

Small business rewards can be worth the risk

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Staff Writer

Students at the University of West Florida and other colleges have different agendas for employment after graduation. Some already have jobs lined up, while others hope to get a job anywhere they can that is related to their field.

There are some graduates or soon-to-be graduates who have been bitten by the entrepreneurial bug and are ready to seek self-employment.

John T. Hewitt, CEO and founder of Liberty Tax Service, said his company is a good platform for those looking to work in fields such as computerized tax preparation. A franchise company, Hewitt said, is a way to gain experience before completely going out on your own.

This kind of company generally seeks out recent accounting or finance graduates to open up their own tax service. Liberty Tax Service offers advice and lends financial support to candidates who have the drive and education, but not the resources to start out on their own.

"We are looking for emerging entrepreneurs who are motivated to start their own business," Hewitt said.

Many college students get their

experience as they are getting a degree. They use this experience and education to finally take the steps necessary to go out on their own.

John Peacock, owner and head broker for the Edward Jones investment office in Pensacola, completed college while in the U. S. Navy. He received degrees in nuclear technology along with completing an accredited asset management specialist program.

"My work experience in the nuclear field as a consultant has helped with sales experience necessary as an investment representative," Peacock said.

With the fluctuation of the economy and so many people trying to make it on their own, Peacock said those who own small businesses in Pensacola have to fight through good times and bad.

"There is a lot of psychology in investing," he said. "People tend to invest more when the economy is good, although that is not necessarily the best time to do it."

Peacock said that being the decision maker and being able to run the business the way you want are both pros and cons of being a business owner.

According to the United States

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John Peacock, owner and head broker,
Edward Jones investment office

Small Business Administration, success in small business is never automatic, and it is not based solely on desire or luck. Preplanning and organization are keys to increasing your chances of making your business a long-term venture.

Unfortunately, the odds of success are against most who try. According to the USSBA, more than 50 percent of small businesses fail in the first year, and 95 percent fail within 5 years.

Michael Ames, author of the book "Small Business Management," said there are some primary reasons why businesses fail.

"Underestimating the difficulty of starting a business is one of the biggest obstacles entrepreneurs face," Ames said. "Some of the most common reasons they don't make it are the lack of experience, insufficient capital (money), poor location

and bad inventory management."

Peacock said he understands this. But if college graduates do not take any kind of chance, they might be stuck in the ranks of big business and burn out, and maybe even question their field of study, he said.

"It is very important to realize that to get ahead in life, you need to take a moderate amount of risk," he said. "The old saying 'you can't steal second with your foot still on first' is very true."

"Opportunities abound and it is important to take them. Too many people pass up opportunities that are lost forever."

Not all small businesses are the same. Some vary in the amount of responsibility put on any single person. UWF graduate Kenneth Lamb owns and operates Cybersmart Computer and Networking and carries almost all of the load and deci-

sion making in his business. Others have spread the accountability. LeAnn, Tom, and Wenda Sullivan, also UWF graduates, help each other successfully operate Sullivan Pharmacy in Pace.

According to the USSBA, there are no guarantees for big companies in the corporate world, much less small, one-man operations. There is simply no way to eliminate all of the risks associated with starting a small business.

The drive to be one's own boss is strong for many people. Some of those who graduate college enter an area of self-employment completely unrelated to their field of study.

Brandon Holcomb owns a small, but growing, pool construction business in Pensacola. He graduated from UWF recently with a degree in history education. Holcomb decided the money offered as a history teacher was insufficient for him to remain in Pensacola. Instead of moving, he decided to start a business.

"A lot of the economy in Pensacola is built on small business," Holcomb said. "In my business, housing contractors build their houses year round, and they need pools for those houses year round."

One significant benefit to own-

ing his own business for Holcomb is the income potential. When business is available, Holcomb can make very good money. However, he said, if he does not oversee his crew or do the work himself, the work does not get done.

"If you want to work hard, you can make as much money as you want," Holcomb said. "You don't have somebody telling you what to do. You're the boss."

Holcomb said that anyone can be a small business owner, but it takes a special kind of person to actually stay in business for a long time. In his field of work, Holcomb has seen entrepreneurs and partnerships come and go with people who have the dreams, but not the discipline or willingness to sacrifice.

"When you first start, you work five or six days a week, 12 to 14 hours a day for any small business to work," Holcomb said.

When it comes to making it on your own and retaining your sanity, a person has to keep all aspects of his life in focus, he said.

"You have to juggle your time between family and work," Holcomb said. "Money isn't everything. There's a balance between having money and having a life."

IHMC researching plans for downtown convention center

Andrew Kilgo
Sports Editor

The Institute for Human and Machine Cognition has been growing in notoriety since its establishment in 1990. What began as a research unit of the University of West Florida has become one of the nation's premier research institutes in the United States.

