

University of the District of Columbia Foundation:

Growth Industries Employment Opportunities Study

Prepared by
Altus Advisory Partners
August 2013

Executive Summary

Altus Advisory Partners was engaged by the UDC Foundation on a project, which is part of a larger strategic planning effort at the university, to understand the skills and abilities that local employers seek in recent bachelor's degree graduates, and what the university should be doing to better prepare its students to be competitive in the regional job market. This will give the UDC Board, Administration, and Faculty concrete objectives as they realign UDC's academic programming, and, ultimately, help to bring the local employers into genuine partnership with UDC.

Meetings were held with regional employers and civic leaders to gain insights on ways that UDC can better align its curriculum and skills training with employer needs, and, thus, improve graduating-student employment outcomes. Important employers were identified in each of the seven economic sectors highlighted in the *Five-Year Economic Development Strategy for the District of Columbia* published in November 2012. Those sectors are Federal Government and Federal Contractors, Professional Services, Technology, Hospitality, Retail, Real Estate and Construction, Education and Health Care. Altus met with 74 people from 44 organizations over three months. Most meetings were in person and typically lasted 45-60 minutes. While there were specific questions that were asked, the format was an open-ended, conversational interview, which allowed for better information gathering. In addition to employers and civic leaders, Altus met with some members of the UDC Trustee and UDC Foundation boards, and senior administrators at the university to better understand the challenges and opportunities at UDC.

Although there are many who are critical of UDC, based on past experience, there is much reason to be hopeful of support from the regional employer community. Many employers who participated in this project expressed willingness, and, in some cases, eagerness to work with UDC to develop academic programs that will produce qualified candidates for the positions they need filled. The report identifies and makes recommendations for specific curricular opportunities in each of the sectors included in the project. In addition to industry specific recommendations, there are general recommendations based on suggestions from employers across industries to help UDC improve graduate employment outcomes.

In the interviews, there were several reasons employers expressed for developing a closer relationship with UDC: the ability to find good local talent who wish to remain in the area; building a more diverse workforce; a desire to support the local public university. UDC should capitalize on these strengths in engaging with employers.

The final section of this report focuses on the next steps, and ways for UDC to move forward based on the information presented in this report. Frameworks for prioritizing the recommendations are offered. UDC has tremendous opportunity if the university is willing to make the changes and do the hard work to build what the employer market seeks and needs. As the university leadership develops its strategic plan, the prioritization of opportunities against competing institutional demands will be an important factor, but, based on the employer interviews, all of the suggestions in this report are important to building a well-regarded, successful university that serves the needs of the local community.

Section 1 Project Background

Mandate for UDC

The University of the District of Columbia ("UDC") faces a "right-sizing" mandate from the District of Columbia Mayor and City Council. To meet this challenge UDC initiated a strategic planning process focused on three main objectives: reducing costs; articulating a practical, sustainable academic plan and programs; and diversifying its revenue streams. UDC noted that it *must ensure more effective and efficient operations, and focus on programs aligned with employment needs in the District and the region.*

Purpose of this Project

Altus Advisory Partners was engaged by the UDC Foundation on a project, which is part of the larger strategic planning effort at the university, to understand the skills and abilities that local employers seek in recent bachelor’s degree graduates, and what the university should be doing to better prepare its students to be competitive in the regional job market. This will give the UDC Board, Administration, and Faculty concrete objectives as they realign UDC's academic programming, and, ultimately, help to bring the local employers into genuine partnership with UDC.

Project Approach

Meetings were held with regional employers and civic leaders to gain insights on ways that UDC can better align its curriculum and skills training with employer needs, and, thus, improve graduating-student employment outcomes. Important employers were identified in each of the seven economic sectors highlighted in the *Five-Year Economic Development Strategy for the District of Columbia* published in November 2012. Those sectors are Federal Government and Federal Contractors, Professional Services, Technology, Hospitality, Retail, Real Estate and Construction, Education and Health Care. Altus met with 74 people from 44 organizations over three months. Most meetings were in person and typically lasted 45-60 minutes. While there were specific questions that were asked, the format was an open-ended, conversational interview, which allowed for better information gathering. In addition to employers and civic leaders, Altus met with some members of the UDC Trustee and UDC Foundation boards, and senior administrators and staff at the university to better understand the challenges and opportunities at UDC.

Project interviews

Industry or Group	Number of Organizations	People Interviewed
Federal Government & Contractors	4	5
Professional Services	9	12
Education & Health Care	9	20
Hospitality	4	5
Technology	4	4
Retail	2	4
Real Estate & Construction	6	8
Civic Leaders	5	5
DC Government	1	1
UDC Board		2
UDC Foundation Board		2
UDC Administration/Staff		6
Total	44	74

The following report represents the findings and recommendations resulting from these meetings. Altus Advisory Partners thanks the UDC community for this opportunity to serve them.

Section 2 Project Context

The following report will discuss the needs and suggestions of employers in the important industries of the city and region, employer perceptions of UDC, and suggestions of how UDC can better serve the needs of the employer community in the area.

Higher Education Market Drivers Context

In the past several decades the general student sentiment about why they attend college has changed. Over the last 60 years, the Gallup organization has polled college students about why they attend college. From the 60's into the late 80's, the number one response was, "to develop a personal philosophy of life." Today, the number one response is, "to find a good job," and the number two response is, "to make more money." Only a small percentage of graduates list developing a personal philosophy of life today. While finding students jobs has never been part of the stated mission of most universities, in recent years, because of the economy and the focus on a "return on investment" for college tuition, universities are discovering that getting their graduates jobs is mission critical. Parents, students, and state and federal governments are all more focused on outcomes as they assess a financial investment in higher education. In order to remain a relevant choice for higher learning, UDC must show that its curriculum prepares graduates for good jobs and teaches the skills needed to build successful careers.

Regional Economic Context

The seven economic sectors covered in the interviews for this report comprise almost ninety percent of the jobs in Washington, DC.

Economic Sectors and Associated Jobs in Washington, DC

Industry	Estimated District Jobs	% of Total District Jobs
Federal Government & Contractors	209,700	28%
Professional Services	146,500	20%
Higher Education & Health Care	163,300	22%
Hospitality	63,500	9%
Technology	21,310	3%
Retail	19,000	3%
Real Estate & Construction	24,400	3%
Total	647,710	88%

Source: The Five-Year Economic Development Strategy for the District of Columbia, Estimated from DC Economic and Revenue Trends, DC Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO).

The economic growth of in the District has been stronger than most metro areas in the last several years, growing by 6.7% between the first quarter of 2004 and the first quarter of 2012. In its *Five-Year Economic Development Strategy*, the District of Columbia suggests that, if the vision they lay out in the plan is achieved, it will create 100,000 new jobs over the next five years, which translates into employment growth of 2.5% annually during that period. As the public university of the District, UDC could be well positioned to help its students take advantage of this job market strength. However, the university will need to make significant changes in order to prepare and position its students for these opportunities.

UDC’s location in the nation’s capital allows its students to take advantage of the thriving business, federal and local government, and association and non-profit communities for internships and full-time employment. By developing relationships with employers and targeting academic programs that meet employer needs and local opportunities, UDC can focus its limited resources and create the highest value for the institution and its students, and thereby improve its reputation in the community, deliver better employment opportunities for graduates, and begin to draw more students to the university.

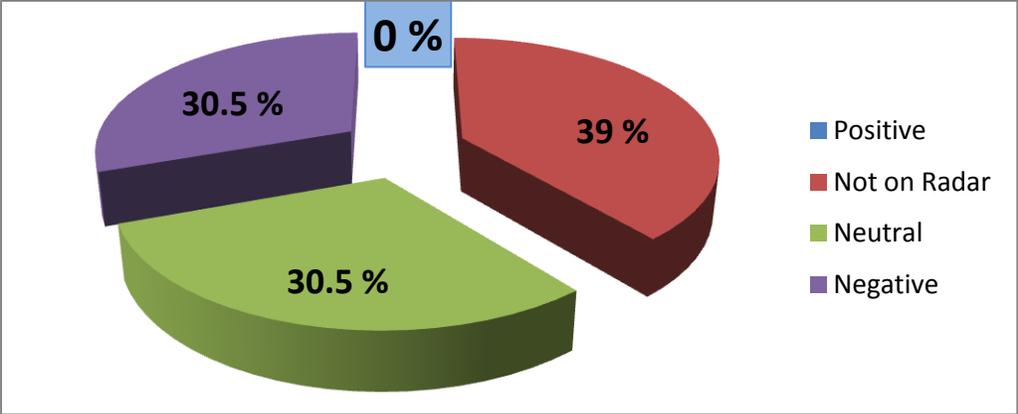
Graduating Student Context

Employers noted that many graduating college students they were interviewing and hiring lacked an understanding of how to operate in a professional setting or the skills needed to perform effectively. This was a universal complaint, not one focused on UDC graduates. Moreover, Accenture published a study in April that examined expectations of graduating college students relative to the current market. They found that students expected higher salaries, employment in their field of study, and more employer-provided training in numbers that were completely out of line with market realities. The authors recommended that employers develop deeper partnerships with universities to better prepare their students for the available entry-level jobs. David Smith, senior managing director of Accenture’s talent and organization practice noted that, “a solution is sorely needed to bridge the disconnect between employers that are concerned about college graduates being unprepared for available jobs and the graduates who feel overqualified for them.”¹

Bad News/Good News - Employer Disconnect

In a large percentage of the meetings, employers expressed a lack of awareness of UDC. Many admitted that although they were generally aware of UDC, it was “not on their radar screen.” However, a few were not aware that UDC existed at all, including an executive who lived in North Cleveland Park!

Employer and Civic Leader Impressions of UDC



The resulting lack of UDC graduates at their organizations is not surprising, given this situation. Many employers said that they were not aware of any contact made by UDC until the interview with Altus, and that they would be open to further contact. This represents a real opportunity for UDC moving forward. However, employers stressed that in order for an ongoing relationship to be developed and to be

effective, contact from UDC must be consistent, at the executive level, and open to the employers' suggestions and ideas.

Verbatim Reality Check

The reality is that many local business leaders who have interacted with UDC in the past have a dim view of the university and its current strategic planning effort. They feel that they have “been down this road before” and that each time “nothing changes at the university.” A recurring theme was frustration with the lack of follow-through by the university with similar efforts in the past. Many felt that they had wasted their time trying to help UDC in past improvement efforts.

In a meeting of business leaders, one said that the only way to fix UDC is to “blow it up.” That sentiment was echoed by other business leaders in their interviews with Altus. One business leader said that “UDC needs to be shut down and reconstituted a year from now.” Another noted that “UDC should give students a reason to attend beyond being the university of last resort.” A high profile CEO said that “UDC is at less than ground zero with the business community” because the university does not respond to the needs of their students or local employers. He questioned the internal will of the university leadership to make real change with the current strategic planning effort, noting that he was “not sure the UDC strategic planning effort will work” because “UDC is broken on many fronts.” He pointed out that he has been asked to speak twice at the university and both times there was no follow-up with him after the event. “There is never any attempt to remain connected to people who can help them...they just don't seem to care.”

Another CEO who has been involved with the College Success Foundation pointed out that UDC remains at the bottom of the list of every DC College Access Program outcomes measure. He went on to say that “we should never send one of our scholarship students to UDC, because it is a pre-determinant of student failure.”

