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Neumont graduates land jobs even before diplomas

By [Bob Mims](#)

Even before receiving their diplomas today, every member of Neumont University's first graduating class had landed high-paying technology jobs.

And that alone, says Nick Donofrio, IBM's Innovation and Technology chief, would be reason to crown the South Jordan-based school - originally opened in February 2004 as Northface University - as a success.

"They have done a pretty innovative thing here, [and] we're proud IBM was there close to the beginning of Neumont," he said. "It provides a terribly important addition to the family of options that we have in the U.S. to educate people beyond high school [and outside] classic brick and mortar institutions."

Neumont's graduates, who will hear commencement addresses from Donofrio and Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman Jr. this afternoon, also have landed jobs paying an average salary of \$58,646 - 15 percent higher than the national average for new computer science grads, according to the latest National Association of Colleges and Employers survey.

Donofrio praised the school's accelerated, 30-month bachelor's degree program for the quality of its students - future computer engineers who learned through "project based" courses designed to provide real world experience.

"They are coming out industry ready, with the certifications and knowledge of the industry they need," he said, adding Neumont's emphasis on continuing to learn beyond graduation is critical to succeeding in an industry where "everything is fast paced and fast changing."

IBM, which has partnered with Neumont during the past two years to provide two instructors along with laptops and software to students at no cost, sees the Neumont model as one in need of replication - if the nation is to maintain its lead in high-tech innovation.

Donofrio's message for students?

"I want them to know that this is just the beginning, not the end [of their educations]," he said. "They must be pioneers for life - that is how America will continue to lead [technological development] in the end."

Huntsman, too, sees Neumont as a showcase for how technological learning and certification can be streamlined to meet the nation's needs more quickly.

"America can compete in the global marketplace, especially in technology-related fields," Huntsman said. "Neumont University is demonstrating that committed students, matched with excellent preparation, are in demand in the workforce. We applaud their direction."

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