The Student Newsletter — Woodmont College

Message from the President

Dear Students,

It is with great pleasure that we introduce our inaugural Woodmont College Student Newsletter.

We envision this newsletter as a platform to connect the broader Woodmont Community by providing continuous professional development resources and serving as a forum for you to share your knowledge and experiences with our students. We realize that a career is a journey and we are proud to have set you on the path to success while continuing to support you along the way.

We strive to share the voices, ingenuity and accomplishments of our students and faculty from their viewpoint and to celebrate their achievements. We invite you to reach out to us to share your wisdom and successes so that we can further our aim of empowering our students to build relationships and form life-long connections.

I am excited for the continued opportunity to work with our Board, faculty and staff to continue on our mission of making a difference in the lives of our students and the Woodmont Community.

Bracha V'Hatzlacha,

Rabbi Dr. Herschel Reichman,
President, Woodmont College

Faculty Spotlight
Professor Rina Schwartz

Woodmont College Interviews Professor Rina Schwartz, Department of Computer Science

Professor Schwartz graduated University of Phoenix and Carlow College (Pittsburgh, PA) with an MS in Computer Information Systems Management. Professor Schwartz first started teaching in the late 1980s when she taught Meteorology in the US Navy for many years. Later, Professor Schwartz taught high school and college-level classes in Computers and Spanish. Before working as a teacher, she worked as a Business Systems Analyst for a major hospital system in Pittsburgh, PA.

1. Tell us a little bit about your background and your life.

I am an Israeli-American Orthodox Jew currently living in Biloxi, Mississippi where I teach cybersecurity for the US Air Force. I began teaching at Woodmont College when it was founded in 2012.

I actually have two professions: cybersecurity professional and college professor. The Navy got me interested in teaching when I was 20 years old, and I'm not quite certain why I became interested in cybersecurity. I guess I kind of drifted there over the years.

2. Why did you choose to major in the technology field?

I studied computers upon my rabbi's advice as I was a single mom and I needed a good job.

3. Do you think your degree was instrumental in finding a job and did it impact the level of your salary?

Somewhat, yes. I think that my salary is based more on my skills than the fact that I have degrees. In the beginning, the degrees helped me break into the working world, but in the field of cybersecurity, one's level of skill/ability is more important than the degree.

4. There are many free resources available online to learn coding. Do you think a tech degree gives you a competitive edge?

I think the degree can be helpful if you can actually DO something when you have earned it. A lot of courses I took in college did not benefit me as far as employment goes, but it DEFINITELY made me a more well-rounded person.

5. Are there any courses outside of the core courses that are particularly useful for technology majors?

It depends on what one wants to do. I think that some of the coding bootcamps and tech certification courses are very useful. Any certification from SANS is very valuable. CompTIA certifications, particularly Security+ are very important.

6. Describe a day in your life. How do you straddle the work/life balance?

I get up at 4am to be at work by 6am, and I leave work at 4pm. I come home, have dinner, spend some leisure time, and then check on my Woodmont College courses. Sunday is Woodmont College work all day. I study Russian with a private teacher online, so my hour of lessons every Sunday is a break from my usual work.

7. What challenges did you face when you first entered the tech world?

The glass ceiling was quite evident when I first started in technology. I wasn't promoted when I should have been, because I was a woman and wasn't a member of the "old boys' club, although I had better qualifications and more experience. So I knew it was time to leave and I'm happy I did. B'h I don't encounter these problems anymore in my work for the Air Force.

8. What lessons have you learned?

Never sell yourself short. Never give up- remember why you started! You will get out of something exactly what you put into it. There are no shortcuts.

9. What advice & tips would you offer for those entering the tech field?

Expect to have to prove yourself. Don't make excuses- about anything. Your boss won't care why you're late. DO not be late. Period. As a professor, I accept late assignments, probably more than I should. Students should not expect future bosses to be so accommodating. The real world is not like college. Don't rely on a degree alone. Spend time taking outside courses and work towards professional certifications. If you want to be good at something, practice, practice, practice.

Alumni Spotlight
Sury (Schlisselfeld) Schwartz

Woodmont College Graduate, Jan. 2021, BS Computer Information Management

1. What inspired you to become a developer and what do you enjoy most about it?

When I finished seminary and had to choose a career, computer programming seemed like a good choice as I've always enjoyed solving math equations and trying to figure things out logically. In addition, I wanted to enter a field that was flexible and that would allow me to work remotely.