When asked what UDC can do, given the strong negative feelings among many important civic leaders, one CEO said, “the bottom line is that UDC has to rebuild confidence with civic leaders. **The administration needs to make real and dramatic changes to fix the university's problems. When we see that happening, we will begin to be supportive again.**”

Still, opportunities abound

Although there are many who are critical of UDC, based on past experience, there is much reason to be hopeful of support from the regional employer community. Many employers who participated in this project expressed willingness, and, in some cases, eagerness to **work with UDC to develop academic programs that will produce qualified candidates for the positions they need filled.** In the following sections, specific, identified curricular opportunities have been outlined.

In addition to curricular opportunities, there are other ways that employers have suggested that UDC can develop ties to the employment community to help improve the employment outcomes of their

students. Opportunities to develop internship programs, as well as better relationships with companies to facilitate full-time hiring of graduates are plentiful.

In the discussions, there were several *reasons employers had an interest in developing a closer relationship with UDC*. Most frequently mentioned was the *ability to find good local talent who wish to remain in the area*. Employers often find that students at other local universities seek employment in other cities. Many employers expressed frustration with students from certain local universities who take jobs in other cities after being given an offer or even being employed. This costs employers time and, if recent hires leave quickly, money, so they seek a more stable new hire pool. Employers seek a *more diverse workforce*, and they view UDC, as an HBCU, as a natural partner. There was also a sense of civic pride and a *desire to support the local public university*. UDC should capitalize on these strengths in engaging with employers.

Report Overview

The following report is based upon input from the employers and civic leaders interviewed for the project. *In each meeting, several themes were discussed: the current situation and outlook for the industry; the kinds of skills and background employers in that industry are seeking in new hires; any experience with UDC or UDC students or graduates; ways that UDC could improve their program to make their students more attractive to employers in that industry.*

That input was the basis for the recommendations in this report. The following sections will cover:

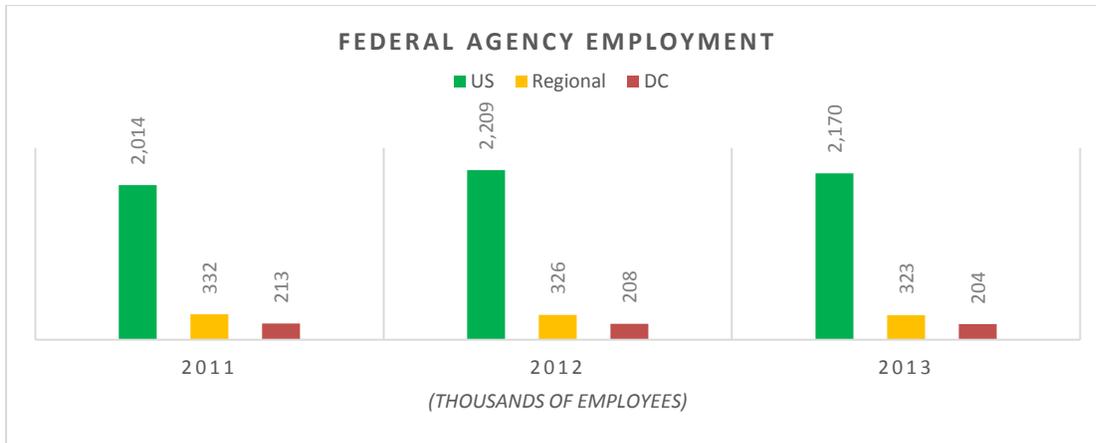
- Industry Reports and Recommendations, in which each of the sectors (Federal Government and Federal Contractors, Professional Services, Technology, Hospitality, Retail, Real Estate and Construction, Education and Health Care) are covered with industry specific ideas that were suggested in the interviews for this report
- General Recommendations, in which themes are discussed which were brought up in most or all of the meetings in all of the sectors
- Next Steps, in which we suggest the way for UDC to move forward based on the information presented in this report

Section 3 Industry Reports and Recommendations

A. Federal Government and Government Contractors

The region benefits economically from the enormous employment base of the federal government and government contractors. Within the Washington Metropolitan Area (WMA) there are more than 320,000 civilian federal employees. Of those employees working in the WMA, 204,000—or slightly less than 10 percent of the total federal civilian workforce—are employed in the District of Columbia (*Exhibit 2.A.1*).

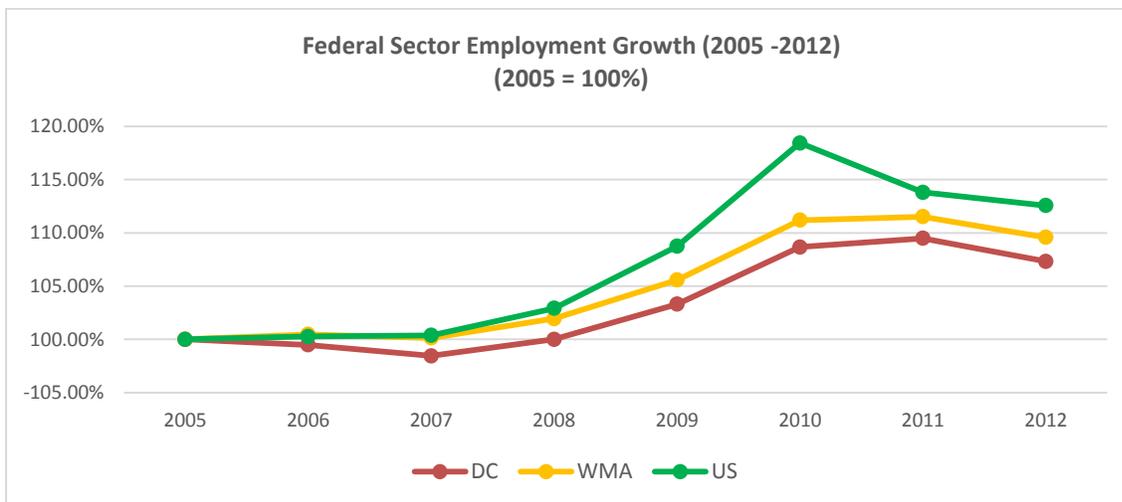
Exhibit 2.A.1



Source: State and Area Employment, Hours & Earnings. US Department of Labor Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved on Aug. 5, 2013 from <http://www.bls.gov/data>. *Regional data is defined as Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV Metropolitan areas.

Fifteen percent of all employment in the WMA, and 30 percent of employment in the District is made up of civilian federal employees.ⁱⁱ Between 2007 and 2011, federal employment grew in the WMA and DC, with Virginia and Maryland outpacing job growth in the District. (*Exhibit 2.A.2*).

Exhibit 2.A.2



Source: State and Area Employment, Hours & Earnings. US Department of Labor Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved on Aug. 5, 2013 from <http://www.bls.gov/data>. *WMA is defined as Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV Metropolitan areas.

In addition to the direct federal employees, government contractors are major employers in the region, with nine of the twenty largest government contractors headquartered in the WMA. In total, the twenty

largest government contractors contracted almost \$170 billion in government work in FY2012.ⁱⁱⁱ Continued efforts to make cuts in federal spending and find ways to operate more efficiently have created a difficult environment for government contractors recently, but federal contractor executives believe that the current constraints are a bump in a generally upward trajectory for the industry.

In FY 2012, the federal government spent \$517 billion, or 16.4%, of the total federal budget, on procurement contracts. Of that, about \$70 billion went to contracts in DC, Maryland, and Virginia.^{iv} The total amount spent on contractors is almost double what the government spent on contractors in 2000. Thus, while the federal government remains a very important part of the WMA economy, federal contractors are increasingly important employers in the region. Contractors are particularly significant providers in certain areas. For example, according to New York University professor Paul Light, contractors perform around 80% of all IT functions at federal agencies.^v

Immediate Federal Government Opportunities for UDC

An aging population within the civil service ranks means that in the next decade there will be a significant number of openings in the federal government. In certain areas the needs are already “critical.” In particular, federal acquisitions and contracting is an area of real shortage within the civil service. The situation is so dire that agencies can go through an open register where they post job openings, allowing agencies to circumvent the normal government hiring process, and use an expedited process to hire acquisitions candidates directly. Because of the stated need, civil servants can move from an entry level position pay grade of a G7 (ranging from \$42,000-\$54,000) to a G12 (ranging from almost \$75,000-\$97,000) in about six years.

Developing a certificate or degree program in government acquisitions and contracting

While the University of Virginia and James Madison University offer courses in government acquisitions and contracting, those interviewed for this report pointed out that they were not aware of local programs with a certificate or degree in the field. **While UDC has a Procurement and Public Contracting degree listed as part of the SBPA, those interviewed were not aware of the program, which suggests that there are opportunities to enhance and grow the program in partnership with government agencies.**

Many civil servants who are in this field have a general business degree and then are trained on the job for three to five years. In the current fiscal environment, agencies do not have the resources to train enough people to fill demand. **These positions are unique in that, by law, they cannot be contracted out; a federal civil servant must fill the role. Thus they are careers that are stable, in demand, and lucrative.** In addition to offering a degree for their students, UDC could offer courses to government employees to earn a certificate in acquisitions and contracting.

While the Department of Defense and the General Services Administration are the agencies of the federal government with the greatest demand, and therefore would be very cooperative with UDC in developing such a program, it was suggested that the Office of Personnel Management would be cooperative for federal-wide opportunities for such a degree. In addition to advising on the development

of a program, administrators in these agencies would be able and willing to find retired acquisitions and contracting civil servants to serve as adjunct faculty.

Developing a degree program and certificate in acquisitions and contracting would allow UDC to:

- Align its curriculum with stated, immediate needs within the federal government
- Train its students for a high-paying, stable career opportunity
- Develop relationships with federal employers and civil service veterans who can advise on program development, course offerings, and ongoing employment needs
- Offer a new revenue stream from training current government employees
- Differentiate UDC from other local universities

Other curricular opportunities to prepare for government employment

Those interviewed suggested other valuable educational opportunities to better prepare UDC students for positions in the federal government, and to set them apart from graduates of other local universities.

1. **Facilities Management Degree** – having a degree in facilities management would give applicants a tremendous advantage over most college graduates. Currently, James Madison University offers such a degree and their graduates are highly recruited by federal employers.
2. **Federal Government Administration or Public Administration Certificate or Bachelor’s Degree** – having a public administration background would better prepare students for entry-level positions in the federal government and make them more attractive candidates.
3. **Develop formalized internship programs with the federal government** – internships offer UDC students one of the best ways to learn about the federal government and make an impression on administrators who could hire them when they graduate. UDC should work with various agencies to develop a more formalized program for their students to work as interns. The opportunities are great, for example GSA hired more than 100 interns in the last three years.

Observations on UDC interns and graduates

Those interviewed had experience with interns and graduates of UDC. They noted that, “some were good, and some were not.” Among the interns hired in the last several years, UDC students fared “no better, and no worse” than students from other local universities. It was noted that UDC could help to set its students apart from others by creating some type of **program to teach life skills and workplace etiquette**. They pointed out that students in general are not getting this training, and a program such as this would set UDC apart. Specific recommendations are in Section 4.

