the DENISON DIFFERENCE
Success You Can Count On

The college experience affects students in ways they anticipate—but also in ways they never dreamed of. To make us even better at launching our students into lives of personal, professional and civic success, we asked young alumni to tell us about their lives during the first five years after graduation.

Very few colleges undertake such robust research—not just with graduates after six months, but also with alumni at the five-year mark. We’re glad we did! We learned what our alumni most value in their Denison experience and how our strategic initiatives can drive improvements on behalf of current students.

Denison prepares its students for success during and after college. Now we are building on this strength. And we are re-defining what preparing students for professional success looks like. Here are some facts to be proud of:

- At five years out, 99% of alumni are currently employed or in graduate school.
- 61% of alumni are currently pursuing advanced studies or have already obtained a degree.
- 93% of alumni report being civically engaged.
- 86% of alumni report that their co-curricular involvement at Denison was very important to their post-collegiate success.
- With a powerful new strategy in place, Denison is responding to the changing global landscape in three ways: 1) curricular expansion in designing new academic programs in Data Analytics, Global Commerce and Financial Economics, 2) co-curricular innovation helping students to develop their leadership skills, and 3) a new approach to Career Exploration, providing students with robust opportunities to prepare themselves for post-Denison success.
Measuring the Success of our Alumni: Five Years Out

At this five-year mark since commencement, nearly all alumni (99%) are currently employed or in graduate school. The map depicts the states in which alumni report working, of those working in the United States.

CURRENT STATUS OF ALUMNI: FIVE YEARS AFTER GRADUATION (N=375)

PURSUIT OF ADVANCED STUDIES

Since graduating from Denison, 61% of alumni have previously or are currently pursuing advanced studies. The graph below displays the frequency of each degree type, for those who pursued additional education.

OF ALUMNI WITH (OR CURRENTLY PURSUING) ADVANCED DEGREE, PERCENT EARNING SPECIFIC DEGREE

NOTES

“Master’s” collapses many types of Master’s Degrees including MA, MS, MPH, M.Div., M.Ed, MPP, MSW, etc.

Some alumni have multiple degrees, and each degree is counted uniquely, accounting for the total exceeding 100%.
Leading a Fulfilling Life

WE ASKED:

Are you currently in the position you want to be in, in the field you want to be in, or on your way to achieving what it is you hope to accomplish professionally? (N=188)

93% of alumni are in their desired field or position or on their way to achieving what they hope to accomplish professionally within five years of graduation.

Overall, how satisfied are you with how well Denison prepared you for professional success after college? (N=184)

93% of alumni report being very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with how well Denison prepared them for professional success after college.

To what extent did Denison contribute to your ability to lead a rich and fulfilling life—professionally, personally, and/or civically? (N=186)

83% of respondents indicate that Denison contributed to their ability to lead a rich and fulfilling life—professionally, personally, and/or civically “quite a bit” or “very much.”
The Value of a Denison Education

We asked, “We know that alumni are some of our greatest ambassadors to speak to the value of a Denison education. From your perspective as a recent graduate, what do you observe as being the value of a Denison education?” The most frequent responses discussed critical thinking and mentorship.

CRITICAL THINKING
Critical thinking—the ability to think critically or holistically about real-world problems, to approach issues with a multidimensional perspective, and to question information through a critical lens—was the most frequently cited response.

MENTORSHIP
Many alumni discuss, in great detail, the close relationships they established with faculty and staff during their time as a student, particularly the mentorship and professional advice they received from faculty and staff, even beyond graduation.

BUILDING CONFIDENCE
Several alumni discuss Denison’s value in terms of community, working and living with others, being a team member, and learning to dialogue across difference. Because of Denison’s small class sizes and the multitude of opportunities to get involved in research, service, and leadership programs, alumni report increased confidence—certainly in written and oral communication—but also in their ability to lead and contribute to their organizations, at Denison and beyond.

QUOTED
“The value of a Denison education includes the combination of liberal arts interdisciplinary, cross-domain analytical style of thinking alongside challenging coursework and great professors. My education helped me to think critically and think ‘outside the box,’ but I also had to back up my own conclusions and engage the work of others. You learn to think for yourself, but also meet high standards of thought. This kind of thought is needed in the workplace. You need to know not only how to do your job, but to do your job well and advance your company or organization. That demands a rigorous and problem-solving style of thinking.”

95% of alumni report Denison was instrumental in developing their critical thinking skills.

QUOTED
“For me, the greatest asset of a Denison education is the close, personal relationships with Denison faculty and staff. At Denison, I always felt that I had faculty and staff looking out for me and going out of their way to help me succeed in school and in life, in the (then) present and the future. At Denison, these individuals really knew me and were invested in my personal and professional success—they weren’t just teachers, they were advocates, friends, life coaches, and mentors, and I wouldn’t be where I am without them.”

Reflecting on their time at Denison, 92% of alumni report having at least one close relationship with a faculty or staff member. Of those, 61% report it was very important to their post-Denison success.

QUOTED
“The small class sizes encouraged dialogue, and although they were intimidating at first, I gained confidence and grew more comfortable sharing my thoughts and ideas. This has helped me in the workplace - I am not afraid to make suggestions on how I believe processes could be improved. I am comfortable speaking to all levels of management.”
The Impact of a Denison Education after College

Alumni overwhelmingly report Denison prepared them for graduate school and interpersonal relationships. Nearly two-thirds indicate Denison prepared them for civic engagement and current careers.