Recently the IHMC's services were sought by the city of Pensacola at a cost of \$200,000 for a project to explore the future of the Pensacola Historic District. The main focus was the city's interest in demolishing the aging Bayfront Auditorium and replacing it with a park.

The plan would then proceed to constructing a new convention center near the Pensacola Civic Center.

IHMC Director Ken Ford, who was recently selected by President Bush to serve as a member of the National Science Board, told the Pensacola News Journal that he thought the idea was very sophisticated.

The city's principal hope is that this project would help spur the downtown revitalization effort. In a previous attempt at demolishing the Bayfront Auditorium, voters elected to block the city's revitalization plan.

Even Charles Fairchild, who led the group that pushed for the referendum against the previous attempt, said he supports the idea. "It makes sense to me," Fairchild told the Pensacola News Journal. "In my mind, it's synergy."

The ideas and drawings for the project were prepared by prominent urban planner Ray Gindroz. So far, most people who have seen the plans are excited by Gindroz's plan to connect neighborhoods, enhance parks, slow down traffic and add residential developments to the city.

The Gindroz plan also called for significant changes in the traffic in and around the Pensacola Civic Center. He proposes to change the name of Bayfront Parkway to Bayfront Park — which means exactly that. He

wants to make the road two lanes instead of four lanes, so that the historic neighborhood residents will have better access to Pensacola Bay.



Ford

Gindroz said the parkway originally was planned for a 25 mph speed limit, but it is designed for vehicles to go 55-60 mph.

The plan also calls for the adjusting of the existing off-ramp to remove the loop around the Pensacola Civic Center.

This would remove the need for motorists to complete U-turns so that they can get from the Interstate Highway 10 to the Alcaniz Street area and the Historic District.

The IHMC Historic District project study will conclude by the end of the year.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The University of West Florida Activity & Service, Athletic and Health Fees
Revised Fee Proposal for 2004-2005

Florida statutes (240.235) require that each state university in Florida establish a separate Activity and Service Fee, Athletic Fee and Health Fee. The Activity and Service Fee and Athletic Fee Committees make the following recommendations beginning Fall semester, 2004:

FEE	PROPOSED AMOUNT	COMMENT
•Activity & Service	\$8.75 per credit hour	Increase of \$.50 per credit hour over 2003-2004 fee
•Athletic	\$12.05 per credit hour	Increase of \$.45 per credit hour over 2003-2004 fee
•Health	\$3.19 per credit hour (main campus only)	Increase of \$.19 per credit hour over 2003-2004

The net impact of these proposed fees would be to increase the registration fees beginning Fall semester, 2004 of each student by \$1.14 for each credit hour taken. The Committee recommendations will take effect upon approval by the University president and final approval by the Board of Trustees.

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Mystery meat, communal bathrooms, your roommate's hygiene habits.

(College life is full of surprises; your checking account shouldn't be one of them.)

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From the files of the UWF Police Department

Compiled by Chris Louie and Andy Pennebaker

Alcohol Violation

On Nov. 4, 2003, a male UWF student was issued a student referral for being intoxicated under the age of 21.

A University police officer was completing a building check at approximately 3:19 a.m. when the student walked in the front doors of Martin Hall.

The officer reported that he opened the door for the student and noticed that the student was unable to walk without swaggering. The officer also reported that the student's eyes were glassy and blood shot and that he smelled of alcohol. The student was 19 years old.

Harassing E-mail

On Nov. 3, 2003, a female UWF student reported receiving an unidentified and offensive e-mail on Oct. 30. She said she did not know how to perceive the e-mail. She said that she feels slightly threatened but feels confident about her security.

The University advised the victim to use the campus escort service. The victim stated that she has had no prior involvement circumstances or difficulties that would warrant her receiving harassing or offensive e-mail.

Trespassing

On Nov. 1, 2003, four juveniles were issued trespass warnings for the entire campus. A University police officer reported that he saw four white males in front of the library.

They attempted to conceal themselves around the columns on the front steps of the library. The four turned and ran when the officer attempted to check them out further.

The boys were apprehended at Building 27 and all of them stated that they thought they would get into trouble because they were skateboarding on campus. The officer completed a check of local warrants for the four males but there were no results. Each of the males were issued trespass warnings for the entire campus and then released.

Warrant Service

On Oct. 28, 2003, a female UWF student was arrested at the southeast entrance to Building 54 for an outstanding warrant. The warrant for her arrest had been issued by the Pensacola Police Department in June 2003.

The warrant was for petit theft. The student was taken from Building 54 and was taken to the Escambia County Jail to be served the warrant. The arrestee said she was not aware of any warrant for her arrest.