



Myths about Careers in Government and Public Service

Brooke Bohnet has heard the myths surrounding employment with the federal government. Bohnet, associate manager of education and outreach with the Partnership for Public Service, also knows the reality.

When asked about common myths, she ticks them off with commentary about the facts.

Myth #1: Federal jobs are only available in Washington D.C.

Fact: Federal jobs are available all over the world. Approximately 86 percent are located outside of Washington, D.C., including more than 50,000 abroad.

Myth #2: If you work for the government, you won't make a good salary.

Fact: Salary levels continue to rise and, within two or three years, most young federal employees increase their salary by half. There are also recruitment bonuses for high-need areas, such as engineering.

Myth #3: Government work is not fulfilling.

Fact: Government employees work on substantive assignments and can make a tremendous difference.

Myth #4: You have to be a government or political science major to work for the government.

Fact: There are federal jobs for every major, interest, and skill, with more than 2,000 separate job categories at 15 cabinet-level agencies, 20 large agencies, and 80 small agencies.

Important Links

Since there are more than 280 federal agencies, a little background work can help students identify those government agencies that might be the best fit. Students can find out about the agencies and the work they do by visiting www.makingthedifference.org.

In terms of finding jobs, most government agencies are required by law to post their positions open to outside applicants at www.usajobs.gov, which is maintained by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. According to Bohnet, college students can also find out about openings by visiting www.makingthedifference.org

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