



**CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2017 PROJECT SUMMARY**

Name(s) Elise T. Okayama	Project Number S0416
Project Title Beyond the First Finish Line: Preparing for Life after College	
<p style="text-align: center;">Abstract</p> <p>Objectives/Goals The objective of this study, is to extrapolate what skills will make graduating college students more valuable to businesses. The overall goal will be to give college students a clear view of what attributes they will need in order to find a good job.</p> <p>Methods/Materials I collected data from two original surveys regarding the valued skills of employees from 2001 and 2017. The first survey asked 32 business professionals their opinion on the value of various key skills, while the other used an analysis of 32 articles from 1996-2006. Both of these data sets were compared in order to extrapolate what skills will be valued in 2031. Economic and social trends were also taken into consideration.</p> <p>Results Based on the trends in the data, I have found that collaboration skills, adaptability, the ability to fit into a companies culture, as well the ability to do multiple varying tasks/jobs will be more desirable to businesses.</p> <p>Conclusions/Discussion Overall, today's employers are not looking for graduating college students with masters or doctorates. Instead, employers are looking for those who are hard working, reliable, adaptable, able to work with others, and have interpersonal skills. Based on this data, I predict that students will need to focus mainly on their interpersonal skills and broad experience, rather than higher level degrees such as masters or a doctorate. Other factors that influence these trends are the increasing cost of higher education and the increasing amount of constantly changing information and market trends.</p>	
Summary Statement The objective of this study, is to extrapolate what skills will make graduating college students more valuable to businesses.	
Help Received Ms. Carson (mentor) and Dr. Swanson (advisor) provided me with guidance and advice on what methods and materials my project should use. Also, as a member of The Center for Advanced Studies and Research, I received additional research experience.	