

About 60 percent of the full-time students were studying for a master's degree and 6 percent for a doctorate. Most of the others were studying for a certificate in teaching or health services.

*How does this picture compare with that of the previous year?*

The survey of 1956 women graduates provides a basis for comparison with a similar study of 1955 graduates, conducted under the same auspices. The number of 1956 graduates indicates an increase of almost 8 percent over 1955. This agrees with the prediction of a continuing rise in the number of college graduates.

The findings for the 2 years were quite similar in numerous respects: Age of the graduates; their marital status; the percentages who were employed, attending school, seeking employment; the types of jobs they secured; their undergraduate major subjects; and their feelings about their jobs. The proportion of women who were married (and also the proportion who were 25 years of age and over) was slightly higher in the 1956 class.

The most striking difference was the increase in starting salaries for the 1956 graduates. The 10-percent rise in average salaries over the previous year reflects the favorable employment opportunities for college women. The largest increase—over \$500—was for women chemists and for mathematicians and statisticians. Teachers' salaries increased about \$300.

There was a small but noticeable drop in the number of grade-school teachers and an increase in junior-high-school teachers. A larger proportion of 1956 graduates were en-

titled to teach subjects in the social and natural sciences, for which the demand has been emphasized recently.

*What did the graduates think about vocational services in their colleges?*

Typical comments indicated a desire for vocational and aptitude tests, as well as for career counseling, realistic information on job possibilities, and a closer alliance between job and academic requirements.

These and other comments reflect some of the experiences of today's college women in their efforts to achieve their full stature as individuals and as workers. With women now constituting almost one-third of all our workers, they represent a significant portion of our human resources. Information relating to their training and the utilization of their professional qualifications becomes increasingly useful in developing the skills of the work force and charting the future progress of our Nation.

**COLLEGE WOMEN GO TO WORK**  
Report on Women Graduates, Class of 1956  
Bulletin 264 of the Women's Bureau  
U. S. Department of Labor  
The full report of the survey, with detailed tables, may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., 30 cents. 1958.

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# YOUNG WOMEN of the YEAR



*A report on the class of 1956*

*Their employment after college*

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
James P. Mitchell, Secretary

WOMEN'S BUREAU  
Mrs. Alice K. Leopold, Director

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## YOUNG WOMEN of the YEAR—

- *A report on the class of 1956*
- *Their employment after college*

*What was their status 6 months after graduation?*

*Were they working, studying, homemaking?*

*What kinds of jobs did they have?*

*What were they earning?*

*Were their jobs and salaries related to their major subjects?*

These are some of the questions you may be asking about the employment status of recent college graduates, if you are an undergraduate student or a counselor thinking of career possibilities and the courses needed to prepare for them.



The questions were among those asked in the winter of 1956-57 of young women who were graduated from college in June of 1956. The answers are summarized here primarily to help young women decide how best to use their capabilities. The information may also be of interest to anyone who is concerned with the development and utilization of the Nation's trained womanpower.

The employment picture evolved from a survey conducted by the Women's Section of the National Vocational Guidance Association in cooperation with the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor. Questionnaires were sent to a sample representing about 87,000 women who were graduated in June 1956 from women's and coeducational colleges and universities granting bachelor's degrees. The 126 schools participating represented 1,022 such educa-

tional institutions. Replies were received from 5,411 women. Not every graduate answered every question; therefore the figures given on a specific subject are based on the number of replies received for that particular question.

### *What was the status of these graduates?*

The typical June graduate was 22 years of age, single, and employed. She was earning nearly \$3,500 on her first job, about 6 months after graduation. This composite picture emerges from the following data:

Of every 100 graduates, classified by—

#### **Age:**

- 19 were under 22 years of age.
- 52 were 22 years old.
- 20 were 23 to 29 years.
- 9 were 30 years or over.

#### **Marital status:**

- 61 were single.
- 37 were married (over two-thirds of these were working; some were also attending school).
- 2 were widowed, divorced, or separated.

#### **Employment or school status:**

- 81 were employed (75 full time, 6 part time); some also attended school.
- 8 were attending school only.
- 3 were seeking work.
- 8 were not in the labor market.

#### **Undergraduate major:**

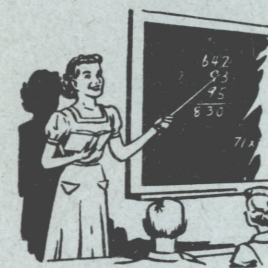
- 36 had majored in education (including physical education. Also qualified to teach were about 25 who majored in other subjects.)
- 18 had majored in the humanities and arts.
- 17 in social sciences.
- 9 in home economics.
- 7 in natural sciences (including mathematics).
- 5 in business and commerce.
- 5 in nursing and other health fields.
- 3 in other subjects.

#### **Baccalaureate degree:**

- 51 received the Bachelor of Science degree.
- 44 received the Bachelor of Arts degree.
- 5 received other bachelor's degrees.

### *What kinds of work were they doing?*

Of the employed graduates, about 80 percent reported that they were in professional positions, 16 percent in clerical jobs, and the remainder in miscellaneous work, mainly in a service or managerial capacity.



The largest number—59 percent—were in teaching, the traditional favorite of college women. Six percent were secretaries and stenographers, 5 percent were nurses, 3 percent were biological technicians, and 2 percent were social and welfare workers. The remaining 25 percent were doing a wide variety of work.

### *Were their jobs related to their training?*

Most of the employed graduates reported that their work was related to their college major. Teaching, the predominant occupation, attracted 88 percent of the employed education majors and a great many of those who had majored in other subjects (among them English, history, foreign languages, home economics, mathematics, music, and physical education).

Among other groups of employed graduates with a strong relationship between their training and their jobs were—

- 99 percent of those with a major in nursing,
  - 85 percent of those with majors in other health subjects,
  - 64 percent of those with majors in physical sciences,
  - 47 percent of those with majors in journalism,
- Smaller numbers of those who had majored in business and commerce, sociology and social work, and home economics.

### *What were the graduates earning?*

The average salary of those employed full time was \$3,446 a year. Over a fifth of the graduates were earning at least \$4,000 a year, and a fifth were earning under \$3,000.

The highest salaries were those of—

- Chemists—\$4,453.
- Mathematicians and statisticians—\$4,382.

Also in the higher brackets were—

- Research workers—\$3,819.
- Home economists—\$3,803.
- Therapists—\$3,733.
- Nurses (degree-holding)—\$3,647.
- Recreation workers—\$3,571.

Teachers earned \$3,492—slightly above the average for all the employed graduates. They compared favorably with—

- Social and welfare workers—\$3,440.
- Dietitians—\$3,351.
- Librarians—\$3,339.
- Editors, copywriters, reporters—\$3,120.

Averaging less than \$3,000 a year were—

- Library assistants and religious workers—\$2,960.
- Typists—\$2,912.
- Sales clerks, miscellaneous retail workers—\$2,504.

### *How many graduates were continuing their education?*



Of every 100 graduates, 19 were studying—9 full time and 10 part time.