

Abstract Submitted
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Career Opportunities for Physics Majors – building career preparation into the undergraduate experience¹ TONI SAUNCY, Texas Lutheran University — There have been increasing calls to grow the size and diversity of the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) workforce over the past decade. Undergraduate physics programs, with effective recruitment, retention and appropriate preparation of students, have the potential to add to the numbers of excellent members of the STEM workforce. However, many departments focus on preparing students for entry into advanced degree programs rather than on preparing the over 40% who will enter the workforce. The obstacles for students and programs may arise from ignorance of both the nature of and the financial remuneration available for those equipped with a bachelor's degree in physics, as well as the broad scope of opportunities where a sound physics preparation can be of benefit. For faculty mentors, there may be an ignorance of the pathways to careers outside of academe. With support from the National Science Foundation, we set out to understand how physics departments can most effectively prepare their students for the STEM workforce and have developed a number of valuable resources for students, faculty mentors and department leaders.

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Toni Sauncy
Texas Lutheran University

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