TEACHING JOBS AT TOP OF OFFERINGS TO COLLEGE GRADUATES IN 2009

The job most likely offered to college graduates in 2009 for the second consecutive year is teaching, although the average starting salary for new teachers declined from last year, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). Prior to 2008, when teaching took over the top spot, either management trainee or sales jobs had ranked first for the previous five years.

“Although teaching has consistently been an important opportunity for new college grads,” private sector jobs headed the list of the top 10 jobs for college graduates every year during 2002-2007, based on the number of job offers reported by colleges and universities, NACE states.

The shift in demand from the private sector to the public sector could have financial ramifications for college graduates, since public sector jobs generally pay less, according to Marilyn Mackes, NACE executive director.

The next most-offered position for the 2009 graduating class was management trainee, moving up from fourth place last year, followed by financial or treasury analysis, consulting, sales, public accounting, private accounting, software design and development, registered nursing, and project engineering. All but one of this year’s top 10 jobs also made the list in 2008, with software design and development positions joining the list and design/construction engineering jobs falling off it.

The NACE compiles figures from college and university career services offices nationwide. With the number of job offers in 2009 down about 20 percent from last year, the average starting salary for a bachelor’s degree graduate declined for the first time in five years to $48,633, down $591 or 1.2 percent, from an average of $49,224 last year, according to updated fall figures from NACE’s Fall salary survey.

Salary offers were lower this year for four of the top 10 jobs offered to new graduates, including teaching ($35,496, down 3.4 percent), management trainee ($41,353, down 1.1 percent), private accounting ($45,859, down 3.0 percent), and registered nursing ($45,229, down 9.7 percent).

The largest boost in first-year pay for college graduates occurred in public accounting jobs ($47,437, up 4.3 percent), followed by project engineering ($58,570, up 3.5 percent). Software design and development positions posted the highest average salary offer among the top 10 jobs ($63,798).