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Top-Paid Majors Among College Class of 2010

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BETHLEHEM, PA—Which college majors command the highest starting salaries?

Engineering majors dominate the list of top-paid bachelor's degrees, according to a new report from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE).

NACE's Winter 2010 *Salary Survey* shows that engineering disciplines account for eight of the 10 most highly paid degrees.

The only non-engineering related degrees in the top 10 were computer science and information sciences and systems. (See Figure 1.)

Petroleum engineering earned the highest starting salary reported at the bachelor's degree level—\$86,220—more than one-and-one-half times the average starting salary reported for bachelor's degree graduates as a whole (\$48,351).

"While a variety of factors play a role in determining salaries, new graduates with degrees in the technical fields tend to benefit from their relatively low supply. There is more competition for their skills, driving up their salary offers," says Marilyn Mackes, NACE executive director.

For example, petroleum engineering degrees account for less than 1 percent of all bachelor's degrees conferred.

"Not every case is that extreme, but, in general, candidates with technical degrees have an advantage in the job market," says Mackes.

NACE will provide a second look at salaries for the Class of 2010 in April with the release of the Spring 2010 *Salary Survey*.

Figure 1: Top-Paid Bachelor's Degrees

Major	Average Salary Offer
Petroleum Engineering	\$86,220
Chemical Engineering	\$65,142
Mining & Mineral Engineering (incl. geological)	\$64,552
Computer Science	\$61,205
Computer Engineering	\$60,879
Electrical/Electronics & Communications Engineering	\$59,074
Mechanical Engineering	\$58,392
Industrial/Manufacturing Engineering	\$57,734
Aerospace/Aeronautical/Astronautical Engineering	\$57,231
Information Sciences & Systems	\$54,038

Source: Winter 2010 Salary Survey, National Association of Colleges and Employers. Data represent offers to bachelor's degree candidates where 10 or more offers were reported.

In addition, NACE will provide monthly updates on hiring/recruiting activity through the NACE Index (reported on www.naceweb.org), and will do a final update on employer hiring projections for the Class of 2010 with the *Job Outlook 2010 Spring Update* survey, scheduled for release in April.

About Salary Survey: *Salary Survey* is a quarterly report of starting salary offers to new college graduates in 70 disciplines at the bachelor's degree level. The survey compiles data from college and university career services offices nationwide. *Salary Survey* is issued in Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall, with the Fall issue serving as the year-end report.

About NACE: Since 1956, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) has been the leading source of information about the employment of college graduates. For more information, visit www.naceweb.org.

