUERRERO

B.S., Geological Sciences
Vice President - Environmental Geology, Tetra Tech

Mr. Guerrero has more than 30 years of geologic and environmental management experience. His technical experience encompasses soil and groundwater investigations of commercial/industrial properties and landfills, soil gas surveys, vadose zone and groundwater remediation of petroleum and chlorinated hydrocarbons, drilling and installation of oil and water wells, and management and development of oil fields and exploration for new petroleum reserves. He has extensive knowledge of project management and technical development of geologic staff, remedial engineering design, environmental drilling and water well oversight, geochemical evaluations, hazardous waste management, cost/schedule responsibility, technical review and approval of remedial action work plans, drilling and sampling plans, groundwater monitoring reports and site closure reports. Additionally, Mr Guerrero served as a City Planning Commissioner for the City of La Habra approving Capital Improvement Projects and reviewing and approving California Environmental Quality Act documents for 13 years. Mr. Guerrero has been selected by the State of California Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors as a Subject Matter Expert and writes questions for use on the California Professional Geologist Exam. Additionally, Mr. Guerrero is a member of the City of La Habra Emergency Response Council. He has experience in drilling petroleum oil & gas exploration and development wells, enhanced oil recovery wells (steam & water injection) and geophysical logging of wells for formation evaluation. He was responsible for training geologists in drilling techniques, well site geology, and log evaluation including electrical, radioactivity, dielectric, resistivity, and magnetic resonance logs. He has drilled wells up to 22,000 feet in depth in various geological environments including Prudoe Bay, Alaska, the San Joaquin Valley, Sacramento and on- and off-shore for the Santa Maria, Santa Barbara and Los Angeles Basins.
KABIR SAGOO
B.A., Neuroscience, Minors in Entrepreneurship & International Relations
Self-Employed

Kabir Sagoo ’10 was a USC Renaissance Scholar majoring in Neuroscience with minors in Entrepreneurship and International Relations. During the first semester of Kabir’s senior year he studied abroad at King’s College London (KCL) and now serves as the Founding President of the KCL LA alumni club. Kabir previously served on the USC LA alumni club board and he enjoys whitewater kayaking. Kabir started his first company, TidePool, to determine personality from photos when he was an undergraduate and then raised around $2M after the Company was incubated by Amplify. Since then he's worked in agribusiness and additive manufacturing. Now, Kabir helped commercialize an industrial marking paste laced with deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) to deter unauthorized modifications and forensically identify warranty fraud for aircraft, automotive, and manufacturing equipment.

REBECCA RADKE
B.S., Computational and Applied Mathematics
Actuarial Analyst, Mercer
Plan it

Career Readiness Guide

The following career readiness guide identifies steps to work towards achieving your career goal. Moreover, users can adopt and develop the guide as a career readiness system to support the achievement of a career goal. First, answer each career goal question. Then, proceed to complete each item in steps 1-4 until all items and steps are completed.

Career goal questions

What is your career goal after graduation?
What else do you need to learn about your career interest?
What will get you one step closer to achieving your career goal?

Assessment

☐ Reflect and identify career goal
☐ Perform a CareerBeam career-assessment
☐ Complete an MBTI Personality Type Assessment
☐ Conduct a Strong Interest Inventory
☐ Describe your personality
☐ Identify skills and abilities
☐ Determine your values
☐ Assess preferred work environment and lifestyle
☐ Discuss career interests with a Career Pathways Advisor
☐ Talk to a Pre-Health, Pre-Law, or Pre-Grad advisor
☐ Meet with USC Dornsife Faculty
☐ Contact a Career Center counselor

STEP 1

Explore majors, minors, and elective courses
Study Career Pathways Major 2 Career Maps
Review What can I do with a major in on connectSC
Network on LinkedIn & the USC Career Network
Conduct Informational Interviews with USC Alumni
Review ONET online & BLS Occupational Handbook
Research on connectSC Vault, Hoovers, Glass Door, etc.
Work. Intern. Research. Volunteer & more!

