

# **MAXIMIZING STEPPINGBLOCKS ON YOUR CAMPUS**

Steppingblocks Annual Conference | March 2025



# ABOUT US

## Helen Powers

Director, University Career Center

## Vicki Hamby

Senior Associate Director for Operations, Career Outcomes  
& Special Projects, University Career Center



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# ABOUT USC

- **Founded in 1801**
- **Carnegie Foundation R1 University**
- **Columbia Campus Enrollment**
  - 35,590 Total Students
  - 27,280 Undergraduate Students
  - 6,466 Graduate Students
  - 1,844 Professional Students
- **Over 330,000 Living Alumni**



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# LEARNING OUTCOMES

**To share how the University of South Carolina has used SteppingBlocks to:**

- Support student success through career exploration and decision-making processes
- Bolster institutional efforts across a wide range of functions (use cases), thereby enhancing career services' impact
- Deepen campus partnerships and cultivate the campus career ecosystem



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# AGENDA

- **Why** we are using big data on career outcomes
- **Who** was involved
- **How** we did it
  - Implementation Timeline
  - Marketing/Roll-out
  - Partner Engagement
- **What** outcomes we have had
  - Impact on Student Success
  - Institutional Benefit (Use Cases)
  - Career Ecosystem



# WHY CAREER OUTCOMES?

PERSONAL FINANCE

**DU**E


## Is College Worth It? The ROI of Higher Education in Today's Economy




August 09, 2023 — 07:00 am EDT  
Written by [Angela Ruth](#) for [Due.com](#) →

FORBES > LEADERSHIP


## Higher Education ROI: A Mandate For Transparency And Holistic Value



 Michael Horowitz Forbes Councils Member  
Forbes Nonprofit Council COUNCIL POST | Membership (Fee-Based)

 Jun 1, 2022, 07:00am EDT

## The Permanent Detour

Underemployment's Long-Term Effects on the Careers of College Grads



  Published May 2018

The New York Times Magazine



## Americans Are Losing Faith in the Value of College. Whose Fault Is That?

For most people, the new economics of higher ed make going to college a risky bet.


The Economist

Menu Weekly edition The world in brief Search

International | Useless studies


## Was your degree really worth it?

Crunching the puny financial benefits of many university courses



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# HOW WE ENGAGED CAMPUS PARTNERS

**Career Center**

**Gamecock GradStats**

Why Career Outcomes?

- 1 Provide a visibility tool that makes career outcomes accessible and transparent
- 2 Position UofSC as a cutting edge leader in supporting students with informed career decision-making
- 3 Improve student success including graduation, employment and post-graduation outcomes
- 4 Enable colleges/schools to quantify and articulate their value proposition to increase future Return on Investment (ROI)
- 5 Enhance understanding of job skills and competencies for greater alignment with employer needs and expectations

**THE STEPPINGBLOCKS SOLUTION**

The Career Center has engaged in various initiatives to glean career insights from alumni. Survey data can be limited and skewed; therefore, the Career Center engaged **Steppingblocks** to produce a comprehensive picture of UofSC alumni career outcomes using big data.

Steppingblocks aggregates alumni data into meaningful, actionable, and accessible information that allows users to make confident and informed decisions. The platform uses advanced machine learning models, unified analytics, quality metrics, data cleansing, normalization, classification, modeling and robust back-end engineering. Users will access data through an intuitive and simple digital interface.

**Data Sources**

Data is captured quarterly from over 100 publicly available unstructured sources. Sample Sources:

NCES (National Center for Education Statistics)	Public Salary Databases	Public Filings
BLS (Bureau of Labor Statistics)	Company Websites	Patent Publications
Census	Company Firmographic Databases	Online Profiles & Resumes
University Websites	Job Postings	Social Groups

**Background & Student Utilization**

The Career Center met with all 11 academic colleges and the Honors College to discuss/agree upon a "majors catalog".

A phased implementation for student faculty and staff will start Fall 2022.

Data will be applied to employer engagement to cultivate new internship/employment pipelines.

The Career Center is partnering with the Communications and Marketing office to integrate outcomes data into UofSC's revamped "Degrees & Majors" website.

**SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES**

- [Steppingblocks Website](#)
- [Steppingblocks Overview \(12 slides\)](#)
- [Steppingblocks Overview Videos \(8 short videos\)](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)

- Held initial stakeholder demos
- Conducted benchmarking
- Shared flyer & implementation plan
- Met with colleges/schools for "major mapping"
- Involved students in naming - branded as **Gamecock GradStats**
- Hosted "Round-2" demos to showcase college/school data
- Partnered with University 101
- Went "on the road" (tabling & presentations)



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# Gamecock GradStats Implementation

<b>PHASE I</b>	Spring & Summer 2022	<b>Product Selection</b> Procurement & Stakeholder Buy-In	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Held vendor demos with key stakeholders</li> <li>✓ Executed procurement</li> <li>✓ Conducted peer benchmarking</li> <li>✓ Met with every college to develop majors catalog</li> <li>✓ Presented to U101, Financial Aid and Admissions</li> <li>✓ Established SSO configuration</li> <li>✓ Solicited student input on customized product name</li> </ul>
<b>PHASE II</b>	Early-Fall 2022 (Sept/Oct)	<b>Pre-Launch</b> Pilot Data Clean-up, Marketing Design, Data-Request Process, & Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct in-depth data review and clean-up</li> <li>• Develop marketing campaign and collateral</li> <li>• Continued collaboration with UofSC's office of Communications &amp; Marketig to explore data integration with the UofSC Degrees &amp; Majors webpages</li> <li>• Pilot use with students via Career Center coaching appointments and in partnership with select colleges</li> <li>• Implement faculty/staff advisory committee</li> <li>• Share initial findings with campus stakeholders</li> </ul>
	Mid-Fall 2022 (Nov/Dec)	<b>Soft Launch</b> User Training & Continued Stakeholder Engagement  <i>Features available: custom dashboard, personality inventory outcomes data and the tuition analyzer</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and disseminate user guides/videos for students, faculty, and staff (user-facing module)</li> <li>• Develop standard reports for academic units and hold stakeholder roadshow presentations</li> <li>• Develop and deliver training for faculty/staff with administrator accounts to access back-end aggregate data</li> <li>• Collaborate with DoIT to develop automated data request form and to explore data integration with Carolina Analytics</li> </ul>
<b>PHASE III</b>	Spring & Summer 2023	<b>Full Launch</b> <i>Features available: Search 360</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement student, faculty &amp; staff marketing campaign</li> <li>• Launch F/S request form for custom reports (record level data)</li> <li>• Strategic engagement with key partners (e.g., U101, Parent Programs, Orientation, Advising, Development, etc.) for ubiquitous adoption of the platform</li> </ul>
<b>PHASE IV</b>	Fall 2023	<b>Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement user satisfaction survey</li> <li>• Analyze results of U101 direct assessment measures</li> </ul>

## Managing implementation

- Strategic about partnerships
- Ensure data Integrity
- Design a high-quality rollout & marketing campaign





# HOW WE BRANDED STEPPINGBLOCKS AT USC

- Summer Orientation
- University 101



- Flyers
- Table Tents
- Digital Slides
- Social Media
- Campus Newspaper
- Give-a-ways



## Gamecock GradStats

Search and view career paths  
of USC graduates:



Where they work



Skills they use



How much they make

[SC.EDU/GRADSTATS](https://sc.edu/gradstats)



Career Center

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# TAILORING THE MESSAGE

## Search and View the Career Paths of USC Graduates



Where they  
work



Skills they  
use



How much  
they make



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# USER TESTIMONIALS

- VP, Student Affairs & Academic Support
- AVP, Student Success
- Interim Assoc. Dean of Academic Programs
- Director, Career Center
- Three students – different messages