2. Why did you ultimately choose Woodmont College to pursue your degree?

We looked around at a few different options and Woodmont College seemed to have all the benefits I wanted. Even though I'm from the NY area, it was still way more convenient to attend college online, instead of wasting time traveling to school. Another big plus was that Woodmont College was a frum school which meant the academic schedule was designed around the Jewish calendar and I could relate to the students and professors. There was no need to start explaining bout all the yomim tovim and how you wouldn't be able to make it to class on those days.

3. What hard skills (languages) and soft skills have you found most important in the workplace?

I was drawn to a more front-end programming job. I use HTML & CSS, PHP and Java

Script on a daily basis. But it certainly helps that I learned other languages as I'm able to communicate ideas and solutions with my teammates and other developers.

4. Tell us about a tech project you've worked on since graduation that you found both challenging and gratifying.

I work for a company that develops and maintains various websites for a broad range of clientele. We create websites for health agencies, real estate companies, private schools and really anyone who likes our work. Chaim V'Chessed and Belz are two major clients of ours, and it was a very rewarding feeling when it was finally time to launch their sites. https://chaimvchessed.com https://worldofbelz.org

5. In what ways have you found being a developer working well with your current lifestyle stage and in what ways has it been a challenge? How have you overcome that?

I don't know of any other field that is so flexible. I'm b'h married with a baby and have never felt challenged in the workspace. I work remotely and can pretty much work whenever I want which is very convenient when juggling a family and housework.

6. In what way do you feel that completing a degree online helped prepare you for the workplace?

Attending college online was a great preparation for entering the remote workforce. Since I work from home, it could have been a big adjustment, but I had already gotten myself into the mindset of managing time, meeting deadlines, and working independently.

7. What key takeaways and experiences from the Woodmont College tech program have you found to be the most helpful for you in your career path?

There were many homework assignments/projects that we had to work on throughout the college program. There were some that were complex, yet very rewarding when I managed to complete them successfully. Working in the programming field, there are often times when I'm stuck and not sure where the code went wrong. I've learnt to persevere and I usually end up figuring it out.

8. What advice would you give current students at Woodmont just starting or completing their degree?

For someone who's just starting out in the program- take advantage! Woodmont has a lot to offer and make use of it. Never be afraid to ask questions. Yes, if you are overwhelmed at certain times, it is normal- you're learning a lot in just over a year. It's important to do all the homework; avoid cutting corners. It's the only way to learn and it pays off in the end.

For someone completing their degree- It might be hard to break in at the beginning, but with time and effort you'll get there. When applying for jobs, network with people who work at companies you would like to apply to, and see if they could put in a good word for you. Don't be focused as much on the salary as on the end gains. Try to work on projects and build a portfolio so you can present yourself as skilled and competent. Experience is the key and that's what most employers look for.

A THREE-STEP FORMULA TO
Snagging your Dream Job
By Tzvi Broker
CAREER COUNSELOR AT WOODMONT COLLEGE

PART 1

STEP 1 - Know What Jobs to Apply For

The first step to writing a compelling resume, developing an engaging networking pitch and creating a strategic interview plan is to know the range of jobs you want to apply for.

So, how is this done?

Build on your skill set and previous experience. At the same time, don't pigeonhole yourself into a specific job title or position. Job titles may mean different things depending on the company size and culture. If this is your first job, be open to taking a less ideal job that has the potential for you to advance or at least get relevant experience on your resume.

STEP 2 - How To Prepare a Compelling Resume

With research showing that the average resume is glanced at for 6 seconds, your resume must be optimally designed to avoid your hard work ending up in the trash.

Here are the secrets that serious job seekers use:

- Make your resume relevant for the job you are applying for. Using a cookie cutter resume gives hiring managers the impression that you're simply lazy.

- Resumes today are best described as tailored advertisements. Use your 'big print' wisely by treating every line on your resume as prime real estate reserved for the most relevant information for the job you are applying for.

- Start your resume with a powerful professional summary that gives a caption of why you are perfect for this job and how your experience makes you a natural candidate. Here's an example template to adapt:

  Passionate, driven project manager with expertise in ….. Specializing in…. With xyz results.

