“Do something you are really interested in and passionate about; take a risk and use your liberal arts skills and background to make an impact on our world. Remember that your first job doesn’t have to be the only job you ever get; in fact it probably won’t last for longer than a few years. Manage your professional career by learning from your experience, building a network of mentors and friends, and if you aren’t happy in a year or two, move on to something different.”

Devon Sherritt `00

“Keep an open mind when on the job market. There is an abundance of career paths that you may have never considered.”

Christopher Wolyniak `01

“It is going to be a difficult environment for job hunting, but the standard advice still makes sense: start early, do your homework, network and talk to as many people as possible, be considerate (and thankful!) of other people’s time, and above all, be flexible. You may surprise yourself and find your dream job where you least expect it.”

Christine Gallagher `83

“You are in good company graduating into a very tough job market. The same was true for many of us. You will need to be even more persistent, more creative and keep a more open mind than graduates of the past few years, but it will pay off. And it’s more important than ever to skillfully use your networks of friends, family and, of course, Colgate alumni to help you explore options and opportunities. We are your cheering squad – we want you to succeed and we are confident that you will!”

Joanne Spigner `76

“Remember that your first job is your FIRST job. Be flexible and open-minded. Your goals and ideal “dream job” will continue to evolve post-graduation so don’t worry if you don’t have it all figured out now. It’s a continuous process so sit back and try to enjoy the ride!”

Chrissy Quirolo `00
“If you plan on moving to a big market like New York, realize that job competition is fierce now – be open minded about your aspirations and don’t rule anything out. Utilize the Colgate network and think about what skill sets and experiences set you apart. When it comes to starting work, you’ll gain the most from an entry-level position if you go above and beyond the job description. Ask lots of questions, take on challenging assignments, seek out mentors and constantly observe what more senior colleagues are doing to help guide your own career development.”

Bart Hale `04

“Stop freaking out! Your first job doesn’t have to be perfect to be worthwhile. What it does have to be is educational: it’ll tell you whether you like a particular organization, a particular industry, and a particular corporate culture, just to name a few. And that will help you determine whether to stay there, or if you don’t, what to look for in your next job. But whether you love it, or hate it, you should strive to be as good in your job as possible. Go above and beyond – as Colgate students know so well how to do. Become indispensable to your boss, and the good things will happen: it’ll be more rewarding for you, you’ll be safe (or safer) during tough economic times, and the people you impress will remember you when thinking about whom to promote within the company or recommend for a job outside the company. So, like I said, stop freaking out.”

Gus Coldebella `91

“Use the leverage a Colgate education has given you. Not only the book smart/classroom education but the life experiences out of the classroom. Colgate alumni enjoy helping other Colgate alums. Seek them out and ask for their assistance. Using your Colgate Connection to get your foot in the door, we may not always be able to hire you but we’re anxious to help and offer advice.”

Tom Dempsey `72

“The best advice I can offer to seniors going forward into post-undergraduate life is to really assess where their passions and interests coincide with marketable skills. It’s easy to get caught up in an image of an ideal career or professional situation, but at the end of the day, it’s the sense of fulfillment and personal satisfaction you feel with what you do that determines your day-to-day happiness. My suggestion to those of you who aren’t sure of where you see yourself post-graduation is this: do something that puts you outside of your comfort zone, be it moving to Africa or London or a new city in the U.S., applying for a Fulbright, taking an internship in an area that interests you but you know little about. The more you challenge yourself, the more self-discovery you’ll experience and the better prepared you’ll be for the next exciting step on your path.”

Christine Hart `05
“The Class of 2009 is very lucky. You are graduating into a terrible job market. Take advantage of it and do something that you love and will challenge you. Feel fortunate that you are not burdened with the decision between the $60,000 job on Wall Street and the $15,000 job at the non-profit. Admit to yourself that you would make the wrong choice, and know that almost all of us have or would do the same. If you can afford it, go to graduate school now rather than working for a year or two. Go work on a campaign, join the Peace Corps or be a ski bum. Make the most of it and your life will be richer for it.”

Paul Lobo ‘89