

Tips for students as graduation approaches

Graduation season can be an exciting time for college students. As their time on campus draws to a close, students may be anxious to put their education to use and enter the workforce.

In recent years, newly minted college graduates faced difficult job markets. But a 2017 survey from the online jobs and professional resources website CareerBuilder found that 74 percent of employers intended to hire recent college graduates that year, marking a 7 percent increase from the year prior.

Recent graduates and students on the cusp of donning their caps and gowns may be entering a healthier job market than the one that greeted grads as recently as a few years ago, but grads should still take steps to bolster their chances of finding work as graduation nears.

- Use the resources at your disposal. The final months and weeks of college are filled with distractions. In addition to final exams, students may be tempted to fill their final weeks with social engagements and extracurricular activities as they try to squeeze every last ounce of fun out of their college experiences. But students also should book appointments with their schools' career services offices. Such offices can help students prepare their résumés. Career services offices also can help students as they search for jobs, internships or other opportunities. Career services staffs also may coach students on interview preparation.

- Gather references. Strong references can help students stand out in crowded job markets. Businesses typically request at least three references, none of which can be family members. Professors, current or past bosses or volunteer program supervisors who can speak to applicants' work ethics and attitudes can make for strong references. It can take time to contact and gather information from prospective references, so students who start early won't experience any lag time when they begin looking for work.

- Get ready to dress the part. Graduates must dress the part when going on job interviews. Both

men and women should purchase appropriate interview attire if they don't already have any. Do so in advance of graduation so you aren't caught off guard by opportunities to interview.

- Find a home. Soon-to-be-graduates can help themselves by studying up on which cities boast thriving job markets and which seem to have few opportunities. Cities may have especially strong job markets for certain majors. Students who research job markets and how geography factors into their job searching equation can then begin to develop a post-graduation housing plan. Some companies may prefer local candidates, so it might be to grads' advantage to move to certain cities even before they've been offered a job. Such students can rely on temporary, part-time or seasonal employment to pay their bills until they find full-time work in their chosen fields. Students on the cusp of graduating from college can employ various strategies as their college careers wind

down to increase their chances of landing a job. TF184889

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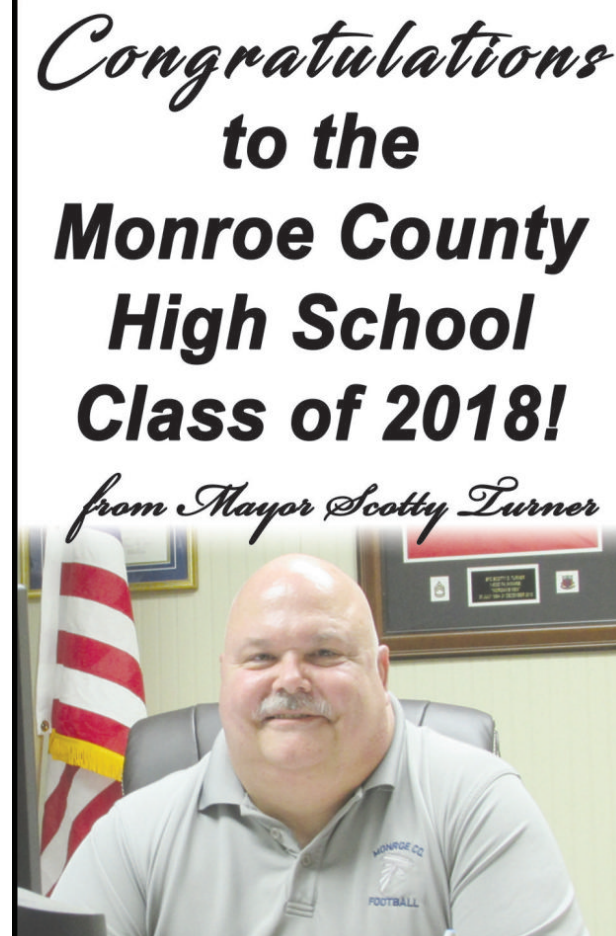
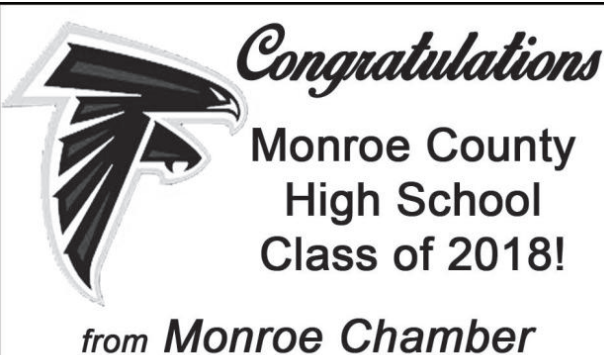
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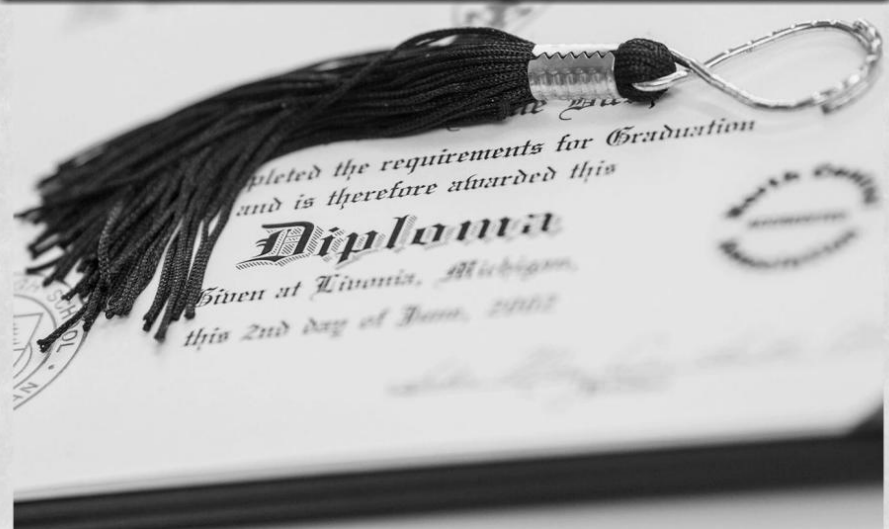
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