Long-term Opportunities with Federal Government Contractors

The current business environment for government contractors is difficult. **Sequestration cut \$100 billion from federal budgets every year for the next ten years. Of those cuts, 50% are tied to government contractors, and of that, 50-60%, or \$25-30 billion, are tied to WMA contractors.** Because the economy is still recovering, those federal cuts cannot be offset by commercial contracts. Thus, most government contractors are in survival mode. One CEO noted “80% of contractors are focused on staying in business

and the other 20% are focused on long-term growth.” In the current market, the best opportunities for recent graduates are with medium-sized contractors. They have proven to be more nimble in the economic downturn, and are more likely to hire college graduates, as well as offer internships. **While the near and medium-term outlook for the sector is negative to flat growth, the longer term outlook is quite strong**, as services offered by the federal government continue to increase, and the federal workforce continues to be cut. Contractors fill that gap. In order to cut costs, while serving increased quality demands, technology will be leveraged by the federal government, and contractors will be the providers of the technology implementations. Those interviewed felt that there will be a resolution to sequestration in the next year or two, and that in three years, as the economy improves, there will be growth in the industry again. **Positioning UDC now as a provider of high quality graduates in the federal contracting industry will have long-term benefits for the university and its graduates.**

In the interviews, the **executives stressed the focus on skills, rather than academic pedigree**. They said that it was an **extremely egalitarian industry, with opportunities abounding for smart, well-trained graduates**. General areas where they hire recent college graduates are in accounting, proposal writing, business analytics, and technology.

Preparing students for in-demand technical skills

Executives noted that certain technology fields within their industry are in strong demand. Because there are not enough trained people to fill these roles, many of the government restrictions around years of employment are lifted, which allows recent graduates to fill these critical-needs positions. Areas of greatest demand within the technology contracting industry include:

- **Data analytics (“Big Data”)**
- **Health IT**
- **Cyber-security**
- **Infrastructure security**
- **Mobile technologies (application development)**
- **Cloud-based systems**

One executive stated that **if UDC developed highly regarded certificate or degree programs in these specific technology areas, “every student in those fields would have 4-5 job offers by local contractors.”**

Developing degree or certificate programs in critical-need areas

One CEO singled out **cyber-security** as a particularly important area. He noted that there is a need for 40,000 people trained in cyber-security, and the federal government says that they have about 10,000 people to fill the need currently. Among local universities, University of Maryland University College is aggressively marketing its cyber-security major and minor degrees. While it is well regarded by contractors, the CEO felt that if UDC developed a **strong degree program in cyber-security**, employers would be very interested in their students. He explained that the **key is to have a focused degree program with a strong curriculum tied to employer needs, and for the university to reach out to federal contractors to develop stronger ties with the community as they develop the degree.**

Another executive suggested that **developing a degree in application development and mobile computing is a great opportunity** for UDC, since there is not a university in the region that has attached its brand to this area. He pointed out that a degree in this field would be attractive to UDC students because it is **in demand both with federal contractors and the commercial sector.**

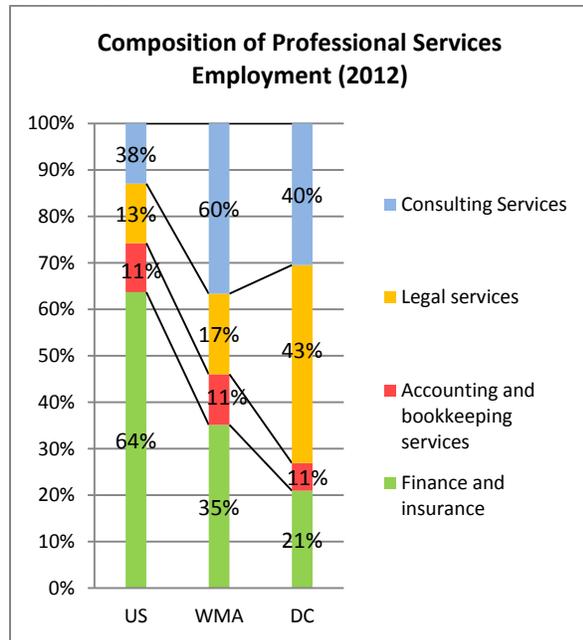
According to those interviewed the **key to success for these programs will be to hire highly regarded professors in the field who have credibility with employers and can develop institutional ties with companies.** All of the contracting executives interviewed noted that **federal contractors need diversity and would be excited about UDC developing programs to educate excellent minority graduates.**

Long-term opportunities for UDC and its graduates

Given the size of the market and the long-term demand for talented employees, the federal government and government contractors will be important long-term employers UDC students. Given the contracting industry’s desire to increase diversity in their ranks, they would be cooperative partners with UDC.

B. Professional Services

Exhibit 2.B.1



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. US Department of Labor Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved on Aug. 5, 2013 from <http://www.bls.gov>.^{vi}

Exhibit 2.B.2

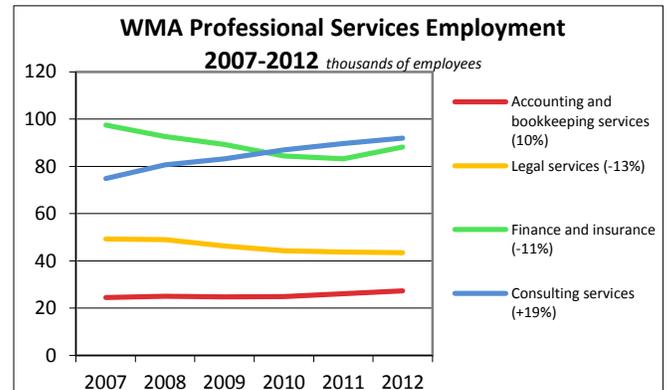
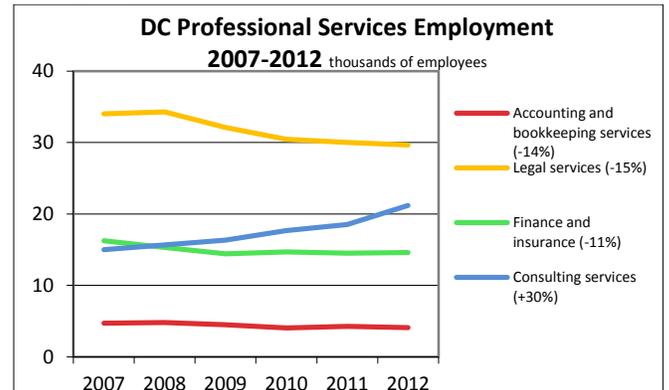


Exhibit 2.B.3



The Professional Services sector is made up of four subsectors: accounting, consulting, finance and insurance, and legal services. In many cases, the most valuable asset professional services firms offer to clients is the knowledge and skill set of their employees. Trends in the industry, which were accelerated

in the economic downturn to maintain profitability and market share include: consolidation of firms, specialization of service lines, and the use of technology to reduce costs and leverage talent. In the WMA and DC the consulting sub-sector represents a larger proportion of Professional Services jobs than is represented nationally (*Exhibit 2.B.1*), and has been growing in the last five years (*Exhibits 2.B.2 & 2.B.3*).

Accounting

The range of opportunities for accounting graduates makes this an attractive degree for UDC students. Public, managerial, nonprofit, and federal accounting opportunities are available for graduates in the WMA. The accounting subsector has been growing in the last five years and those interviewed felt that this trend would continue.

Accounting internships are key to full-time employment

In all of the interviews with accounting firms, they **stressed the importance of internships and work experience in accounting** as an important preparation to being hired. Many of the firms interviewed have relationships with other local universities for interns, and some would be **open to developing an internship program with UDC**. They said that it was **important for the head of the accounting department, as well as the career services office, to develop relationships with local firms** to facilitate internships and graduate hiring. Most firms use internship programs to identify talent for full-time jobs.

Ways to set UDC's program apart from other local universities

Public accounting firms **stressed the importance of communication skills, social polish, networking skills, and an ability to work with a variety of personality types as key soft skills necessary for success in their firms**. They viewed these skills as important as the hard accounting skills for long-term success in their field, and suggested offering courses or seminars to prepare UDC students. **Developing partnerships with accounting associations such as the Greater Washington CPA Association, and the National Association of Black Accountants** would offer UDC students: exposure to local employers; mentoring opportunities; networking opportunities; and potential guest speakers on campus. It was noted that **UDC could create opportunities for its students by offering a program in international accounting standards**. Currently other local universities do not offer such programs, and there will be an increasing need for accountants trained in these standards. Many of those interviewed **encouraged UDC to focus on developing a reputation for "good, solid" accountants for local and regional corporations**.

Consulting

In the WMA, this subsector has been growing the fastest of all of the subsectors represented in professional services (*Exhibit 2.B.2*). Growth in the industry and a business model that leverages junior staff for project work means that this could be an opportunity for UDC graduates.

Internships are important path to full-time employment

Consulting firms **stressed the importance of internships and work experience in consulting** as an important preparation to being hired full-time. Consulting firms interviewed have internship relationships with other local universities. Most firms use internship programs to identify talent for full-time jobs. They noted that most arrangements with universities were based upon alumni employees,

usually partners, at the firm. Unlike other industries, consulting firms did not seem as open to developing an internship program with UDC or to giving feedback to the school on ways to improve its programs.

Career services preparation for interviews and alumni connections

Consulting firms expressed the importance of interviewing skills and the ability to do case study interviews as a key to being hired. They encouraged UDC to develop a strong capability in preparing students for resume writing and interviewing. They also encouraged the career services office to make connections with alumni working in consulting to develop relationships with firms.

Finance and Insurance

The Finance and Insurance sub-sector represents 21% of the Professional Services employment in DC and 35% in the WMA, which is far less than the 64% that the sector represents nationally (*Exhibit 2.B.1*). The use of technology in the banking is rapidly changing the face of the industry, and will lead to a reduction in employees and branches. At the professional level in banking there is still a strong demand for recent graduates. One regional bank hires 300-400 graduates annually. Most of the positions are filled by graduates with degrees in finance, accounting or information technology. It was noted that the DC market is one of the most sophisticated in the country, which means that banks seek graduates with a high degree of sophistication to deal with clients. One executive noted that demand for talent from top tier programs is greater than ever, however, his company will not consider graduates from second or third tier universities. Thus, because of the market size in the WMA, the employment dynamics in the industry, and UDC's lack of reputation, the same executive felt that UDC would be "leaning on a slender reed" if it sought to create a strong finance program.

Legal Services

The Legal Services sub-sector represents 43% of the Professional Services employment in DC (*Exhibit 2.B.1*); however the number of positions has been declining since the economic downturn (*Exhibit 2.B.3*). Administrative and support staff positions in law firms offer opportunities for undergraduate hires such as: paralegals; legal secretaries; marketing; information technology; accounting; and human resources. The firms interviewed did not have organized internship programs or hiring relationships with local universities. Most law firms cut their internship programs during the economic downturn and have not revived them. However, some firms are looking to develop relationships with local universities and one of those interviewed encouraged UDC to contact them.

Preparing UDC students for legal services jobs

It was noted that the most frequent majors hired for legal services support staff jobs are political science, English, and marketing. Those interviewed suggested that developing training or coursework in understanding law firms and the legal process would be useful. They also noted that developing a certificate in legal accounting would set UDC students apart from their peers and make them more attractive to law firms. Those interviewed felt that communication skills were the most important success factor for legal services jobs. They encouraged UDC to work to build communication skills training into their courses. They noted that most large firms have in-house trainers for staff hires, but that some preparation while still in school would set UDC students apart from other applicants.

