

Financial Services Career Cluster

What is the Financial Services Cluster?

The financial services cluster focuses on preparing students for careers in Financial Services. The cluster includes a program called the (AOF) Academy of Finance. AOF is a nationally acclaimed, industry-validated curriculum model sponsored by the National Academy Foundation (NAF). The model includes course work in areas such as banking and credit, securities and insurance, and financial planning; a paid summer internship between the student's junior and senior year of high school; and articulation agreements with two and four year colleges. For more information about NAF visit their website at www.naf.org.

What is the employment outlook in financial services through 2012?

Increased investment by businesses and individuals is expected to cause faster-than-average employment growth for financial analysts and personal financial advisors. Accountants and auditors are expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations. The banking industry is expected to increase six percent. Much of the increase is expected to occur in credit unions, small regional banks and savings institutions. Insurance industry is expected to grow eight percent. In addition, financial services positions cut across many sectors of our economy and individuals work in a range of industries, such as health care and high tech manufacturing.

What schools are involved?

Eight high schools – Alvirne, Londonderry, Manchester School of Technology, Merrimack, Nashua North, Nashua South, Pelham and Pinkerton Academy. Existing academies will continue to serve as mentors for new sites.

What are the connections with the business community?

Employers are excited about the potential of the Academy of Finance to better prepare students as entry-level workers at their companies. The Partnership has established an Academy of Finance Advisory Board that assists in overseeing the program. Members of the AOF Advisory Board include Ameriprise Financial, BAE Systems, Brownell Insurance Center, Inc., Enterprise Bank, Fidelity Investments, Focus Capital, Granite State Credit Union, Lockheed Federal Credit Union, NE Planning Associates, NH Community Technical College-Nashua, Smith Barney/Citigroup, Southern NH University, Triangle Credit Union, UPS and local school districts.

Does the Academy of Finance Program have articulation agreements with local colleges?

Southern NH University, Daniel Webster College, NH Community College-Nashua and Rivier College have articulation agreements with the New Hampshire Academy of Finance. All agreements include advanced standing credits or transfer credits. Details of these agreements are available upon request.

What employers say about the AOF Internship Program

Patrick, our intern, did a fantastic job with our members and supported the operations of the branch during summer vacations. I was so impressed with Patrick and the Academy that I will be volunteering next season in the program and look forward to working with a new intern.

Mary Johnson, Branch Manager, Lockheed Federal Credit Union

The AOF Internship Program is a great opportunity to expose highly motivated and talented individuals to real world business experiences. The interns are eager to learn, willing to help and interested in what the organization does in the financial service sector. I wish I had a similar program offered to me when I was in high school.

Erik Swanson, Director of Operational Controls, Fidelity Investments

How can I get involved?

Employers can host an Academy intern.

Educators can contact Kim Runion about how to start an Academy at your school. Schools can begin by exploring ways to strengthen their existing curriculum and moving into an Academy model.

For More Information

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