



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The International Students' Road to Employment in the US

Traits which may give international students a unique advantage:

As a result of living in at least two different countries, most likely you offer the following traits: Willingness to learn, adaptability, ingenuity, problem solving skills, language and cultural knowledge. Be sure to highlight on your resume the ways in which you've used these strengths. List on your resume all languages, including English, in which you are fluent or proficient. Become confident in talking about how you've utilized these and other positive qualities. During college, continue to develop these and other marketable skills.

Advice from Swarthmore international alums who are employed in the US:

Get a campus job and do it well. Keep a job as long as you can. Suggestions from former International students included jobs with much "public interaction" and public speaking. Find opportunities to practice enunciating and practice reading other's reactions to your conversation. Also, the opportunity to know your supervisors well will be an advantage when asking for references and when learning of opportunities.

Get some work experience off campus, as well. Yes, this will utilize some of your Optional Practical Training allowance, but it will be invaluable in making contacts within your desired field. An internship well done gives you the opportunity to prove your ability to excel in a post-graduation position. Furthermore, former international students have found the opportunity to hone their skills in a professional environment very useful.

Keep your options open. You might consider working in another country, working in a career field with more openings, going on to graduate school, volunteering in the US if possible.

Know the H1B visa application process and be willing to explain it to an employer.

Most importantly, create a great **resume** and be able to **interview** well so the employer will want to hire YOU!

A word about employers sponsoring H1B visas:

Myvisajobs.com is a site which lists the 1000 employers which have applied for the most H1B visas over the last decade. The list is searchable by city, region, industry and job title. It is by no means an exhaustive list, just a list of the employers applying for the largest numbers of visas.

Be willing to "dig" for employers not on this list. Network with professionals in the field you'd like to enter, with Swarthmore alums who were international students and with family and friends. Read news articles about your desired industry so you're aware of organizations known for hiring international students.

If an employer has reservations about hiring an international student, the following may be some of their concerns. It costs an employer several thousand dollars to sponsor an employee's H1B visa.

Consequently, many employers will state that they do not sponsor international students. While you should take this information into account, you should also do some research. Perhaps the employer will

sponsor you if you are the “perfect” candidate for the job. Perhaps the employer is not educated about the process and assumes it’s more difficult than it really is. If you are able to explain the process, you may be able to secure sponsorship. Save this method for applications in which you are willing to put a lot of effort with possibly no result. They may be concerned that the grantee will leave for another job after getting the sponsorship. The employer may be concerned about incurring US Citizen and Immigration Services fines for improper hiring. The employer may not know how to complete the process. It may have backfired for them in the past.

What is eVerify?

You can find a list of employers who use the eVerify service on the US Citizenship and Immigration Services website. These companies are not the only employers who will verify an employees’ eligibility to work in the US. The website explains this: “E-Verify is an Internet-based system that allows companies to verify the eligibility of their employees to work in the United States. E-Verify is closely linked to Form I-9 and exists to strengthen the Form I-9 employment eligibility verification process that all employers, by law, must follow. Though all employers must verify their employees’ employment eligibility with Form I 9, participation in E-Verify is usually voluntary.”

Key Resources in the Career Services Office:

If you are still deciding on a career, Career Services offers interest, skill and personality assessments to help inform your decision.

Career Services’ website has a list of some employers which have in the past hired Swarthmore International Students. Employers’ situations may change, but it’s a helpful place to start.

<http://www.swarthmore.edu/student-life/career-services/career-resources-for-international-students.xml>

Resumes differ between countries – Career Services can help you be sure that your resume is written well for US employers.

Mock Interviews can help you become accustomed to talking about your skills and promoting yourself. Mock interviews can be video-recorded for your review.

Attend Dapper Dining to learn professional etiquette in the US. Attend the Alumni-Student Networking Dinner to connect with 40+ Swarthmore Alums. Attend International Alumni-Student Gathering to connect with alums who were international students.

When using eRecruiting in your job search, be sure to read through the qualification requirements.

Employers may indicate their work authorization requirements. If you meet those requirements, you can apply to the open positions of interest to you. As an international student, your OPT authorizes you to work for a period of 12 months (29 months if working in Science, Technology, Engineering or Math) prior to obtaining visa sponsorship. Jennifer Marks-Gold, International Student Advisor, will process your OPT paperwork and she encourages you to begin this process far in advance of your planned start date. Check with her for current regulations.



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CAREER SERVICES

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