The importance of the career services office in preparing students for legal services positions was emphasized. Assistance with resume preparation, mock interviews, and developing ties with local law firms were all mentioned. All of those interviewed noted that law firms will be hiring more staff over the next few years. The austerity in law firms following the economic downturn will be giving way to growth. One interviewee said that “the days of doing more with less are over.” This represents a good opportunity for UDC graduates in the next few years.

C. Technology

The Technology sector represents one of the more important employers in the WMA, with over 157,000 jobs in the region attributed to the sector (*Exhibit 2.C.1*). The Technology sector has experienced strong growth in the WMA and DC during the last five years (*Exhibit 2.C.2*). Those interviewed from the industry felt that this growth would continue and that the sector would be an important one for UDC graduates.

Exhibit 2.C.1

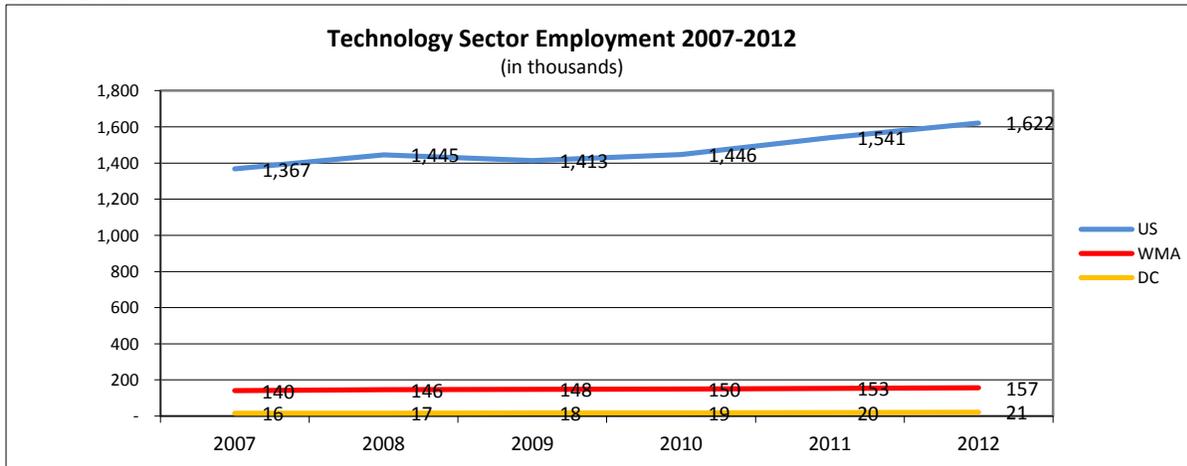
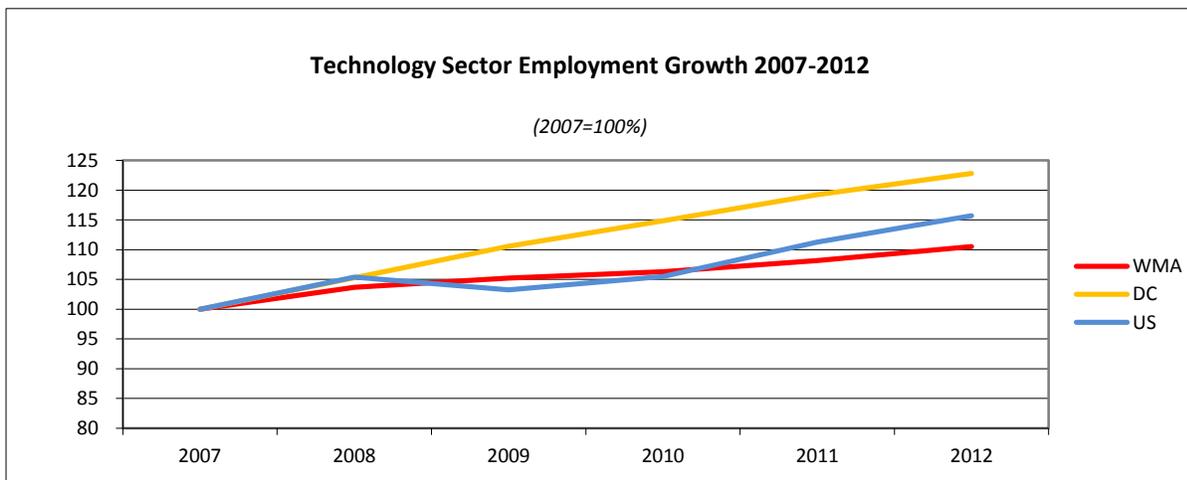


Exhibit 2.C.2



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. US Department of Labor Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved on Aug. 5, 2013 from <http://www.bls.gov>.^{vii}

Because 74% of Technology jobs in the region are in the IT sector, this report is focused on employers in that sector. Within IT, the region has both large and entrepreneurial companies and representatives from both were interviewed. Some of the trends in the IT sector that are driving growth include mobile computing, cloud-based computing, and big data analysis.

Most companies focused on three broad categories for hiring college graduates: sales, business analytics and operations, and developers and programmers. In sales, because there are so few academic programs focused on the category, companies seek candidates with specific personality traits and then train them internally. In operations and business analytics, employers seek strong financial, quantitative, and analytical skills. They expect the new hires to be up to speed when they are hired. For developers and programmers, the focus is on their coding skills and the languages they know. One manager who was interviewed felt that the Information Technology curriculum was well structured, covered the key areas, and was adequate for preparing students for general IT jobs.

Employer partnership opportunities

A human resources director who was interviewed pointed out the great need within IT companies for skills in closure languages like Ruby. She pointed out that last year their need was so great, and there was such a lack of programmers in the area with these skills, that the company spent almost \$200,000 to hire people interested in coding, and then train them internally for the language. She noted that their company would be interested in **partnering with UDC to train for languages the company needed, such as closure languages like Ruby.** She said that there are local volunteer groups that train people in such languages, but that the need outpaces the programmers they produce.

She also noted that **developing a strong sales curriculum that ties the coursework to the needs of local employers** would be a huge opportunity for UDC. Currently there are no local universities that offer such a curriculum. She explained that Elon University in North Carolina has an excellent sales program and would be a good model for UDC. She pointed out that because there are so few sales programs at universities, companies must train employees hired into sales. Students in sales programs like Elon's are highly sought after by employers because they are better prepared and more effective than their peers.

Helping students find the right fit within the IT industry

A recurring theme was the need to help students identify the right kind of company for them within the sector. The region has both very large, **established technology companies and fast-paced entrepreneurial ones**, UDC students would benefit from understanding what the working environment would be in each kind of company. Several interviewees pointed out that a **successful candidate is not just one with the right coding or analytical skills it is someone who has chosen a company with the right fit for them.** Professors, Career and Professional Services staff, and alumni could give students insight and help them find the best fit for them.

In the IT sector, it takes more than hard skills

Those interviewed emphasized that the nature of IT and the companies in the sector meant that certain skills were critical for the long-term success of a college new hire. **The ability to work in cross-functional**

teams, to interact with colleagues across disciplines, and to communicate effectively is essential. They encouraged UDC to build opportunities to develop these skills into the curriculum through case studies, group exercises, and other opportunities to work in teams.

The tech sector represents a great opportunity for UDC

One CEO noted that one of his technology companies hired 500 graduates in the last two years. He said that the critical requirement is excellence. If a college graduate is good at what they do, has good soft skills and professionalism, he pointed out that working in start-ups is an excellent opportunity because the culture is totally egalitarian. “I don’t care where you went to school; I care what you can do for me.” The continued growth in the sector offers UDC graduates significant job opportunities.

D. Hospitality

Exhibit 2.D.1

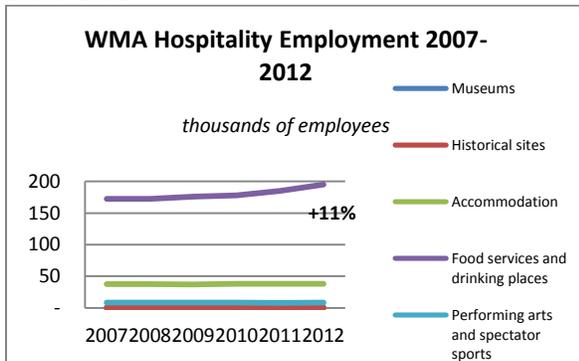


Exhibit 2.D.2

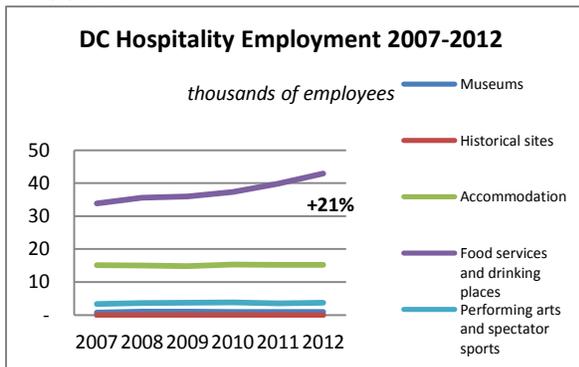
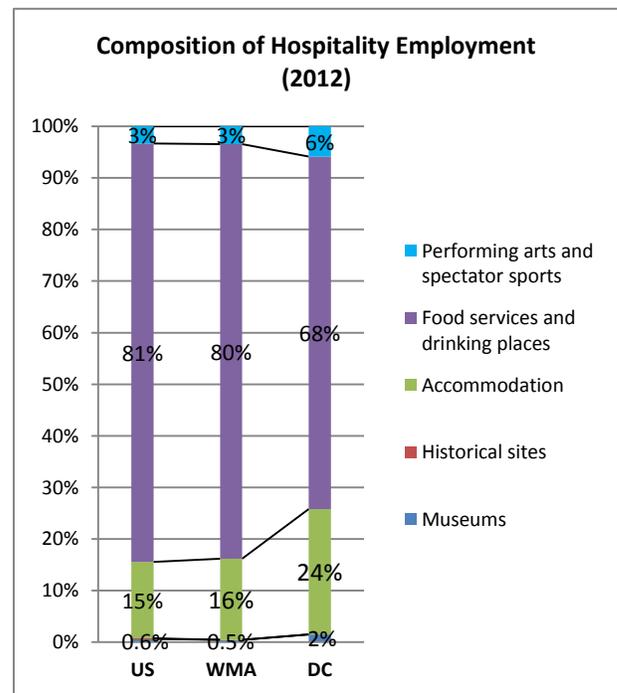


Exhibit 2.D.3



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. US Department of Labor Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved on Aug. 5, 2013 from <http://www.bls.gov>.

With over a quarter million jobs in the WMA, the hospitality sector is important for the region and represents an opportunity for UDC to develop programs that serve the needs of local employers. Unlike the national averages that have seen declines in hospitality jobs, the WMA hospitality employment held steady during the economic downturn and has been growing steadily in the last three years, primarily in the food service sector, where it has grown 21% in DC and 11% in the WMA (Exhibits 2.D.1 & 2.D.2).

Trends in the sector include: the continued rise in international tourists visiting the WMA; urban-focused, casual dining that caters to a healthier lifestyle; willingness of diners to pay for good food; the

professionalization of sports teams; baseball and basketball gaining an international following; the increasing reliance on technology throughout the sector.

Restaurant owners need good managers

The restaurant industry in the WMA has a chronic shortage of good restaurant managers for their establishments. The lack of strong post-secondary hospitality training programs in the region has meant that restaurateurs have had to hire managers from outside the region and bring them to the WMA. The process is costly and turnover rates can be high. Top local restaurant groups hire from the leading hospitality training programs, such as Cornell, University of Nevada Las Vegas, and Culinary Institute of America. Locally, some firms have a relationship with George Washington University's hospitality program. However, the demand continues to outstrip locally trained students.

