

Essex County College  
Office of Institutional Effectiveness,  
Planning and Assessment

# 2024 Alumni Survey Executive Report

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## **Introduction:**

The Essex County College (ECC) Alumni Survey is administered three times a year by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Assessment (IEPA), to graduates who conferred their degrees in the prior fiscal year. Summer 2022 graduates were surveyed in October, 2023, Fall 2022 graduates in February, 2024, and Spring 2023 graduates in June, 2024. Data from all three graduating cohorts were combined. This year, the Office of IEPA revised the survey to add questions on demographics and the job search process.

## **Methodology:**

This survey was distributed via email through Qualtrics to all students that graduated from ECC in fiscal year 2023. The survey consists of multiple-choice questions, fill in the blank questions and open-ended comment sections. In the the Fall 2022 administration, questions on student demographics and major were added. Employed graduates were asked questions about their current job such as the salary, the office location, how they found the job, etc. The unemployed and looking group were asked about the kinds of jobs that they are applying to, how long they have been looking and what challenges they faced. The group that is not employed and not looking is asked why they decided to not seek employment. This survey was sent out to 1,027 graduates and 61 responses were received, yielding a 5.9% response rate.

## Results

This year, 72% of participants were employed and 28% were unemployed. This was a decline from 2023 (see Figure 1). Participants (Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 graduates) were asked if they have used ECC's Career Services: 12% reported yes and 88% reported no. Of those who said yes, 80% reported these services as helpful. Of those who have not used the career center, 69% reported they did not know it existed, 14% did not think it would be helpful, and 17% did not have time.

### Employed Participants:

Of the participants that were employed, the majority (64%) were employed full-time, matching last year's full-time employment rate. Of those that reported that they were employed, 38% found their job after graduation. The rest found employment before entering ECC (32%) or while at ECC (30%).

These participants were asked to select all the ways that their program of study at Essex helped them with; 57% of participants reported that it helped their job performance, 34% reported that it helped them to advance in their current job, and 38% reported that it helped them to obtain a job. When participants were asked how they found their current job, "friend or relative" was the most common response (61%), followed by "other" (34%), "newspaper or online advertisement" (14%), and "ECC Office of Student Development and Counseling/Career Services" (6%). Of those who reported "other" and asked to specify, responses included ECC professors, LinkedIn, and other job forums. The majority of participants are employed in Essex County (61%). Another 25% are employed outside Essex County but in New Jersey, 3% are in the tri-state area (NY, PA, CT), and 11% reported "other".

Figure 1: Employment Rate One Year Post-Graduation

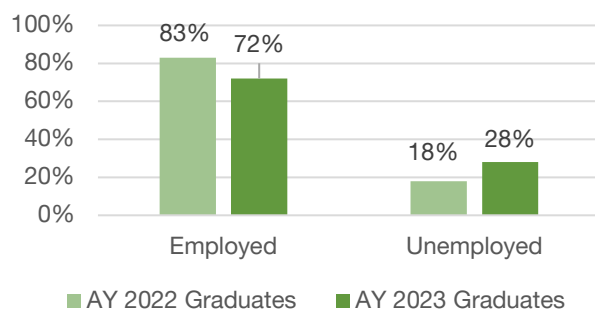
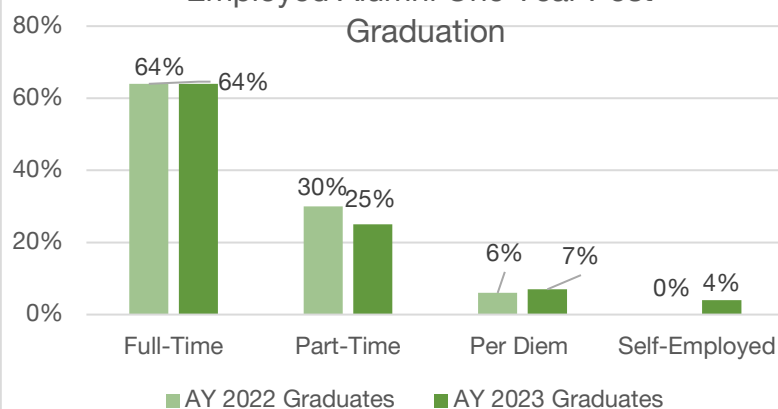


Figure 2: Type of Employment Among Employed Alumni One Year Post-Graduation



### **Unemployed Participants:**

In 2024, of the unemployed respondents, 76% were looking for a job and 24% were not looking. This is similar to what alumni reported last year with only a 3% difference (more participants not looking for a job.)

Those who responded that they were unemployed and looking for a job were asked a series of questions about their job search. This group of participants were applying to jobs in various fields. The majority of participants were looking for jobs in New Jersey (62%) with 23% looking specifically in Essex County. These participants were asked what their biggest challenge was in regards to finding employment. Responses included issues with resume building, lack of English-speaking skills, lack of experience, and finding the right fit for their career goals. We also asked this group of participants what they thought ECC could've done better to prepare them for their job search. The most common responses included more internship and networking opportunities.

For those who reported they were unemployed but not looking for a job, the majority cited that they went back to school (60%).

### **Conclusion**

The majority of our participants were employed with the most common type of employment being full-time. However, the percentage of employment has decreased since the year prior. ECC can improve by adding more internship and networking opportunities to students while they are still an enrolled student.