SUCCESS

Continued from page 9

enjoy working there. I was offered the job and I accepted it shortly after," Mehta said. "The Career Showcase is a great opportunity for students because companies from various areas are recruiting for different majors," Mehta added.

As a Director for Special Events, Mehta was directly involved in this semester's showcase by organizing "Meet the Recruiters" evening, where 60 students and 22 recruiters were present.

James Ross Maloney, a physics senior, will attend the showcase in hope of getting job offers. His eyes are set on big name companies, such as AMD, Intel, and Lockheed Martin, a company focused on the research, development and manufacture of advanced technology systems, whose customers include NASA, The Department of Defense and other federal agencies.

"I am applying for graduate school, but I would like to have the security of a job offer in case I don't get in the first time," Maloney said.

This semester will be his second encounter with the showcase.

"I have attended one before, looking for a summer internship. I didn't obtain any internship offers but it still was a good experience because I had the chance to put my resume together," he said.

Unfortunately, the Career Showcase felt the impact of the recent economic slump as well. According to Lucas Wall, assistant director of current events at the Career Resource Center, the numbers of participating companies are down a third, with Enron, a usual of the O'Connell center, making big news about financial hard times.

"Despite the economy, some companies still have the need for certain positions to be filled," Wall said.

Karen Mendez, a marketing major graduating this semester, remains positive about the hiring conditions.

"Companies are not hiring as many people as they did before, which makes it harder for students to stand out, due to the competition," Mendez said. "If you want to succeed, you have to go the extra mile, but it is not an impossible task."

Mendez had an opportunity to choose her future employer between two great companies: Motorola and IBM. During the Fall Career Showcase, she spoke to an IBM representative and presented her resume. She kept in touch with him through email and found out about the events IBM was sponsoring on campus.

After a series of interviews that took place at the UF CRC, she visited the Boca Raton IBM offices in Florida. Two months later IBM offered her a marketing position. By that time, she had already accepted an outstanding offer from Motorola, with whom Mendez had interned four times before.

"The Career Showcase is a wonderful opportunity to interact with employers and increase your chances of getting an interview," Mendez said. "These days more and more students are sending their resumes online, but the Showcase is the best medium to meet the recruiters because of the human interaction aspect."

Local business and companies are benefiting as well from this Career Showcase. CEX Communications is starting an internship program and will be looking for students from information technology, sales and marketing, finance, public relations, among other majors.

"This event is an outlet for us to interact with the University of Florida students who are interested in local opportunities, and to let them know we are a major employer in the area," said representative Vanessa Earhart.

By Camelia Negoita
The Gator Times staff

When Nancy Leitner started working for the University of Florida in 1969, the Career Showcase was just an outlet for companies to present themselves to students. A parking spot was only a mere $2, and no hiring took place at that time.

Over the years, Leitner, an Information Specialist at the Career Resource Center, saw the showcase evolve into one of the biggest in Florida, and even in the United States.