

Parlez-Vous Paycheck?

YOU'VE HEARD THE FACTS: In 1996, there will be almost half a million more college graduates entering the U.S. job market than new jobs, and nearly one-third of those graduates are expected to take positions that don't require a college degree.

TRIPPIN'

But a rapidly increasing number of students are able to get away from these statistics. Thousands of miles away, actually.

The Council on International Educational Exchange estimates the popularity of working overseas increased by 25 percent last year. The daunting task of finding work outside the United States has been simplified in recent years by a variety of new student-friendly programs — some by religious organizations, some through the U.S. government and still others through community service organizations.

Will Cantrell, editor of the monthly newsletter International Employment Hotline, says it's toughest to find jobs in the popular countries, like Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

"Most of the action is in the developing world," Cantrell says. "Industrialized areas already have a vast reservoir of qualified applicants."

Employers in most countries

must prove there is not a single resident competent for a job before they can secure a permanent work permit for a foreigner. So in Europe your competition for a permanent job is, well, everyone in Europe.

Kevin Kotelly, a recent Northeastern U., Mass., grad, didn't turn his six-month civil engineering internship in Dublin into a permanent position there but did land a job upon returning to the States.

"What distinguishes my experience is that I was able to actually work in my field," Kotelly says. "My friends who went abroad all ended up working in a bar or something."

According to Paul Feltman, program director of CIEE, only 25 percent of the 6,000 students and recent graduates it set up with abroad opportunities last year landed résumé-worthy jobs. But many want it that way.

"Even office career types who find professional work abroad often get a second service-industry job," Feltman says. "Not for the money but to meet people their own age, to help get into the scene."

For easy access to an overseas job, think classrooms and keyboards. Teaching English is a popular job for students because some programs don't even require knowledge of the native language or teaching experience.

Computer know-how will also land you on the fast track.

"If you have extensive computer skills, you can find an office job practically anywhere, even in Britain," Feltman says.

Students are warned to plan ahead, though.

"Some people go overseas expecting to find work like they're job hunting in Kansas," Cantrell says. "It's just not that easy."

James Hibberd, U. of Texas, Austin / Illustration by Eric Meroia, East Carolina U.



Amusement Parks Unmasked

WORKING AT AN AMUSEMENT park isn't just a summer of free rides. Students compare their jobs at theme parks to a marriage (the long hours and dedication) or to football season (intensive training, then practice every day).

Getting the job isn't difficult. "You just have to have some personality," says Jennifer Sturiale, a Duke U. senior who played Chip, of Chip and Dale, at Disney World. But once you get into the costume, there's a lot to remember.

You can't autograph currency or flags, not can you take pictures with people holding alcohol, Sturiale says. "And you have to make sure both of your hands show, so people can't say, 'Look, Goofy was grabbing my butt!'"

There's also the problem of keeping the costume on.

DOLLARS

"Once when I was doing Minnie Mouse, my bloomers just fell right down," says Amy Herrington, a freshman at Georgia Southern U. who's worked five seasons as a Disney character.

Jennifer Flinn, a senior at the U. of Texas, Austin, who worked at Six Flags for four years, once helped put a fake cockroach in the head of a colleague's costume. "He freaked and ripped his head off!"

Losing your head is a major faux pas. "[Who's behind the mask is] totally top secret — the best kept secret in the park," Flinn says.

Disney demands the "24-hour smile," as do many parks.

"When people come to Disney World, they expect everything to be perfect," Herrington says. "One time this guy actually yelled at me because of the prices."

But not everyone treats you badly. The friendships are the No. 1 reason people come back to their summer jobs.

"There's something about working with 2,000 people your age that's really appealing," says Jenni Mineck, a senior at James Madison U., Va., who has worked at Busch Gardens for five years.

And if you put all these college students together, Flinn says, romance is bound to happen. Six Flags tried to avoid this by forbid-

ding co-workers to date. Flinn's second year, however, the rule was dissolved. "It went haywire, and everybody got together," Flinn says.

Guests as well as employees find parks erotic (this summer *Glamour* magazine touted roller coaster rides as the best new place to do it).

"I'm sure sex has been had in every area of the park," Flinn says.

All in all, it's a pretty good summer job.

"I'm making money and doing what I like," says Bill Dunn, an Ohio State U. senior who plays trumpet at Busch Gardens. "It's better than flipping burgers."

Sturiale was offered a full-time job at Disney World, but she turned it down. She got sick of smiling.

"I lived, breathed and ate Disney World the entire summer," Sturiale says. "I O.D.'ed."



Wendy Anne Grossman, Duke U.

The 24-hour smile.



Jennifer Sturiale Chips In at Disney World.