

Grim summer employment picture for Lincoln students

By Sigrid Peico

One UNL student spent two weeks scrounging for a job but he only found an opening as a receptionist at a beauty parlor. Maybe he better grab the job because his plight typifies the summer employment scene.

"Without any doubt" there are fewer jobs available this year than last, said Mrs. Jacque Baluch, operations manager for the Lincoln Job Service.

A Job Service of Nebraska report said the only jobs available long are low paying and/or have high requirements. The report said 43 percent require specialized education, training and experience. The figures are for Fillmore, Lancaster, Saline, Seward and York Counties.

Reflects economy

Mrs. Baluch said the situation reflects the economy. She said major companies that have laid off employees are still not hiring or just rehiring laid off workers.

The Job Service report said there were 4,760 applicants seeking work in May, an increase of 400 from April. The figure includes 200 people who want part-time jobs and slightly over 300 that need summer work.

Unemployment in Lancaster County was 6 per cent in April compared with the 3 per cent rate a year ago. A slight drop in unemployment was expected for May followed by a raise in June when students left the classrooms, said the report.

Much ingenuity

Referring to students, the report said, "Some will have to use much ingenuity in creating jobs on their own."

Jobs for college students are also "slim" at UNL, said Doug Severs, employment coordinator for UNL. The Scholarships and Financial Aids office, which lists jobs on and off campus, receives an average of 10 to 15 job openings a week compared with the 26 a week averaged last summer, he said.

Jobs that open up, he said, are usually "gone by the end of the day."

Can't find work

"I have more students coming to me and telling me they can't find work," he said.

However there may be more university jobs available with the start of the new fiscal year, July 1, he said. This is when new budgets go into effect.

Severs said that this month, with old budgets coming to an end, university departments may find themselves short of money so they are not hiring. With more money available after July 1, he said, there should be more jobs.

College has edge

Severs and Mrs. Baluch both said college students have an edge over high school students in getting jobs. Mrs. Baluch said college students have the experience and the age. Federal regulations require workers to be 18 for factory or construction jobs.

But the number of college students requesting jobs at her office is down from other years, she said. Apparently students not from Lincoln have gone home because without work they can't support themselves here, she said.

Temporary help

A spokesman for a firm providing temporary help for businesses said they have increased the number of college students they employ by about 10 per cent. These 30 to 40 students fill-in for absent or vacationing employees on an "on call" basis, she said.

Students not finding full-time jobs may have turned to this work, she said, because they decided temporary jobs were better than none.

Those \$6 and more per hour construction jobs are close this summer. One paymaster said, "We have a steady stream (of young men) coming in the door" and we have to turn them down. He said company hiring is down 75 per cent and there is hardly enough work to keep regular employees busy.

City jobs

The city management hasn't cut down on its summer employment, but those 700 jobs were filled by mid April, said Harvey Schwartz, personnel officer for Lincoln.

City summer work is usually replacing vacationing employees, he said. About 1,000 people apply every year but only 150 are hired new, he said, the rest are rehired from previous summers.

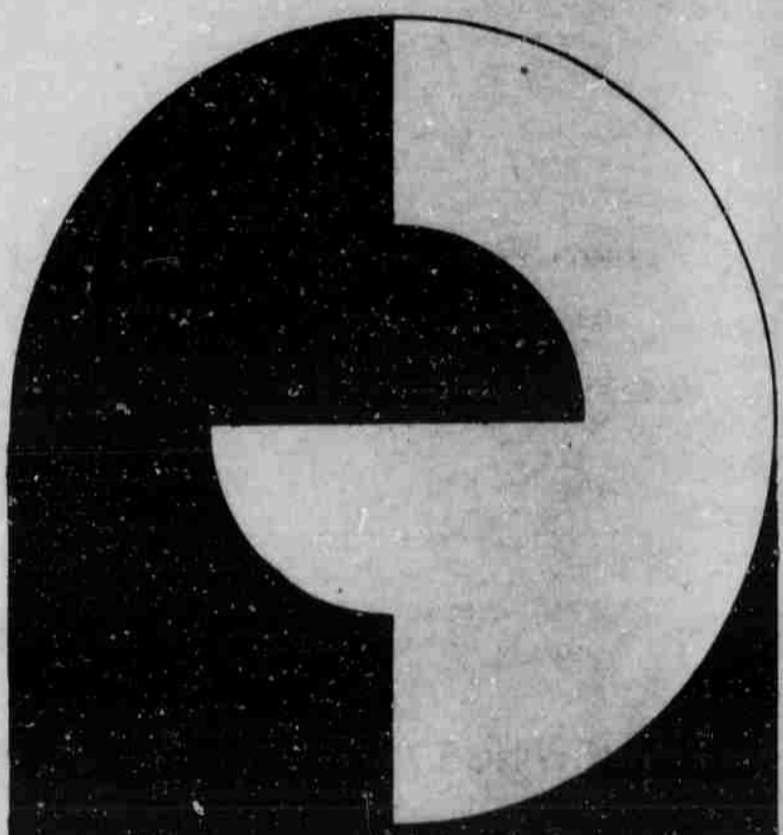
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