STEP 2

Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
Oral /Written Communication
Teamwork/Collaboration
Information Technology Application
Leadership
Professionalism/Work Ethic
Career Management
Global & Intercultural Fluency

STEP 3

Establish professional social media like LinkedIn
Draft a Resume or CV
Write a Cover Letter
Develop your Elevator Pitch
Practice interview skills
Identify career opportunities
Apply for career opportunities
Negotiate offers when applicable

STEP 4

USC Dornsife Career Pathways | dornsifenusc.edu/careerpathways | (213) 821-4728 | GFS 320
Pitch it

Talking about yourself is extremely useful when meeting a prospective recruiter, representative or faculty for a desired internship, research position, employment or career opportunity. An “elevator pitch” is a useful speech or statement to prepare in advance of such opportunities. The statement is referred to as an elevator pitch because delivering it should take about as long as it takes to get from one floor to another on an elevator. Although an elevator pitch can be created, practiced, and developed, it should provide an accurate and authentic representation of you. Practice your pitch so

The Elevator Pitch

Pitching Frameworks

1-2-3 Pitch

1. **Introduction**: Introduce yourself and share pertinent information such as your major, minor, year in school, organization, leadership position, etc.

2. **Interest**: Articulate your interest in the organization and in a position of either an internship, part-time or full-time position. Briefly share experiences or skills relative to the position.

3. **Action**: Identify what you wish to do such as talk about career opportunities, leaving a copy of your résumé, applying for a position, or following-up with a phone conversation.

The Pixar Pitch: The pitch as story-telling

The purpose of framework is to bring focus to the narrative. You can use the Pixar framework to tell your story.

*Adapted from Daniel H. Pink’s, To Sell is Human, 2013.*

**Pixar**

Once upon a time ____________________

Every day, ________________________

One day, _________________________

Because of that, ___________________

Because of that, ___________________

Until finally, ______________________

Now, use comparable substitutes to start your pitch and follow the suggested sequence.

Example:

“I’ve always been fascinated with research. Every day, I would stay after-school to grow cultures at my high school’s biology lab. When I came to USC, I was able to conduct research on Drosophila melanogaster in Dr. Mc Fly’s lab. Our findings showed a decrease in eye pigment cells in wild-type flies. My research overlaps with your work on photoreceptor cells. That is why I am interested in conducting research in your lab.”
Connect it

Networking

Who you know is equally important as what you know. Networking is about establishing and developing social relationships. It is about making a connection with people. When you make a connection with someone, you not only make a connection with the individual, but you open the potential to connect with the person’s network of individuals. This network serves as a type of social capital that can be tapped into and leveraged. When you network, you take an active measure to realize your goals. Chances are, you already network and don’t realize it. Below are suggestions for networking.

You know you Networked if:

1. At the end of a conversation, you have the name of a person who is in a position to help you
2. At the end of a conversation, you learn of a new employer or organization that is of interest to you
3. At the end of a conversation, you learn new information that helps you in the realization of a goal

Networking opportunities

There are multiple ways to network; planned or unplanned. The following are recommendations to help you get started:

- **In-person** - at your place of employment, internship, research, etc
- **USC Career Network** – a database of USC alumni available for career guidance and networking. Available via connect SC
- **LinkedIn** – you can search by alumni, career, and even major to find people with similar backgrounds and request to learn about their career path
- **Informational interviews** - conducting an informational interview is a great way research a career and network. Simply, locate an individual who is in a career of interest and request an informational interview
- **Professional associations** - join associations in your area(s) of interests
- **Faculty** - you have the oppor-
**Informational Interview Best Practices**

**Purpose:** The purpose of an informational interview is to learn a first-hand account of your career choice of interest from professionals working in the field. You may learn additional information not available through traditional exploration guides or on-line resources while providing the opportunity to practice communication skills.

**Do**
- Research the company and person with whom you are conducting the informational interview
- Prepare a list of questions that you can ask
- Bring a notepad or tablet for you to take notes
- Ask if it is okay for you take notes during the interview
- Dress professionally
- Have your personal business card ready
- Follow up with a thank-you note, either handwritten or e-mail, within 48hrs.