- Then use the work experience section of the resume to tell the narrative of how you became who you are through your accomplishments. Even if you don't have direct experience in your desired field, learn the art of presenting transferable soft skills you've used in any previous employment. Examples are problem solving or collaborating to meet a goal. Make each statement engaging, concise and clear to what results you achieved.

Tzvi Broker is a Career Coach with 10 years of experience providing career services to individuals, colleges, and organizations within the Jewish community. He runs workshops on career development and work engagement for companies, conferences, organizations, and schools worldwide. Tzvi's goal as Career Counselor for Woodmont College is to transition students from 'education' into the workforce through strategic guidance on building a resume and LinkedIn profile and the mindset needed to find their next opportunity.

News & Updates

Internships

Woodmont College is excited about its new innovative Tech Internship Program to help our students break into the tech industry.

The Woodmont College internship initiative provides advanced students and recent graduates with the opportunity to apply for a three-month unpaid internship at a technology-based company or organization. Most positions are remote and include working alongside a supervisor at the company who provides direction and mentorship. Sifra digital, a software and mobile application company based in Jerusalem currently works in conjunction with Woodmont College. Interns have also been placed at a Bet Shemesh based startup.

- **How does it work? (cost, timeline, application process…)**

Interested students must fill out an internship application form. Students then meet on the phone or over Zoom with the Technology Coordinator, Leora Waldman, as well as with our Career Counselor, Tzvi Broker, to assess their specific strengths and needs regarding
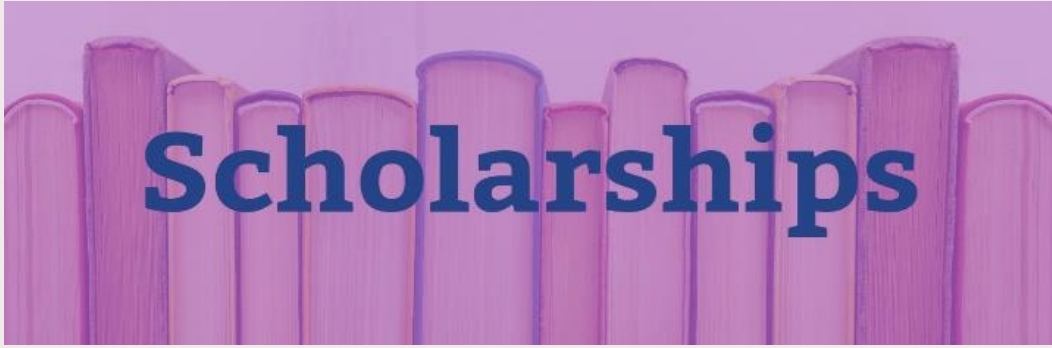
placement, and to prepare them for the internship application process.

- **How can I receive an application form or inquire further about the program?**

Contact Elisheva Steinhart at: student.services@woodmontcollege.edu to receive an internship application form.

- **I'm already gainfully employed. How can I bring great talent to my company while helping recent Woodmont graduates find internships?**

Please reach out to us at: alumni@woodmontcollege.edu and we'll set up a call to explain more details of the program, understand the tech needs of your company and guide you through the process of clarifying with your company if they're interested in this amazing opportunity.

In addition to the scholarships that Woodmont College offers, there may be external scholarship opportunities you may qualify for. Note that these scholarships are not managed by Woodmont. Please contact the specific organizations directly if you have questions.

Tech Scholarships for Undergraduates-

Name	Amount	Deadline
[Betty Stevens-Frecknall Scholarship](#)	$2000 - Varies	May 1, 2023 Check website for new application availability
[The Gladys Carol Scholarship ProgramUS](#)	Up to $5000	March 31, 2023 Check website for new application availability
[Generation Google Scholarship](#)	Up to $10000	Applications open in 2023. Check websi for deadline
[Microsoft Tuition Scholarship Application](#)	Up to $5000	Jan 31, 2023

We love hearing from our Students!

We invite you to share any suggestions, updates or accomplishments. If there's a topic you'd like to see covered in a future issue or if you'd like to be interviewed for our Student & Alumni Spotlight Column, please reach out to us at: alumni@woodmontcollege.edu