UDC has an opportunity to **create a four-year degree in hospitality management** by working with local employers to develop a program and curriculum that will serve their needs. Restaurant owners said that there would be local support for the development of such a program. Those interviewed said UDC's **local student body and diversity are important draws for employers**. While UDC's Hospitality Management and Tourism degree at the Community College serves a need, hotels and restaurant groups expect managers to have a four-year degree that develops industry knowledge along with business, writing, and leadership skills. One restaurant owner emphasized the importance of the "hospitality quotient" (warmth, empathy, friendliness, always smiling) as a critical success factor in the sector. He pointed out that a program cannot teach students to have it, but those who do will thrive in the sector if they go through a hospitality management program. Those interviewed encouraged **UDC to reach out to the hospitality community to develop stronger ties and to work with employers to develop a hospitality program that will serve their needs**.

Develop a pipeline of good hospitality students

Graduates of **DC Public School's Hospitality High School and the Carlos Rosario Public Charter School** offer a strong pipeline of local, talented students for a hospitality program at UDC. Developing a formal relationship between UDC and these schools would create a strong applicant pool for a new program.

Partnership opportunity for the Community College

DC Central Kitchen (DCK) has developed a highly successful program for training ex-convicts to be cooks and kitchen staff. Participants in their program have a 1.5% recidivism rate, which compares to 60% nationally and 70% in DC. The program has two key elements, a self-empowerment course that pushes participants to better life choices and an internship program that gives participants opportunities for real work experience. In the past UDC has contracted with DCK to provide food service. **Reengaging with DCK could allow Community College to develop an academic program based on the DCK program and internship model**. UDC students would benefit from training for opportunities in the restaurant industry, and DCK could use underutilized food service facilities owned by the university.

Sports teams offer potential for UDC students

The sports subsector of Hospitality has unique dynamics that make it difficult to find full-time jobs. Those interviewed noted that because there are so many applicants for so few jobs, teams are able to hire employees who have a higher degree level than is necessary for the position (one interviewee noted that her HR assistant had a master's degree in a position that only required an associate's degree), and they are willing to work long hours for low salaries. Most teams do not offer training, so expect their applicants to have the skills and experience for the job.

UDC should consider **developing a sports marketing program**, given that the sports subsector represents 6% of the Hospitality employment in DC, compared to 3% in the WMA and nationally (*Exhibit 2.D.3*). Two local universities, Georgetown and George Washington, both offer sports programs and have strong ties to local teams, including adjunct professors from the teams. This gives their graduates an advantage over other local graduates. Those interviewed encouraged UDC to develop a highly selective program at UDC that would position its students for jobs in the industry. Citing the **need for more minority students in professional sports management, and the First Source Agreements that require teams to try to hire DC residents first**, employers felt that **UDC would be well-positioned to develop a program**. They were open to the idea of working with UDC as they develop a curriculum and **encouraged UDC to develop relationships with local teams**. One owner said that his teams would be willing to put a system in place to **help UDC students get internships**, which are critical for gaining the experience and professional network to help get a full-time job at graduation. Everyone interviewed stressed that full-time hires are based on experience working with teams and the skills applicants have. Developing such a program could be a good reputational move for UDC because it may raise the university's profile. However, the total number of jobs every year in this area is fairly small.

UDC could partner with the Nationals Baseball Academy, which will begin in fall 2013 or spring 2014. The academy will serve the youth of Wards 7 and 8, and would give UDC students an opportunity to work the Nationals organization as volunteer coaches and counselors for the academy. It would be an excellent networking opportunity for UDC students and set UDC apart from other local universities.

E. Retail

The retail industry in the WMA saw declines in employment between 2007 and 2009. While the DC retail market has remained fairly strong throughout the economic downturn, and is now above 2007 employment figures, the WMA in aggregate is still below 2007 employment numbers (*Exhibits 2.E.1 and 2.E.2*). However, the recovery has been better than the national employment in retail.

Store consolidations, as well as internet and mobile shopping are key trends negatively impacting the industry and long-term job growth in the sector generally. However, **many retailers still view the WMA as a growth market**. Retailers noted that there will be demand for both management and hourly workers. They explained that when hiring candidates for management roles they seek people with business analysis skills, an understanding of financial reports, an ability to lead teams, and experience in

Exhibit 2.E.1

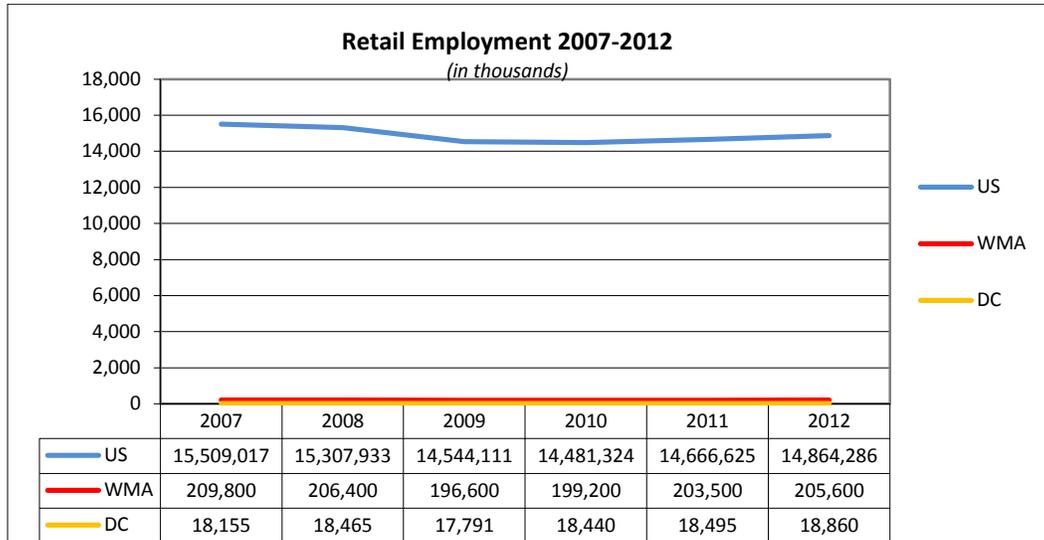
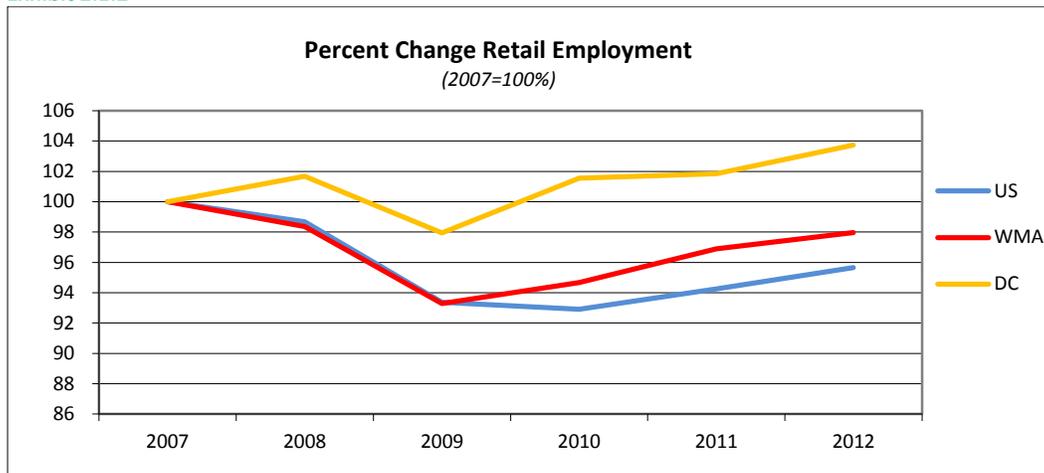


Exhibit 2.E.2



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. US Department of Labor Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved on Aug. 5, 2013 from <http://www.bls.gov>.^{ix}

retail, as well as soft skills such as strong communication skills and an ability to interact well with people, and alignment with the corporate culture.

It was noted that in retail, most managers are promoted from internal positions. In some companies, employees are promoted to manager from hourly positions. One retailer explained that 90% of their store managers in the Maryland and Virginia with the WMA were promoted from hourly jobs. They noted further that performance, rather than a college degree was the key to promotions in stores and throughout the company, pointing out that several senior managers began as hourly workers. While the retailers interviewed often have college students working as hourly employees, they said that they were just beginning to develop college internship programs or special management tracks. They noted that they find talented college graduates from top rated hospitality, food marketing, and retail programs.

The retailers interviewed said that they would be open to further discussions with UDC on ways to partner with the school. They were attracted by the opportunity to increase the diversity of their workforce and to find good, locally-based talent. Those interviewed did not have suggestions for curricular opportunities that would allow UDC to differentiate itself from other university retail programs.

F. Real Estate and Construction

During the economic downturn, the Real Estate and Construction sector was significantly impacted with over 200,000 jobs lost in the last five years in the U.S. (Exhibit 2.F.1). In the WMA and in DC, while there were job losses, they were not as severe as the rest of the nation and the region has recovered faster than the U.S., with DC jobs in the sector exceeding those in 2007 (Exhibit 2.F.2).

Exhibit 2.F.1

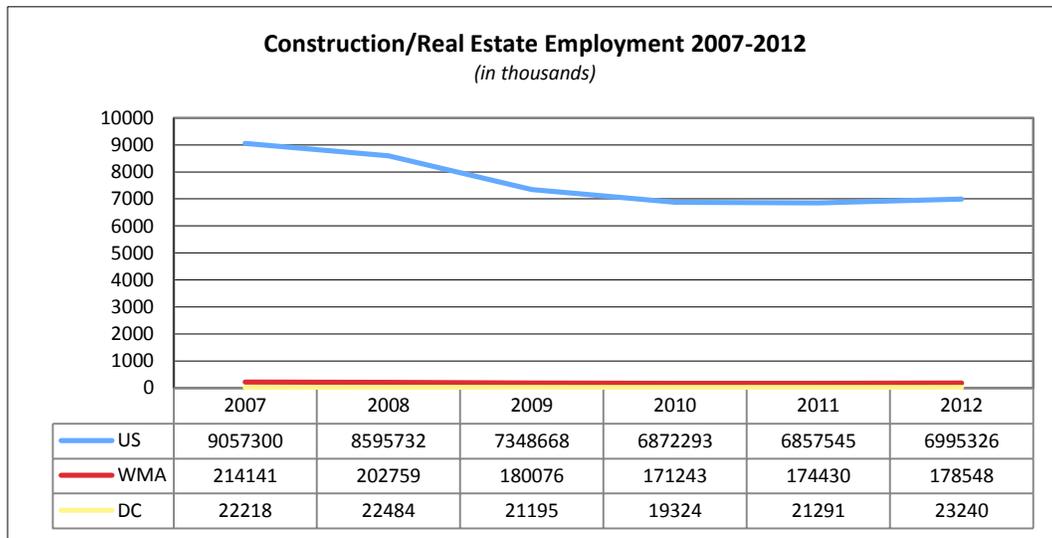
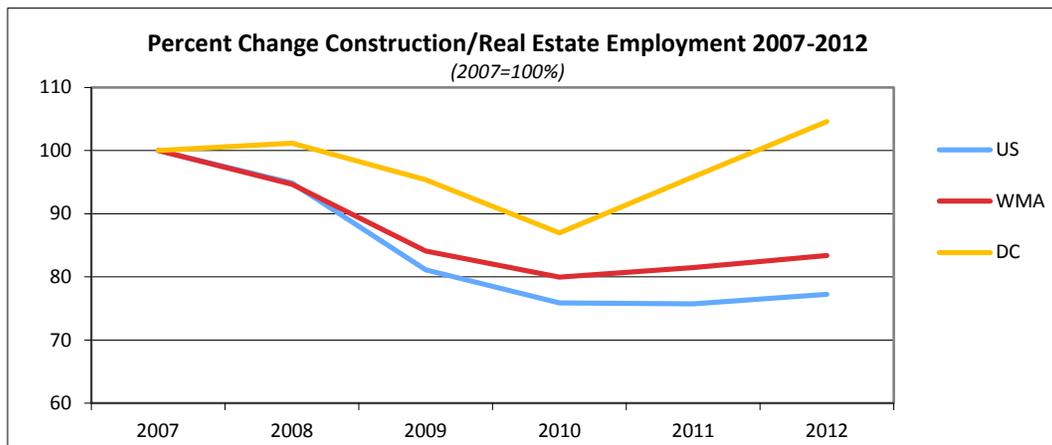


Exhibit 2.F.2



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. US Department of Labor Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved on Aug. 5, 2013 from <http://www.bls.gov>.

