The Working Papers

That’s a Wrap!

We are out for the Summer! See you in September.

Chapter Officers & Program Questions:
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CHAPTER SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Jonah Anderson
As the Chapter year draws to a close we acknowledge and congratulate Cal State Sacramento senior Jonah Anderson. Jonah is the recipient of the Chapter’s scholarship award.

Read Jonah’s scholarship winning essay on the following page. It is an inspiring message of perseverance.

Jonah is a senior at CSU Sacramento and anticipates a December 2016 graduation. He is a Business Administration major with an Accounting emphasis.

Jonah is an active leader in the Beta Phi Chapter of Beta Alpha Psi and is the President-elect. Beta Alpha Psi is an honor organization for financial information students and professionals. Aside from Beta Alpha Psi, Jonah has been recognized by Grant Thornton and Deloitte.
“Always remember the value of a good education. Life may get in the way of school, but it is never too late to go back.” My mother gave me this piece of advice after my high school commencement. At the time, I did not think much of this. I had just graduated ranked 6th overall in my class with a 4.2 weighted GPA. I was feeling so confident that I even semi-joked with my mother how I would finish college in less than four years.

Shortly after my graduation, my mother accepted a job offer in California. I decided to move there with her and my siblings, because I knew that I would miss my family if they left without me. Also, I knew it would be difficult for a single mother to start life over in another state. Upon arriving in California and enrolling at American River College, I was shocked at the expensive nonresident tuition rates. Financial aid was helpful, but my mother had to take out a significant amount in loans to cover my educational expenses. Growing up in a poor family meant that money was always scarce. Thus, I was grateful that she believed in me enough to invest her hard-earned money into my education.

My first year in college at ARC was a disaster. Since daycare was so expensive, I would go to school in the mornings and my mother would work the graveyard shift so that my siblings would always be taken care of. I also had difficulties adapting to this new state. This led to my first D and F grades in my academic career. I became depressed, because I felt that I wasted my mother’s money. She was patient and encouraged me to never give up my educational pursuit.

My family moved and I transferred to Cosumnes River College the following year. I did somewhat better in school in the sense that I earned mostly A’s and B’s. I had a few ideas of what I wanted to do but no clear focus. Eventually, I became stuck in the community college system and was taking classes merely as a routine. The low point of my career occurred in Fall 2010 when I took swimming, fitness, nutrition and writing. I failed the writing course. I dropped out of college after the Spring 2011 semester.

I decided to work as much as I could until I figured out what I wanted to do in life. I was on track to become a manager at Blockbuster Video until the company declared bankruptcy. After that, I eventually ended up working an average of 50 hours weekly between two jobs. The money was nice but it began to take a physical toll on my body. Some days I would be stuck in bed due to severe back pains. My turning point came after working three consecutive double shifts during one weekend and only having a total of six hours of sleep during this period. After-hours straight due to exhaustion. I working like this. I also realized career without a college educa-back work hours in order to return time student.  (continued)
What has happened to me since then? I have achieved straight A's in all of my classes and maintained a 4.0 Sac State GPA while increasing my overall cumulative GPA to a 3.441 and working part-time. I have been recognized as a DEGREES project scholar for outstanding academic achievement and obtained the Dean’s Honors List in each of my semesters at Sac State.

For three semesters I have been an active member in Beta Alpha Psi, an international honor society for Accounting, Finance and AIS majors. We have collaborated in joint events with fellow Sac State student organizations including Accounting Society and ALPFA. We have done various community service events together including Safe Rides for Sac State students, Seymour Park Clean-Up and KPMG’s Family for Literacy. I represented my Beta Phi Chapter in Project Run With It at the 2015 BAP Annual Meeting. During that time, I was part of a consulting team that helped a local Not for Profit organization in Milwaukee, WI. I also earned the Grant Thornton Ethics Award for my Beta Phi Chapter and the right to compete in the Best Practices competition at the 2016 BAP Western Regional Meeting. Currently, I am simultaneously holding two leadership positions as a Director of Awards & Competitions and as President-Elect. In Fall 2016, I will be the President of Beta Alpha Psi at Sac State.

After graduating I plan to study for and pass the CPA exam. I plan to work as an auditor for either a public accounting firm or the State of California. I have also thought about continuing my studies to obtain either an MBA or MSA. Eventually, I want to buy a house and start a family of my own.

I plan to finance my studies through financial aid by using grants and loans as a last resort. Being awarded the Institute of Internal Auditors Scholarship and not having to rely on another student loan would be a tremendous help to me.

I want to demonstrate to my brothers and sister that working hard will help them achieve their goals. I also want other students to be inspired by my story so that they will never give up on pursuing their education. Life will present numerous challenges. However, do not make these obstacles bigger by getting discouraged, because it is never too late to go back to school.
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Management Advice: 
Time For a Career Path Discussion With Your Team?

Do you spend enough time talking to your staff about their career paths? Probably not, according to a recent survey from global staffing firm Robert Half, which found many employees want to spend more time discussing their future. Of the 1,200 accounting and finance professionals polled, 93 percent said they would like to talk about their career path on a regular basis, yet 40 percent said they never have this conversation with their managers.

The benefits of career path direction
Career planning should be a vital part of any staff retention strategy. Employees are more likely to stay at a company if they feel there is a long-term plan in place for their professional future. Otherwise, they’re liable to take matters into their own hands and look for a job elsewhere.

As a manager, touch base with your staff on a regular basis to ensure they’re satisfied with their position and career path.

Frequency of career path discussions
Many employers will include career progression as part of an annual review. This may not be enough, though: 48 percent of respondents in the survey said they would like to discuss their career path quarterly or even more frequently.

How to talk about a career path
If you’re among the many managers who have never had a career path discussion with employees, or if you do so irregularly, here are some tips:

Uncover goals. Some staff members, especially those at the beginning of their professional journey, need guidance in turning their goals into a tangible career plan. As a manager, ask questions to discover what really motivates them such as: which type of work they are drawn to, if they would be interested in supervisory roles in the future and what weaknesses are holding them back. Work with your employees to define a career path that leads to clear, attainable goals.

Help them along the way. When you outline career path objectives, you undertake partial responsibility for helping employees achieve those goals. This means mentorships, training, on-the-job experience and perhaps another degree or certification. If they’re on a management track, professional development can help staff members acquire the leadership skills and general business acumen they’ll need later in their career.

Be realistic about opportunities. As with all plans or promises, you shouldn’t make them unless you think you can deliver. It’s best to be transparent and open about the opportunities that will — and will not — be available. For example, if the company won’t be able to offer reimbursement for an MBA, or if there are no senior-level vacancies expected in the next five years, be up front about it. So as to not discourage ambitious accounting professionals, talk about the opportunities you anticipate will become available.

Mix formal and informal chats. Even if you and your staff discuss their formal career plan only once a year during performance review time, you can have casual talks more often. Go out for coffee and ask how it’s going and whether they feel they’re on track to meet their goals. Take the time to show you’re interested in their career progression.

You should never experience turnover due to the lack of career planning. With the cost and time associated with recruiting new finance professionals, as well as the even greater toll of losing top talent, it’s in your best interest to prioritize career path discussions.

This article is provided courtesy of Robert Half Management Resources, the premier provider of senior-level accounting, finance and business systems professionals to supplement companies’ project and interim staffing needs. The company has more than 150 locations worldwide and offers online job search services at www.roberthalfmr.com. Follow our blog at blog.roberthalfmr.com.
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Stay tuned for additional details!

Event Dates: From September 18 – 20, 2016
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