**Don’t**
- Don’t ask for a job
- Don’t give them your resume (unless they request it)
- Don’t be late

**Suggested questions to ask:**
- How would you describe the environment you work in?
- How would you describe a typical day at work?
- What portion of your job involves interacting with others?
- What college courses have been most helpful to you in your job?
- What types of special skills are necessary to perform your job?
- Is special certification, training, or an advanced degree required for your job?
- What personal qualities do you see as important for success in this occupation?
- What do you like most about your job?
- How did you get interested in this area of work?
- What was your undergraduate major field of study?
- Did you have any practical experience or training, other than college?
- How would you advise me to prepare myself for a career in this field?
Career readiness of college graduates is of critical importance in higher education, in the labor market, and in the public arena. Yet, up until now, “career readiness” has been undefined, making it difficult for leaders in higher education, work force development, and public policy to work together effectively to ensure the career readiness of today’s graduates.

In accordance with its mission to lead the community focused on the employment of the new college graduate, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), through a task force comprised of representatives from both the higher education and corporate sides, has developed a definition and identified competencies associated with career readiness for the new college graduate.

**COMPETENCIES:**

**Critical Thinking/Problem Solving:** Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

**Oral/Written Communications:** Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.

**Teamwork/Collaboration:** Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure, and can negotiate and manage conflict.

**Digital Technology:** Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.

**Leadership:** Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.

**Professionalism/Work Ethic:** Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from his/her mistakes.

**Career Management:** Identify and articulate one’s skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.

**Global/Intercultural Fluency:** Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals’ differences.
USING THE DEFINITION AND COMPETENCIES
How do the definition and competencies help those focused on ensuring new college graduates have the skills necessary to enter and become part of a strong, productive work force?

The definition and competencies provide for development of strategies and tactics that will close the gap between higher education and the world of work. They lay the foundation for the work necessary to prepare college students for successful entry into the work force by:

• Providing a common vocabulary and framework to use when discussing career readiness metrics on campus, within employing organizations, and as part of national public policy.
• Establishing defined competencies as guidelines when educating and advising students.
• Establishing defined competencies to identify and assess when hiring the college educated.

NOW AVAILABLE: CAREER READINESS RESOURCES
NACE members have generously shared a variety of resources designed to support your efforts in integrating career readiness into your programs and services. You can access those materials and measurements at www.naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-resources.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers
Advancing college talent together

Established in 1956, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) is the leading source of information on the employment of the college educated.

In carrying out its mission—to lead the community of professionals focused on the employment of the college educated by providing access to relevant knowledge, resources, insight, and relationships—NACE connects more than 7,600 college career services professionals at nearly 2,000 colleges and universities nationwide, and more than 3,000 HR/staffing professionals focused on university relations and recruiting, and business affiliates who serve this community.

Among colleges and universities, NACE represents more than 50 percent of all four-year colleges and universities in the United States, and 98 percent of all research universities. Approximately 30 percent of two-year public institutions count themselves as NACE members.

On the employer side, NACE members include mid-size and large national and global organizations, ranging from Fortune 500 organizations to start-up companies to government agencies. NACE employer members represent a wide range of industries, including finance, energy, retail, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, insurance, consulting services (accounting, engineering, computer), government and nonprofits, and more.

Headquartered in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, NACE forecasts trends in the job market; tracks, analyzes, and reports on outcomes for new college graduates by discipline, degree level, and type of school through its First-Destination Survey; monitors legal issues in employment, the job search, and hiring practices; and provides college and employer professionals with professional standards as well as an ethical framework by which both groups can work together to benefit the college-educated candidate. NACE provides its members with benchmarks and metrics; research; resources, including a survey of starting salaries for new college graduates, a quarterly journal, and a biweekly newsletter; and professional development opportunities.

www.naceweb.org
62 Highland Avenue • Bethlehem, PA 18017 • Phone: 610.868.1421
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