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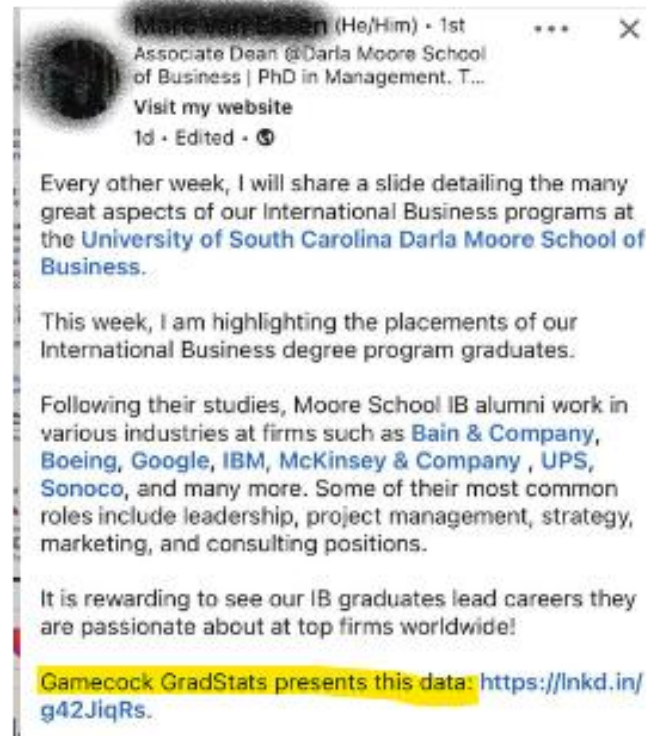


# REACTIONS TO THE ROLL-OUT

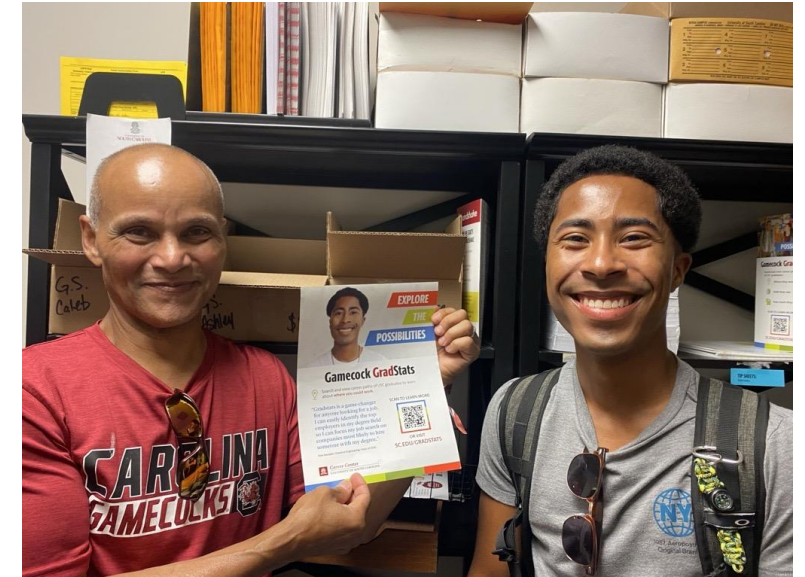
## Part-Time Job Fair



## Faculty Support



## Family Weekend



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# PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

**Supporting institutional efforts across a wide range of functions (use cases) in ways that elevate career services**

- Faculty/Staff use with students
- Class Projects / Student Experiences
- Government Relations
- Employer Relations / Corporate Engagement
- Development / Alumni Relations
- Athlete Recruitment/Retention
- Graduate Student Analysis
- College Relations – Curriculum Development
- Brand Communications Majors & Degrees website project



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# PARTNER ENGAGEMENT MAJORS & DEGREES PROJECT

**FINANCE, B.S.B.A.**

## USING YOUR DEGREE

Make your college experience the foundation  
for a successful future.

Learn how alumni use degrees with outcome  
data from [Gamecock GradStats](#), a service of the  
University of South Carolina Career Center.

### Potential Careers

- Accountant
- Forensic Auditor
- Bank Examiner
- Commodities Broker
- Financial Planner
- Investment Professional

### Job Titles of Alumni

- Financial Analyst
- Account Executive
- Financial Advisor
- Analyst
- Associate

### Average Alumni Salary

Five to 10 years after graduation without  
additional education

**\$76,424**

### Workplace Settings

- Business/Corporate Work
- Banking
- Investments

### Employers of Alumni

- Wells Fargo
- Bank of America
- Vanguard
- PwC
- Deloitte
- EY



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# CAREER CENTER - BEST PRACTICES

