

Most Recent Graduates Face Grim Jobs Outlook

Most college students graduate with high hopes that they'll land a great job with good benefits and pay. But the reality for half of graduates is very different.

A new *Associated Press* study revealed the tough road ahead many college graduates face. One in two are jobless or underemployed in positions that don't fully use their skills and knowledge. Add to that higher tuition and mounting student loans.

"The majority of people that I know are graduating and end up having to move back home," college senior Corie Prendergast said. "If they even get a job, it's not anything that's going to cover any kind of living expenses."

The study found there is a strong demand in certain science, education and health fields, but those with degrees in the arts and humanities are struggling.

"They couldn't find jobs [so they're] working at gas stations, working at fast food places. It's kind of like, 'I've spent four years, a bunch of money, \$20,000 sometimes in debt on student loans,' and now they're working at \$10 an hour," senior Jerrod McKenna explained.

Median wages for those with bachelor's degrees are down from the year 2000.

When you take into account underemployment, the job prospects for bachelor's degree holders fell last year to the lowest level in more than a decade.

A recent poll by the nonprofit, nonpartisan organization Generation Opportunity showed 77 percent of young people ages

18-29 either have or will delay a major life change or purchase for economic reasons.

According to the same poll, only 31 percent of 18 to 29-year-olds approve of President Obama's handling of youth unemployment.

However, some college students remain positive, saying success is all about hard work and character, not discouraging labor statistics.

"You won't make it if you don't work hard and put your mind in everything you do, every little thing. So I think I'm going to be doing just fine," college freshman Ciena Stinson said.

Other students say college gives them the opportunity to network, which can sometimes mean more than the education they receive.