

College Students Rethink Careers In New Gallup Survey

(NAPSA)—When football star Pat Tillman announced he was trading his NFL career for one in U.S. Army Special Forces because of the events of September 11, it was a decision that resonated with many of today's college students. Take Caitlyn Yeykal. A senior at a small Pittsburgh college, she planned to become a medical journalist, but is now applying to medical school with dreams of working for the Centers for Disease Control in bioterrorism. Kevin Koney, an accounting major at Chicago's DePaul College wants to go to work for the government as a forensic accountant. Recent MIT grad Ryan Wagner, a computer science major, always planned to fight cyberterrorism. The only difference now is that he's not the only person he knows interested in homeland security.

These students are not alone, according to a recent Gallup survey. Commissioned by Bayer Corporation, the *Bayer Facts of Science Education VIII: U.S. College Students Look Ahead* finds one in five college students reporting they, too, have seriously considered changing their career plans or thought about joining the U.S. military or the nation's intelligence fields because of the terrorist attacks.

"From bioterrorism to cyberterrorism and beyond, few will feel the effects of our changed world as much as today's college students," said Rebecca Lucore, manager of Bayer's *Making Science Make Sense* program that advances science literacy through hands-on, inquiry-based science learning, employee volunteerism and public education.

College Students and 9/11

The *Bayer Facts of Science Education VIII survey** found that:

- 75 percent of college students say the U.S. will face increasing threats from terrorists.
- 90 percent believe science and technology are important in helping the U.S. meet those threats.
- One in five (17 percent) say 9/11 has prompted them to seriously consider changing their career plans or major, or, for the first time, think about joining military or intelligence fields.
- They believe that nearly 10 percent of their classmates are rethinking their plans, too.
- 67 percent see a shift toward careers that benefit society and the public interest.
- 93 percent say science literacy is important for average Americans in order to understand and deal with terrorist threats.

* Conducted by The Gallup Organization



Seven in 10 students affirm that new job opportunities will be created as a result of America's new emphasis on homeland security. Of those, an average of one in 10 report seriously considering these new opportunities. And, while making money will never go out of vogue (nearly eight in 10 say there will not be a shift away from careers that offer greater financial reward), two-thirds predict a turn toward careers that benefit society and the public interest.

For those students planning to pursue homeland security careers, new "skills" realities have sharply altered the employment landscape. At a recent Congressional hearing, National Security Agency and FBI representatives said the most highly prized skills for new recruits are science, mathematics, engineering, computer science and foreign language skills.

"Each day it becomes clearer that science and technology play a key role in the war on terrorism. What should also be clear is that now, more than ever, we as a nation need to make improving math and science education a priority so that students develop the critical thinking, problem-solving, team-working and other science literacy skills that are increasingly integral to the protection of our nation," said Bayer's Lucore.

Do today's students have what it takes to succeed in high-tech reliant homeland security fields? Despite international assessments like the *Third International Math and Science Study* that place U.S. high-school students near the bottom, college students surveyed were confident of their abilities in these two areas. Eight in 10 say, yes, they've had the proper grounding in math and science that is necessary for success. However, four in 10 say they wish they'd had a stronger pre-college science and math education, and seven in 10 believe science and math education should be strengthened for the next generation of students.

For a copy of *The Bayer Facts of Science Education VIII*, visit Bayer's web site at www.BayerUS.com/msms.