For the first time in three years, commercial real estate sales volume in the WMA slowed, totaling \$5.4 billion in 2012 – a decline of 25% from the previous year. Within the WMA sales volume in DC held up well, rising 0.7% from 2011, while transaction activity in Northern Virginia and suburban Maryland fell by 53% and 32%, respectively.^{xi} Sales in 2013 are expected to be similar to 2012.

Those interviewed for this report all agreed that the **long-term outlook for the WMA real estate market is very strong**. Several factors play into this including: the federal government presence gives stability to the commercial real estate market, as well as the local job market, which positively impacts residential real estate; a high barrier to entry for new construction in DC, including the Height of Buildings Act of 1910, which restricts the height of new developments; long-term job growth, with a 20 year average of 40,000-50,000 new jobs annually. **That said there are current trends that will negatively impact commercial office leasing and commercial and residential construction in the near-term**, including: austerity in government spending in the next few years; reduced office square footage in both government and commercial offices; a current high level of office vacancy; and in residential, 20,000 new units currently under construction in DC will exceed current demand.

Employers seek a Construction Management bachelor's degree

All of the employers interviewed noted that the two-year program in Construction Management at UDC would not be enough for them to hire a graduate as a full-time employee. They all expressed that **UDC should develop a bachelor's degree in Construction Management in order for their students to be competitive in the marketplace**. They noted that, while an associate's degree is fine for certain roles, most firms were now requiring a bachelor's degree for management positions. Some of those interviewed also suggested that UDC **add more cross training in the construction management curriculum, so that students learn interdisciplinary functionality**. They pointed out that construction managers must be able to understand and communicate with architects and engineers to be successful in their role. Several executives suggested that the **curriculum include lean management principles**, because the focus on continuous improvement within construction is increasingly important.

Soft skills training is important

All of those interviewed stressed the **importance of interpersonal skills**, noting that construction managers must interact with people from a range of backgrounds and technical skill sets and build consensus within the group. They suggested **developing case studies to prepare students for situations they will encounter in the field**. They noted the importance of **training in facilitative leadership and public speaking** to prepare students for success in the industry.

Marketing UDC's construction program

One of the executives interviewed suggested that UDC's Construction Management program begin to **sponsor local industry events both in the region and on the UDC campus**. In addition to creating exposure for the university, by having students volunteer at the programs it would give them the opportunity to network with potential employers. Some of those interviewed suggested that UDC should **leverage the DC government's First Source rules requiring construction firms who work for the city to hire DC residents as a way to promote its students to construction employers in the District**. Many firms find it difficult to find managers who are DC residents, so this should be an opportunity for UDC graduates.

G. Education and Health Care

Education

The Education sector, including elementary, secondary, and higher education is an important employment base for the region and DC, with nearly 78,000 and 40,000 jobs respectively (*Exhibit 2.G.1*). In addition, the sector has continued to grow in the last five years with the WMA trailing the national growth rate only slightly (*Exhibit 2.G.1*). For the purposes of this report, the interviews in the sector focused on jobs in the elementary and secondary schools.

Exhibit 2.G.1

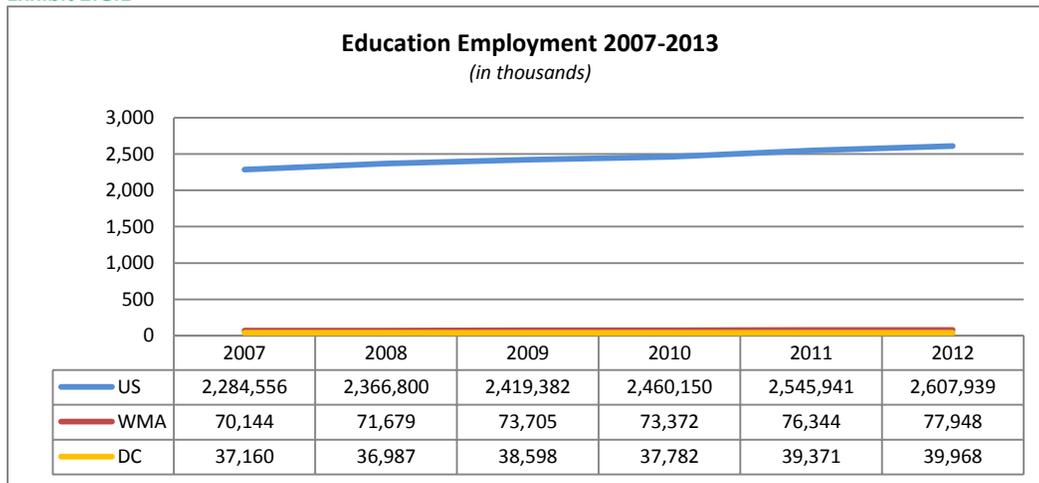
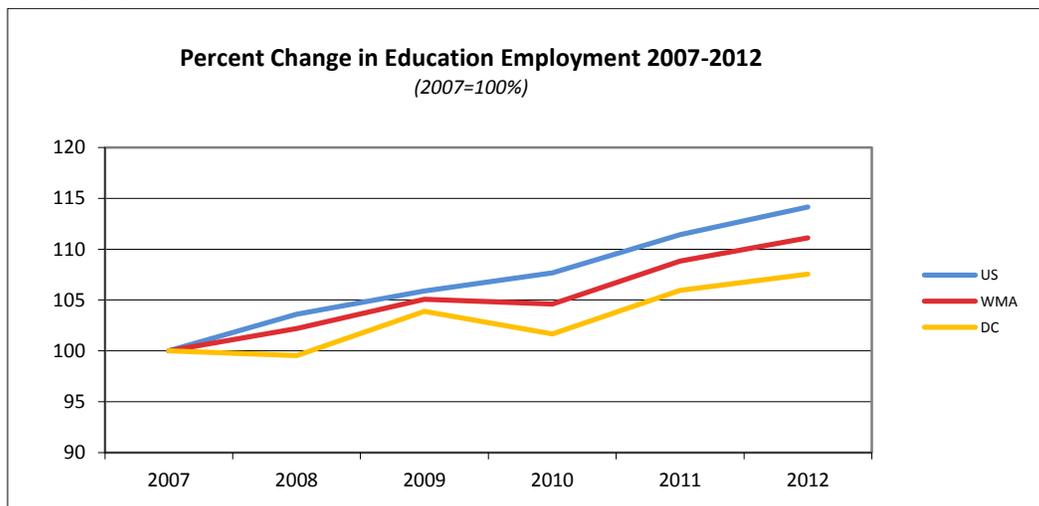


Exhibit 2.G.1



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. US Department of Labor Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved on Aug. 5, 2013 from <http://www.bls.gov>.^{xii}

Regional public school systems need teachers

The WMA boasts some of the largest and most highly ranked public school systems in the nation. Each year the school systems in the WMA hire thousands of new teachers. **Regional demographics will ensure that strong demand for teachers will continue** for some time, both because of population growth in the WMA, and retirements of baby boomer teachers. Because the demand outstrips supply of qualified, good teachers, many school systems in the region must recruit in low-employment states like Michigan and Pennsylvania.

Other local and regional universities are large suppliers of teachers in the WMA school systems, but those interviewed said that **UDC graduates were not hired very often in those systems**. All of the school systems interviewed said that the qualifications they seek in teachers include experience as a student teacher or intern, high scores on Gallup Teacher Insight, and certification to teach in that jurisdiction (both Virginia and Maryland have reciprocity with the District for teacher certification). A strong undergraduate curriculum is important, and **they all expressed a willingness to advise UDC on its curriculum to align it with their needs**.

They noted that internships are the most effective way to gain experience in a school system. In addition, internships improve a student's chances of being hired full-time because they have proven themselves to the principal. UDC should work to **develop formal relationships with local public schools systems to get UDC students internships** at schools within the system. The systems interviewed for this report all had memoranda of understanding with regional universities. In addition to the internship programs, which are formal arrangements and in which the students are paid, those interviewed also encouraged UDC to help their students find **opportunities to student teach or tutor** within the regional public school systems. Although these roles are not paid, they offer valuable experience teaching. As part of this project, Altus made contact with the people responsible for internships and hiring at each of the three systems – DC Public Schools, Fairfax County Public Schools, and Montgomery County Public Schools. **All three systems were eager to begin a partnership with UDC**.

Curricular opportunities in education for UDC

All of the systems **encouraged UDC to focus students on critical needs areas**. Most often cited as areas of extreme need in their systems were: **special education, technology education, math, science, computer science, and foreign languages**. By concentrating on a few critical needs subjects, UDC can develop a positive reputation among school systems in the WMA. It will also improve the employment opportunities for UDC's graduates.

Those interviewed also suggested **offering more graduate degree programs**, so that students could graduate in 5 years with a master's degree in their field of study. They noted that other regional universities do this and it makes their students more attractive to employers, as well as being hired at a higher salary.

School systems are seeking to grow the diversity of their teachers. In one system, although 50% of their students are minorities, only 15% of their teachers are. All of the systems expressed interest in UDC’s graduates to help them improved their diversity.

Healthcare

The Healthcare sector is an important employment base for the WMA and DC, with about 264,000 and 62,000 jobs respectively (Exhibit 2.G.3). In addition, the sector has continued to grow in the last five years with the WMA and DC outpacing the national growth rate (Exhibit 2.G.4).