- Career Center management of platform establishes office as the "go-to source" for career information
- Data Sharing Agreements
- Data Cleansing Efforts
- Annual Report Templates &/or Infographics for Partners (*coming soon*)
- Intentional Use in Employer Relations
- Demo/trainings for fac/staff (career coaches, exploratory advisors, others)
- Classroom integration & development of lesson plans (i.e. U101, U201)
- User navigation guides & tutorial videos



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# STUDENT OUTCOMES



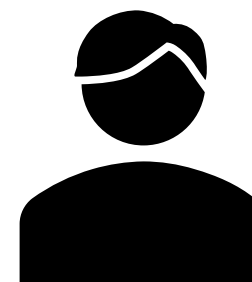
Chemical  
Engineering  
Interns



Remote  
Job  
Searcher



Student Athlete



Future CFO

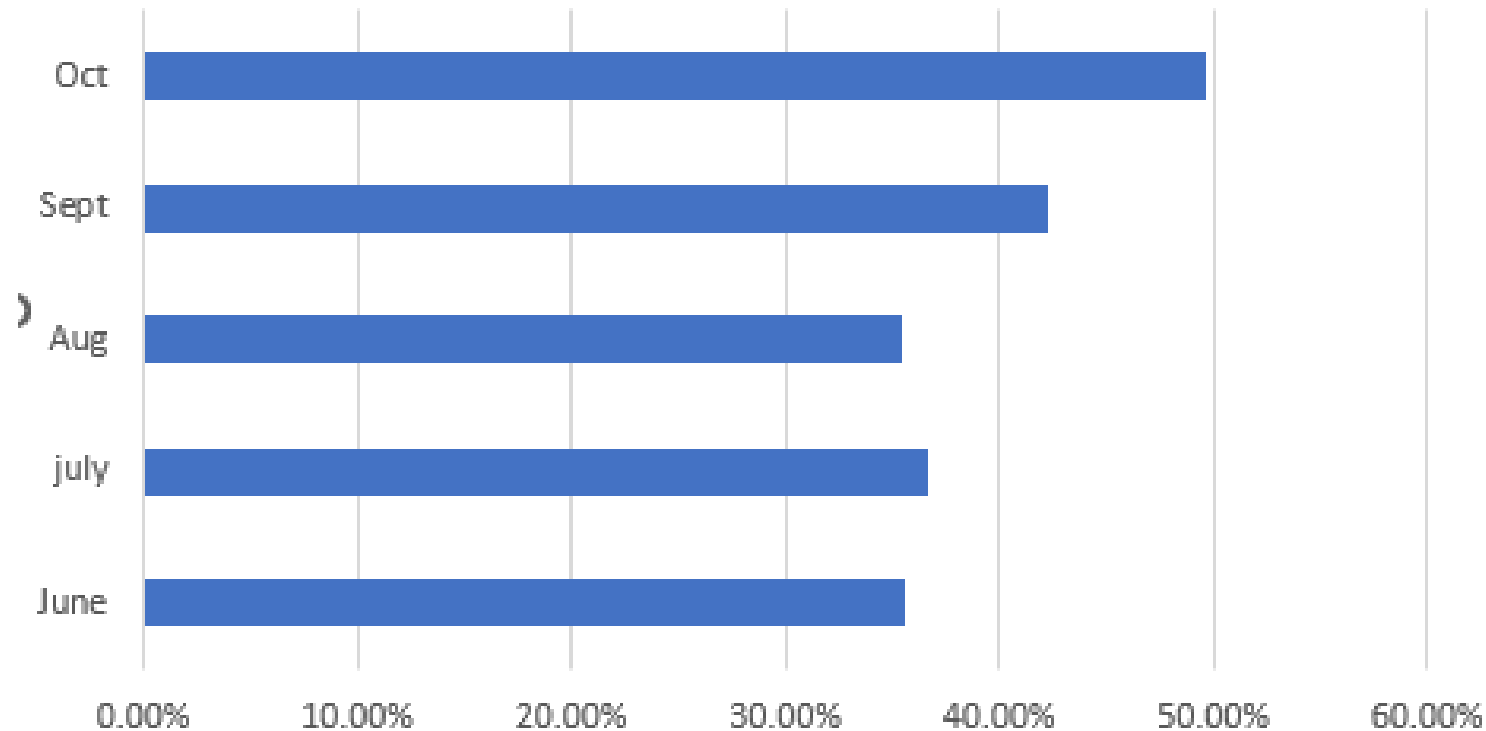


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# WHAT OUTCOMES WE'VE HAD

## Re-Engagement Rate

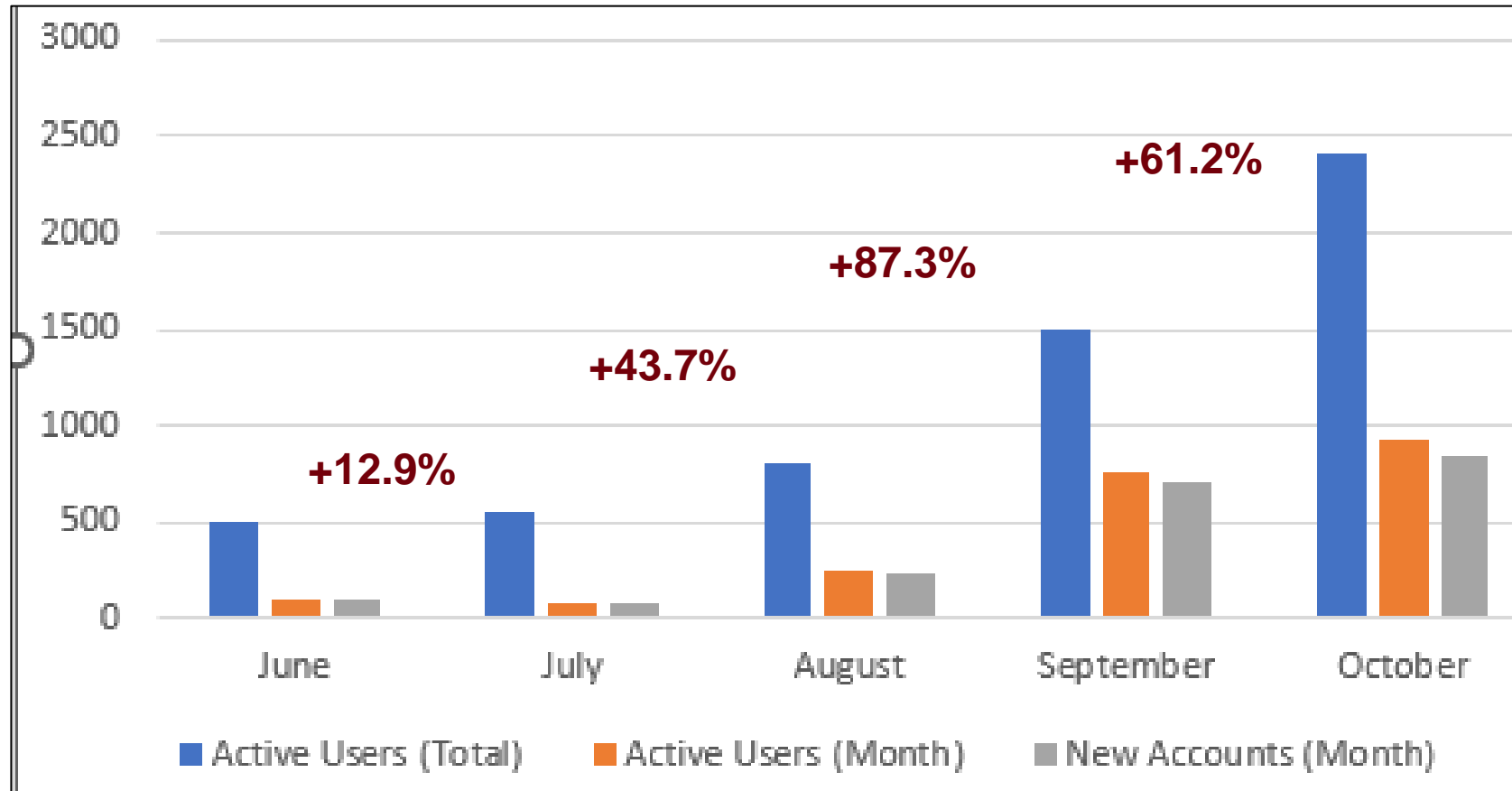
50% of users who visit the platform log in more than once



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# WHAT OUTCOMES WE'VE HAD

## Usage Report



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# QUESTIONS?

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