**THE DEGREE TO WHICH DENISON PREPARED ALUMNI “QUITE A BIT” OR “VERY MUCH” FOR…**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>GRADUATE SCHOOL</strong></th>
<th><strong>INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS</strong></th>
<th><strong>CURRENT CAREER</strong></th>
<th><strong>CIVIC ENGAGEMENT</strong></th>
<th><strong>MANAGING LIFE (finances, wellness, etc.)</strong></th>
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**DENISON STRATEGIC PRIORITY: STUDENT WELLNESS**

Alumni discuss feeling under-prepared to manage their financial well-being after college, lacking skills in understanding loans and credit, negotiating salary, and managing personal finances. Denison staff are collaborating on new programs to support students’ financial well-being and to increase their financial literacy.

**DENISON STRATEGIC PRIORITY: CURRICULAR EXPANSION & CAREER EXPLORATION**

Alumni report great strength in Denison’s curriculum—developing skills in critical thinking and oral and written communication. Some alumni discuss experiencing gaps in specific skills like data analysis, financial modeling, and business skills, particularly in the first year or two post-Denison. Today, through curricular expansion in new majors like Data Analytics and Global Commerce and innovative programming in Career Exploration, students are provided with opportunities to develop these additional skills to prepare them to hit the ground running on their first job.

Significant proportions of alumni indicate that Denison extensively contributed to critical thinking, written and oral communication, teamwork, and problem-solving.

**THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEIR DENISON EXPERIENCE CONTRIBUTED “QUITE A BIT” OR “VERY MUCH” TO THEIR ABILITY TO...**

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>THINK CRITICALLY AND ANALYTICALLY</strong></th>
<th><strong>WRITE CLEARLY AND EFFECTIVELY</strong></th>
<th><strong>SPEAK CLEARLY AND EFFECTIVELY</strong></th>
<th><strong>WORK EFFECTIVELY IN TEAMS</strong></th>
<th><strong>SOLVE REAL-WORLD PROBLEMS</strong></th>
<th><strong>UNDERSTAND AND USE QUANTITATIVE DATA EFFECTIVELY</strong></th>
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Involvement During College and Beyond

The survey examined the influence of collegiate engagement on post-Denison success. **Alumni report that their engagement during college was very important to their post-Denison success.**

**ENGAGEMENT WAS “VERY IMPORTANT” TO POST-DENISON SUCCESS**
(OF THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE ACTIVITY IN COLLEGE)

- Leadership Position: 68%
- Research Experience with Faculty Member: 67%
- Varsity Athletics: 66%
- Off-Campus Study: 64%
- Internship: 59%
- Student Organizations: 50%
- Campus Job: 40%
- Community Service: 36%
- Performing Arts: 21%

Aggregating all nine experiences, **86% of alumni report having engaged in at least one of these activities at Denison and found it very important to their post-college success.**

**Denison alumni are actively involved in their communities.** Three of every four alumni have volunteered in the community, two-thirds have led a group of people to accomplish a goal, and one of every three has served on a board or committee.

**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT SINCE GRADUATING**

- Spent Time Volunteering or Serving: 73%
- Led Group of People to Accomplish a Goal: 66%
- Been Involved with Local Community: 62%
- Served on a Board or Committee: 31%
- Participated in Campaign Work: 10%
- Held Political Office: 1%

**93% of alumni report being civically engaged in one or more of these capacities.**
Financial Return on Investment

**SALARY**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>MEDIAN SALARY FOR DENISON ALUMNI FIVE-YEARS AFTER GRADUATION</th>
<th>NATIONALLY</th>
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<td>$56,720 vs. $49,203</td>
<td>Median Salary for Bachelor’s Degree Holders with 1-4 years of experience</td>
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**BOTTOM LINE**

69% of Denison alumni earn more than $50,000 annually within five years of graduation.

National salary information according to Payscale.com

**QUOTED**

“For Denison graduates, the compelling question isn’t, ‘What do you do for a living?’ The far more intriguing responses are found in going deeper; ask them ‘how’ they go about doing what they do, ‘why that is,’ and ‘why it matters.’

Our students learn and our alumni understand that while income and security in life are very important, so are meaning, purpose, and having impact. Denisonians tend not to measure their success as much as they evaluate the value they bring to their work, civic engagement, and a life worth living. This is why in our career center, everything we do is measured in terms of helping students and graduates uncover their greater capacities.”

“Denison tends to help them hone their skills, and embed them in deep knowledge. When students realize their capacity to do good and important work, by melding their knowledge and talents, we get to see a great future unfold.

Getting to that point is day-to-day work that must be thoughtful and well-informed. It's the result of intentional and well-designed experiences that extend throughout a student's four years, and beyond.”

RICHARD T. BERMAN
DEAN OF CAREER PREPARATION

DR. LAUREL B. KENNEDY
VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT DEVELOPMENT
"Denison students are thriving professionally because of five attributes of the college. First, our students receive fantastic mentorship from our faculty. Second, students are academically engaged and challenged in ways that help them develop a range of liberal arts skills. Third, everybody on our campus is involved in co-curricular activities where they acquire important skills, values and habits. Fourth, the talents and diversity of our student population lead to tremendous lateral learning. And fifth, students have access to strong networks and programs to help them explore careers and hit the on-ramps into the lives they want to create.

Denisonians have thrived for generations. The tradition continues because we get education right."

DR. ADAM WEINBERG
PRESIDENT

This document reports the current professional status for alumni five years after graduation (based on an incredibly strong 78% knowledge rate drawing from survey responses and professional profile data), while the rest of the data are derived exclusively from survey responses (with an impressive 42% response rate).