Exhibit 2.G.3

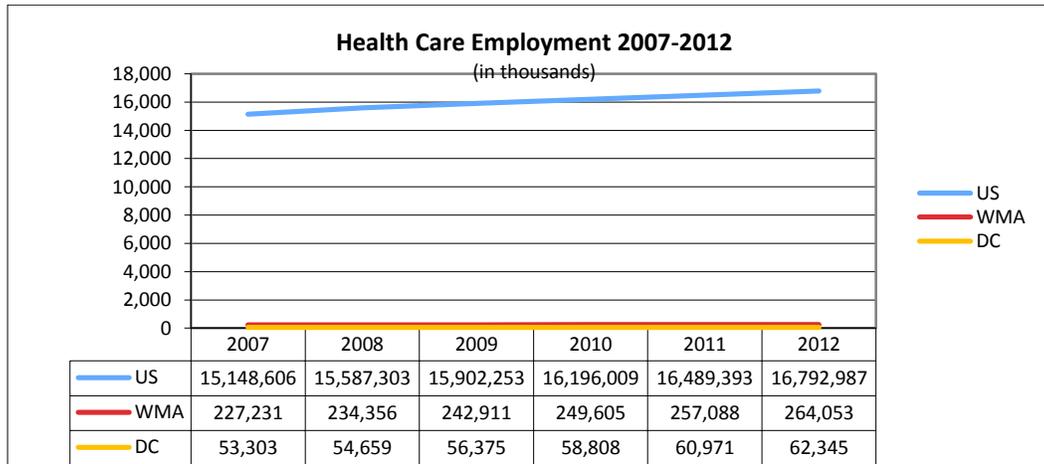
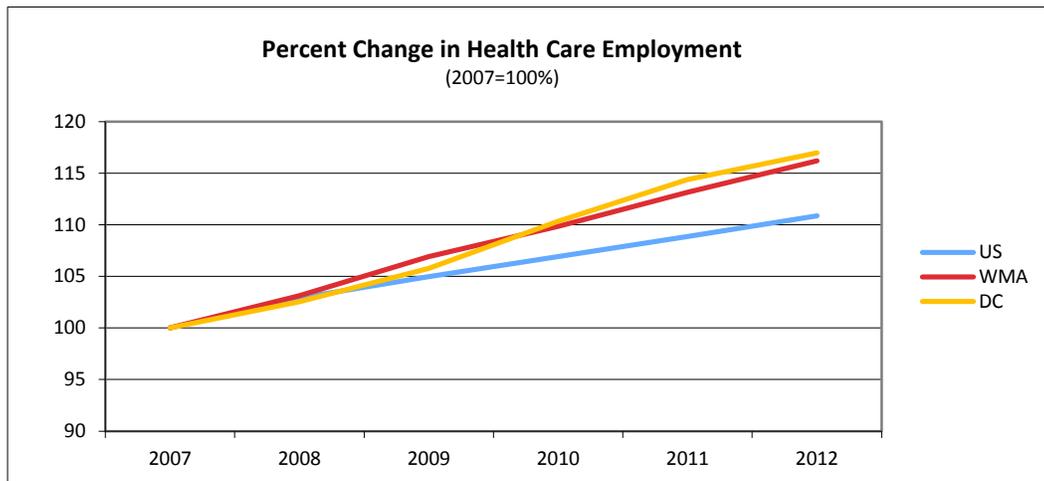


Exhibit 2.G.4



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. US Department of Labor Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved on Aug. 5, 2013 from <http://www.bls.gov>.^{xiii}

Hospital nursing will be a tough market for UDC graduates in the near-term. Those interviewed noted that there are currently a lot of nurses entering the market. It allows hospitals to be more selective in who they hire, by focusing on high GPAs from top schools. In addition, they said they preferred hiring from four-year nursing programs. While the total number of nurses hired each year by hospitals in the

WMA is in the thousands, the competition is very high. It was noted by many of those interviewed that **they have a negative view of UDC nursing graduates**, based on bad experiences with UDC graduates several years ago. When asked for clarification, they explained that there was a general feeling that the UDC graduates did not have the basic skills needed, and often did not pass their nursing license after being hired. As a result, it brought the curriculum and program into question and tainted their view of the UDC nursing program.

Rehabilitating UDC's image with hospitals

When asked what UDC could do to regain the confidence of the hospitals that had a poor opinion of the program, they gave several suggestions:

- **Focus on the four-year nursing program**
- **Work with employers to improve the nursing curriculum**
- **Pick some of the best nursing candidates and present them to the hospitals as applicants – show students who are representative of what UDC wants to be**
- **Develop a small internship program and create a formal feedback mechanism between the hospital and the nursing program at UDC**

Specific nursing opportunities for UDC

Those interviewed shared **several areas of need at their hospitals**. In general, they explained that they were **seeking more male nurses** and that demand always stripped supply. **If UDC could encourage more male students into their nursing programs, there would be employment opportunities at local hospitals**. In addition, they noted that **certain specialties are in high demand including emergency room, surgery, family center care, and radiology**.

Senior care will be a growing opportunity

Demographic trends of an aging baby boomer population combined with more options in the spectrum of senior living facilities mean that the long-term employment opportunities in the senior living sector are good. In the WMA, the high number of senior living facilities leads to a scarcity of experience and facilities are poaching employees from each other. It was noted that because senior living facilities straddle healthcare and hospitality, companies have been seeking employees from outside healthcare.

Currently, George Mason University has a senior care program and has developed relationships with local senior living companies. Those interviewed felt that there was an **opportunity to develop a senior care program at UDC** given the current demand for talent. Developing the curriculum with employer input is critical. Working with employers can also help to develop internship and training programs between UDC and employers. Entry level college graduates typically begin in sales and are promoted to facility executive director. It was noted that within a few years, a new hire can be promoted to executive director and making a six-figure salary. In addition to the administrator career track, senior living facilities hire many nurses, which offer a good opportunity for UDC's nursing program.

Section 4 General Recommendations

The following are specific recommendations that have been developed based on the meetings with business leaders in the seven targeted sectors. These recommendations, suggested across all of the industries, represent specific, actionable steps that UDC can take to improve the employment outcomes of their students.

Create a Clear and Compelling UDC Brand

Very few colleges and universities have a clear definition of what they are or an identity that sets them apart. This can be a problem for both attracting the best students and potential employers. **Successful institutions will be the ones that can define themselves and message that to students and employers.** This will result in a better student fit, improved academic and employment outcomes, and employers who are aligned with the institution.

UDC has the opportunity to build a brand around its strengths, which include the deep connection to the Washington area. This offers internship and career opportunities for students in the federal government, non-profit, and for-profit sectors. In addition, the student body is attractive to local employers because they are majority local, qualified, hard-working individuals who want to stay in the area. This is important to local businesses that want to hire good graduates who are committed to the region and who will be good long-term employees. Over time, the employment successes of UDC graduates will draw students from beyond the area who want to work in the region.

Currently, UDC “flies under the radar screen” of local businesses. Many of the companies interviewed did not have any knowledge of the university, had never hired a UDC graduate, and admitted that the university did not immediately come to mind when they thought of local universities. As part of the strategic planning effort, UDC must work to define itself and create its brand. **Given limited resources, rather than trying to be all things to all people, it must chose the areas it will focus on and develop strong programs that fill a local need.**

In the Industry Reports section, we described specific, industry-identified opportunities for UDC to develop academic programs that would set it apart from other regional universities and prepare students for stated job opportunities. UDC should reach out to businesses in the targeted areas to get their input on the curriculum. This will make the companies aware of what UDC is doing and build relationships and goodwill among targeted employers. **Several business leaders who were interviewed said that they saw a competitive advantage for UDC to be able to say that industry leaders had helped the university design curricula for related programs.**

It is important to point out that our recommendation to develop the UDC brand and to make key constituents aware of the university is not advocating an expensive branding campaign that blankets the region with ads. Rather, this is **defining internally what UDC wants to be, aligning its programs to achieve that goal, and taking a targeted, personalized marketing approach focused on the businesses in industries**

in which the university chooses to focus its programs. As part of this process, there is also an opportunity to improve the messaging to potential students and to employers in the region through social media and an improved website.

Improve and Expand the Career & Professional Development Center

While the staff of the Career & Professional Development Center works hard to help students achieve their employment goals, the current staffing level and budget are woefully inadequate to the needs of UDC students. If the university wants to improve employment outcomes, it must invest in the infrastructure and personnel to make that happen.

Aligning resource allocation to better career outcomes is critical to UDC's long-term success. The university will be successful if its graduates are getting good, fulfilling jobs. The Career & Professional Development Center can help students to achieve that in several ways:

- Helping students define for themselves what a good job is, and to better understand their strengths and interests, will ensure a better job fit and long-term employment success
- Developing and maintaining relationships with local businesses, will ensure a strong pipeline of available job opportunities in a wide variety of companies
- Coordinating internship programs (see below)

The Career & Professional Development Center's role should be made more comprehensive in the students' life. Contact and engagement with students should be made early in their college experience. The Career & Professional Development Center should offer a series of life skills courses (see below), as well as early career counseling (see below) to ensure that students are taking the right courses to achieve their goals. The office should organize opportunities to hear business leaders speak on campus and begin to network and engage with the professional world.

By helping students to define for themselves what a good job would be, UDC will ultimately align their students to better career outcomes. Career success is finding the right career path for the individual. Because most colleges do not help students think about and define what a good job looks like, UDC has the opportunity to differentiate itself from other universities by helping their graduates find the right career for them.

Create Industry-focused Advisory Boards

In every sector, the executives interviewed felt that a key component of UDC's success in preparing students for employment was to ensure that the curriculum of study is applicable to the real world needs and realities of employers. One of the best ways of achieving such a goal is to create advisory boards related to specific industries. These boards would be made up of industry practitioners and alumni who would: advise the university on the curriculum; serve as a resource for the university as it develops industry internship programs; identify potential adjunct faculty; assist in developing relationships with local companies; help sponsor and judge student competitions; and help UDC to create and sponsor industry events to offer networking opportunities for UDC students.

Develop a Strong Adjunct Faculty of Industry Practitioners

The advisory boards could assist UDC in **identifying and engaging industry practitioners to serve as adjunct faculty**. A common theme throughout the interviews was the **value of having adjunct faculty who are respected within industry to raise the reputation of a university program**. Other local universities have used adjunct faculty very effectively to build their programs. Adjunct faculty would **bring real world insight to the classroom and develop a network of business leaders in the community with a strong affiliation to UDC**. Many of the business leaders interviewed said that they would be willing to assist in a teaching capacity, especially as a guest lecturer. The key is being asked by someone with whom they have a relationship.

Develop Internship Programs with Employers

In every sector included in this report, **developing internship programs with employers was noted as one of the most important things UDC can do to improve the employment rate of its graduates**. Internship programs give **valuable, real world experience, and allow students to develop a professional network**. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers two-thirds of graduating college students in 2013 had internships during their college career, and 63% of paid interns received at least one job offer. Employers like internships because they offer a low risk opportunity to identify talent and evaluate potential employees. Many of those interviewed noted that in their industry **a high percentage of full-time hires are the result of an internship at the same company**.

Develop a Program to Train Students in Life Skills and Professionalism

UDC could help to set its students apart from other graduates by creating a **program to teach life skills and workplace etiquette**. Many interviewees pointed out that students in general are not getting this training, and a program such as this would **raise the profile of UDC graduates in the employer community**. Some areas that employers mentioned specifically related to: **communication; workplace etiquette; dressing for success; time management; presentation skills; and networking**.

Develop a Freshman Orientation Course or Seminar Focused on Careers

The **orientation course would help incoming students to begin thinking about what they want to do in their career, and how to get the most out of their college experience as they work toward their career goals**. In addition to helping guide incoming students on how to be successful in their academic coursework, it would link their academic success to their career goals and expectations. Such a course would **introduce students to the importance of internships, professional experiences, networking with employers, building their resume, interviewing skills, choosing the right academic courses for their career, and building a professional wardrobe**. By focusing on these things from the beginning, UDC students will be better prepared for their college experience, more focused on their career goals, and able to budget for the costs associated with working in a professional environment, such as wardrobe and transportation, as an intern or full-time employee.

