

JOU 2303 spot news story

Taylor Dundore

549 Words

Mark and Paula Hurd Welcome Center hosted 116 employers at Baylor's spring Career Day on Tuesday.

Nerves were high as students of all majors connected with future employers and professionals in their field at Baylor University's semi-annual campus-wide career fair in the Mark & Paula Hurd Welcome Center on Tuesday.

There were thousands of students and 116 employers at the five-hour event. Staff from the Baylor University Career Center and Hurd Welcome Center student workers helped facilitate the fair and directed students.

"Even if you haven't prepared, just fight the nerves and come," Donna Sparks, a career success professional at Baylor, said. She has worked in the Career Center for over 25 years, and has been to over 100 career fairs. She has helped several students get hired through the fair, and believes they are incredibly important, because "you can show so much more in person than you can on a piece of paper."

Two former students that worked with Sparks recruited current students at the career fair, and both thanked her for the role she played in getting their current positions.

Bozeman, Montana junior Gracie James attended Career Day to look for internship opportunities. "I haven't been to a career fair in this mindset," she said.

James said talking to companies with the intention of getting an internship position is stressful. To prepare, she planned which companies she wanted to talk to, and brought copies of her resume and a pen to take notes.

Many employers brought free merchandise for the students, including food, ring lights, pens and more. Magnolia, a well-known local company represented at the fair, was offering cupcakes at their table, which James said caught her eye.

Among the 116 employers in attendance, there were companies related to business, engineering, computer science, physical therapy, health sciences and more. Each had two or three employees representing their booth and getting to know students.

Even if students are not offered a job or internship at the fair, they still have the ability to network with employers. By connecting through LinkedIn or other communication methods, students gain a connection that could be beneficial for their career goals in the future.

Baylor sophomore Sabrina Merkle attended a career fair in the past. She used the opportunity to network.

"I connected with two of the people and had lunch with them," Merkle said. Of the four employers she talked to during the fair this semester, Merkle said she was most excited about Fisher Investments, an independent money management company.

Lindsey Williams works as a client services group manager at Fisher Investments. This year was her first career fair hiring at Baylor University. She was impressed by both the welcome center and the students she had met.

Williams observed that many of the students she talked to were very proactive, prepared and ready to learn. She said her advice for students is that preparation ahead of time is as important as the conversation itself.

“Do a little bit of research,” Williams said. “Come in with questions for the representatives’ specific experiences.” She says knowing about the company beforehand helps in having a professional and productive conversation.

Career Day also required preparation for the companies. Each employer paid \$600 per table to attend the career fair and meet students.

There will be another Career Day in the Fall 2024 semester, but the date has not been finalized yet.