



# TCC INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH BRIEF

## 1998 GRADUATE SURVEY STUDY

During fall 1998, the Office of Institutional Research surveyed 1,568 TCC graduates who graduated in May 1998. The biennial survey is conducted for purposes of program assessment and to gain knowledge of demographic, enrollment, attendance, employment, educational, and attitudinal data about TCC graduates. Results of the 1998 survey are published in the report, *Tidewater Community College 1998 Graduate Survey Study (July 1999)*. Highlights of the study are provided below.

- Approximately half of the graduates attended another college or university prior to enrolling at TCC. A small portion (17%) enrolled directly from high school. Almost three-fourths of the graduates were working either full- or part-time while enrolled and 20% were on active duty or discharged from the military service.
- The primary reasons for attending TCC have remained the same for the last 20 years: low tuition (74%), close to home (64%), and courses/curriculum of interest (65%). The majority (56%) of respondents indicated their primary goal was to obtain an associate degree for transfer.
- After graduation, 73% of the graduates were employed either full-time or part-time. Almost half of those employed full-time earned over \$26,000 per year. Approximately 3 out of 5 graduates were working for the same company that employed them during their enrollment, and almost a third of this group received a promotion or pay raise after earning their degree. Sixty-nine percent of the employed graduates were working in a curriculum-related field and 97% of this group indicated TCC preparation for employment was good to excellent. For graduates employed in a job unrelated to their curriculum, the primary reason cited was that they were already working for their present employer before completing the program.
- Approximately half (49%) of the graduates continued their education after graduation. For those who continued, 74% enrolled in a four-year college/university and the majority (56%) enrolled full-time. Most were classified as juniors or seniors and 75% enrolled in a TCC-related curriculum. Ninety percent rated their performance as expected or higher than expected after transfer. Eighty-five percent cited TCC's preparation as satisfactory or excellent for continuing their education.
- Since 1994 the percentage of graduates who felt they gained or made progress in developing basic computer skills has increased from 71% to 85%. As one student noted, "I use the information I learned in my computer class at TCC on a daily basis at my present job." Between 80-90% of the graduates indicated they were adequately prepared in writing, speaking, and math skills, defining and solving problems, understanding written information, and thinking creatively.
- Graduates are overwhelmingly satisfied with their TCC experience: 95% would recommend the same curriculum and 99% would recommend the college, in general, to others.
- TCC's success in regard to the mission of workforce development is best described in the words of one 1998 graduate: "As a direct result of my training I have gone from working odd jobs to a professional position in medical transcription for a national company where I receive health benefits, competitive pay, and a 401K and stock option."

**Table 1**  
**Comparison of Respondents With Graduates**

	Respondents		All Graduates	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
<b>By Campus</b>				
Chesapeake	93	12.9%	222	14.2%
Moss	28	3.9%	73	4.6%
Portsmouth	170	23.5%	436	27.8%
Virginia Beach	431	59.7%	837	53.4%
Total	722	100.0%	1568	100.0%
<b>By Award</b>				
AA	30	4.2%	55	3.5%
AS	315	43.6%	667	42.5%
AAS	251	34.8%	500	31.9%
Certificate	126	17.4%	346	22.1%
Total	722	100.0%	1568	100.0%
<b>By Gender</b>				
Male	287	39.8%	699	44.6%
Female	435	60.2%	869	55.4%
Total	722	100.0%	1568	100.0%
<b>By Race</b>				
			1134	
White	544	75.4%		72.3%
Black	105	14.5%	265	16.9%
Other	73	10.1%	169	10.8%
Total	722	100.0%	1568	100.0%
<b>By Age</b>				
17 and under	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
18-21	47	6.5%	88	5.6%
22-24	97	13.4%	230	14.7%
25-29	133	18.4%	323	20.6%
30-34	115	15.9%	265	16.9%
35-44	199	27.6%	426	27.2%
45-54	108	15.0%	191	12.2%
55-64	23	3.2%	43	2.7%
65 and over	0	0.0%	2	0.1%
Total	722	100.0%	1568	100.0%