Rebuild the Confidence of the Civic/Business Leaders, Develop Relationships with Business Community

Business and civic leaders who have been involved with UDC in the past are skeptical of UDC and its ability to remake itself into an institution that merits their support. Because they tried to help improve the university in previous efforts, which failed, in their opinion, **many are unconvinced that this strategic planning effort will be any different. It will take work on the part of the Administration and Board of Trustees to show that the current effort is serious and the result will be significant, positive change at the university.**

In addition, UDC must work to continue to develop the relationships with the regional business community to **raise awareness of the university, encourage support, and develop partnerships for hiring.** This is a long-term process that will require an institutional commitment of time and money to ensure that these relationships are developed and maintained.

Section 5 Next Steps

As UDC continues its strategic planning effort, the university has a tremendous opportunity to rethink its curriculum and organizational priorities, rebrand the institution with students, the employer community, and civic leadership, and rebuild the university so that it is stronger both financially and organizationally.

Based on the findings and recommendations in this report, Altus encourages UDC to:

- Maintain and build upon the relationships forged with the employer community in this project
 - follow up with study participants to share report results and get feedback
 - invite participants to idea generation summits at UDC to continue the conversation
- Work to rebuild trust with civic leaders and employers who have had bad experiences with UDC in the past by showing a commitment to improvement and change
- Define, clarify, and commit to a clear mission (e.g. to educate students for career success in growth industry employment opportunities)
- Prioritize the curricular suggestions and begin phased implementation process
- Leverage the offers made by employers to help with
 - industry advice on curriculum,
 - internship program development, and
 - advisory board creation
- Develop a holistic approach to supporting student employment with
 - an orientation seminar on professional and life skills in the students' first year,
 - stronger ties to industry through adjunct professors and panels,
 - a robust internship program, and
 - a larger, more dynamic career services program

There is a lot of work to do in order to achieve the recommendations in this report, and there is a great deal of opportunity for UDC if it implements them. The first step will be for the university leadership to get aligned on how to evaluate the relative value of the opportunities in order to prioritize them. There is a lot of information in this report, so we would like to suggest some things to consider in evaluating the opportunities:

- which current UDC programs are the best, and the time and incremental cost to create a top tier program,
- which programs would yield the greatest number of high quality jobs for UDC graduates,
- which programs would most raise the profile of UDC in business community and city,
- which programs will attract the best students based on market demand,
- the incremental cost to create a program consistent with the quality that UDC demands
- how the city council and mayor will view any programmatic decisions.

As the university leadership develops its strategic plan, the prioritization of opportunities against competing institutional demands will be an important factor, but, based on the employer interviews, all of the suggestions in this report are important to building a well-regarded, successful university.

Section 5 Appendix

Interview List

Employer Interviews

Marianne Ali

Director of Culinary Training
[DC Central Kitchen](#)

Shelley Baker

Director of Talent Management
[Sibley Memorial Hospital](#)

Owen Barwell

Managing Director
[Grant Thornton](#)

Kari Bedell

Executive Director
[Greater Washington Society of CPAs](#)

John Benziger

Regional Managing Principal
[Cassidy Turley](#)

Heidi Bertelli

Sr. Director of Talent Acquisition
[Sunrise Senior Living](#)

Lauren Brown

Sr. HR Generalist/Regional Recruiter
[Whole Foods Market](#)

Rod Buck

Director
[Vista Technology Services, Inc.](#)

Brandon Busteed

Executive Director
[Gallup Education](#)

Meg Calderwood

Director, Employment Services
[Fairfax County Public Schools](#)

Michael F. Curtin, Jr.

Chief Executive Officer
[DC Central Kitchen](#)

Chris Edwards

Director, Operations
[Rand Construction Corporation](#)

Paul P. Elias

VP, Construction
[The JBG Companies](#)

Nora Essawi

Regional Director
[Starbucks Coffee](#)

Kenneth Ewing

Partner
[Steptoe & Johnson](#)

Margaret Fisher

Vice President, Human Resources
[Specialty Hospital of Washington - Capitol Hill](#)

Kiersten D. Fox

Administrative Recruiting Manager
[Wiley Rein, LLP](#)

Donald E. Graham

Chairman & CEO
[The Washington Post Company](#)

David Graling

President & Managing Partner
[Gelman, Rosenberg & Freedman](#)

Mike Greene

VP, Construction
[Hines Interests](#)

Dawn Haag-Hatterer

Director of Human Resources
[Psychiatric Institute of Washington](#)

Mike Harreld

President, Greater Washington Area
[PNC Bank](#)

Gerard Heiber

President
[Sigal](#)
Board Member
[UDC Foundation, Inc.](#)

Alexa Herndon

VP, Human Resources
[Washington Nationals](#)

Dennis Hoban

Sr. Director of Recruitment Services
[MedStar Washington Hospital Center](#)

Tanisha Holland

Recruitment Special Project Administrator
[Fairfax County Public Schools](#)

Nicole Horst

Director of Recruiting
[Tate & Tryon](#)

James Iker

Managing Partner
[The JBG Companies](#)

Anita Jackson

Employment Manager
[Howard University Hospital](#)

Thomas James

Deputy Regional Commissioner
[GSA Public Buildings Service, National Capital Region](#)

Phil Kangas

Principal, Talent Recruiting
[Grant Thornton](#)

Rachel Kelly

HR Manager
[Starbucks Coffee](#)

Shiv Krishnan

CEO

[Indus](#)

Jim Lawler

Senior Vice President, Chief Human Resources Officer

[TASC](#)

Ted Leonsis

Partner

[Monumental Sports](#)

Carol Mahoney

HR Director

[Living Social](#)

Eric Malloy

Director of Recruitment

[Howard University Hospital](#)

Robert Malson

President

[District of Columbia Hospital Association](#)

Jeff Martinez

Director, Department of Recruitment and Staffing

[Montgomery County Public Schools](#)

LaTisha McNeill

Clinical Nurse Recruiter

[United Medical Center](#)

Emily Nixon

Coordinator, Recruitment and Selection

[District of Columbia Public Schools](#)

Justin Palmer

Director of Government Relations

[District of Columbia Hospital Association](#)

Phyllis C. Pajardo, Ed.E.

Assistant Superintendent

[Fairfax County Public Schools](#)

Mitch Ping

Senior Recruiter, US Business

[Starbucks Coffee](#)

Queenie Plater

Vice President & Chief Human Resources Officer

[Sibley Memorial Hospital](#)

Thomas Raffa

President & CEO

[Raffa](#)

Tanya Roane

Principal, Francis L. Cardoza Senior High School

[District of Columbia Public Schools](#)

Chuck Roberts

Executive Vice President, Chief Operating Officer

[McKissack & McKissack](#)

Karen Savoy Brown

Human Resource Manager

[Specialty Hospital of Washington - Capitol Hill](#)

Dawn Sheridan

Director, Recruiting

[Rand Construction Corporation](#)

Dr. Inger Swimpson

Director, Department of Certification & Continuing Education

[Montgomery County Public Schools](#)

Warren Thompson

President

[Thompson Hospitality](#)

Michael M. Tryon

Partner

[Tate & Tryon](#)

Kathryn L. Watts

Administrative Recruiter

[Wiley Rein, LLP](#)

Paul Webber

VP & Senior Corporate Counsel

[Xerox](#)

Sandra White

Human Resource Generalist

[MedStar Washington Hospital Center](#)

Annette Wigton

Director of Human Resources

[Covington & Burling](#)

Rob Wilder

CEO

[Think Food Group](#)

Eryka Young

Senior Recruiter

[Children's National Medical Center](#)

Other Meetings**Dr. Ken Bain**

Former Provost & Vice President of Academic Affairs

[University of the District of Columbia](#)

Patrick F. Bateman

Deputy Director, Office of University Advancement

[University of the District of Columbia](#)

Bob Craves

President, CEO & Chairman.

[College Success Foundation](#)

Dr. Elaine Crider

Chair, Board of Trustees

[UDC Board of Trustees](#)

Jim Dinegar

President

[Greater Washington Board of Trade](#)

Kim R. Ford

Acting Dean, Workforce

Development and Lifelong Learning

Community College

[University of the District of Columbia](#)

Allison Gerber
Executive Director
[DC Workforce Investment Council](#)

Petch Gibbons
Board Member
[UDC Foundation, Inc.](#)

Dr. James E. Lyons, Sr.
Interim President
[University of the District of Columbia](#)

Katie Nailler
Director, Career & Professional Development Center
[University of the District of Columbia](#)

Joseph M. Perta
President
[UDC Foundation, Inc.](#)

Michael C. Rogers
Vice President of University Advancement
[University of the District of Columbia](#)

Margaret Singleton
Vice President & Executive Director
[DC Chamber of Commerce](#)

George Vradenburg, Esq.
Board Member
[UDC Board of Trustees](#)

David Zipper
Director of Business Development and Strategy
[Office of the DC Deputy Mayor](#)

Endnotes

- ⁱ *Chronicle of Higher Education*, “New Graduates Have Unrealistic Expectations for Pay, Survey Finds,” May 3, 2013
- ⁱⁱ *The Five-Year Economic Development Strategy for the District of Columbia*, p. 46
- ⁱⁱⁱ www.USASpending.gov
- ^{iv} www.USASpending.gov
- ^v *CNN Money*, “Cutting Washington Could Hit Main Street,” July 23, 2012
- ^{vi} WMA is defined as: DC, MD (Anne Arundel, Frederick, Montgomery, Prince Georges Counties), VA (Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, Loudon, Fauquier, Stafford Counties). Data pulled from <http://www.bls.gov>
- ^{vii} WMA is defined as: DC, MD (Anne Arundel, Frederick, Montgomery, Prince Georges Counties), VA (Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, Loudon, Fauquier, Stafford Counties). Data pulled from <http://www.bls.gov>
- ^{viii} WMA is defined as: DC, MD (Anne Arundel, Frederick, Montgomery, Prince Georges Counties), VA (Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, Loudon, Fauquier, Stafford Counties). Data pulled from <http://www.bls.gov>
- ^{ix} WMA is defined as: DC, MD (Anne Arundel, Frederick, Montgomery, Prince Georges Counties), VA (Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, Loudon, Fauquier, Stafford Counties). Data pulled from <http://www.bls.gov>
- ^x WMA is defined as: DC, MD (Anne Arundel, Frederick, Montgomery, Prince Georges Counties), VA (Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, Loudon, Fauquier, Stafford Counties). Data pulled from <http://www.bls.gov>
- ^{xi} Cassidy Turley, 2013 State of the Capital Markets, Washington, DC Metro Region
http://www.cassidyurley.com/Research/MarketReports/Report.aspx?topic=Washington_DC_State_of_the_Capital_Markets_2013&action=download
- ^{xii} WMA is defined as: DC, MD (Anne Arundel, Frederick, Montgomery, Prince Georges Counties), VA (Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, Loudon, Fauquier, Stafford Counties). Data pulled from <http://www.bls.gov>
- ^{xiii} WMA is defined as: DC, MD (Anne Arundel, Frederick, Montgomery, Prince Georges Counties), VA (Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, Loudon, Fauquier, Stafford Counties). Data pulled from <http://www.bls.gov>