

1. Name

Katie Maher

2. Title

Assistant Director of Career Services

3. Institution

Virginia Military Institute

4. Role

Career Services

5. Membership registration or conference attended: Name, date, where and when.

NACE Conference, June 3-5, Phoenix Arizona

6. Provide a brief overview of that membership or conference opportunity and why you selected it – this should be a summary/story of need – why is this opportunity critical to your current work and career goals to advance work-based learning opportunities for students?

The NACE conference is the national association of colleges and employers' annual event and is often considered the best for professionals working in career services. Our office at VMI facilitates a leadership lab that is a once weekly course for all non-commissioning students in their junior year that allows us to work with students over one full school year on becoming their best professional self. Topics covered in this course include, resumes, cover letters, interviewing techniques, articulating the NACE competencies, LinkedIn, Handshake, and networking.

Attending the conference allowed me to remain up to date on best practices within the profession alongside growing knowledge to assist in a curriculum review we are undertaking this summer for the leadership lab to ensure this is enabling all students to get the most out of this opportunity.

As an office we are also looking to review platforms we utilize to ensure our cadets are career ready, attending this conference allowed me to review all offerings on the market and make an informed recommendation on platforms needed to ensure VMI cadets are getting the most out of career development while here.

7. Share the story of the value that this scholarship added to your professional work. What did you learn from the professional development opportunity and how does it relate to advancing work-based learning for students? Be specific. Every type of conference or membership offers opportunities for networking and learning best practices, new resources. What sets this opportunity (conference or membership) apart? What did you learn that will help you advance work-based learning opportunities for students?

Attending the conference allowed me to expand my knowledge within the world of Career Services. One thing that stands out to me greatly is the use of data collection within our roles and how we can utilize all the data we already have to help make more informed decisions moving forward. I learnt how to utilize PowerBI to enhance the keeping, storing, comparing and sharing of data a much smoother and more time efficient process for both internal and external partners of our office.

8. How do you plan on using what you learned in your day-to-day responsibilities and current role?

As mentioned above, we are looking to utilize PowerBI to assist with the sharing of our data and to better allow for the quick generation of reports on both appointment-based information and first destination survey data. This will allow for a great time saving through the usage of the platform in comparison to hand making all reports. I was also able to connect with a wide range of college recruiters adding to the vast list of recruiters and companies that are looking to recruit VMI talent.

9. How will this opportunity benefit the students you work with?

The opportunity to attend the conference will have a direct impact upon our non-commissioning cadets as we look to re do our non-commissioning leadership labs curriculum this summer. This course is a one hour a week requirement and assists all our cadets during their junior year in becoming ready for the professional workplace.

In reviewing our software's at the conference, we made the decision to add big interview to our portfolio. This will give student direct access to a mock interview platform to help better prepare them for interviewing opportunities in their future.

10. What else would you like to share about the conference/membership experience?

I would just like to thank VTOP for making this opportunity possible for myself this year. I felt as though I was able to learn and grow so much over the duration of the conference and I am looking forward to utilizing all my knowledge learnt to continue to help the students within the state of Virginia.

