Quarterly Career Trends Report

Conducted quarterly, the SoFi Career Trends Report aims to identify current employment trends, gauge the demand for undergraduate and graduate level talent, and provide insight into hiring practices across industries and regions.

KEY FINDINGS

As 2015 came to a close, fourth quarter employment data continued to illustrate a theme that's been in play since the U.S. economy recovered from the Great Recession—job growth without wage growth. Although underemployment is one reason for the lag in wages, another factor is that many candidates and employees can't (or don't) protect their market value by **negotiating higher salaries** in new positions or asking for a raise in current ones. This is especially true at the professional level where labor supply is tighter.
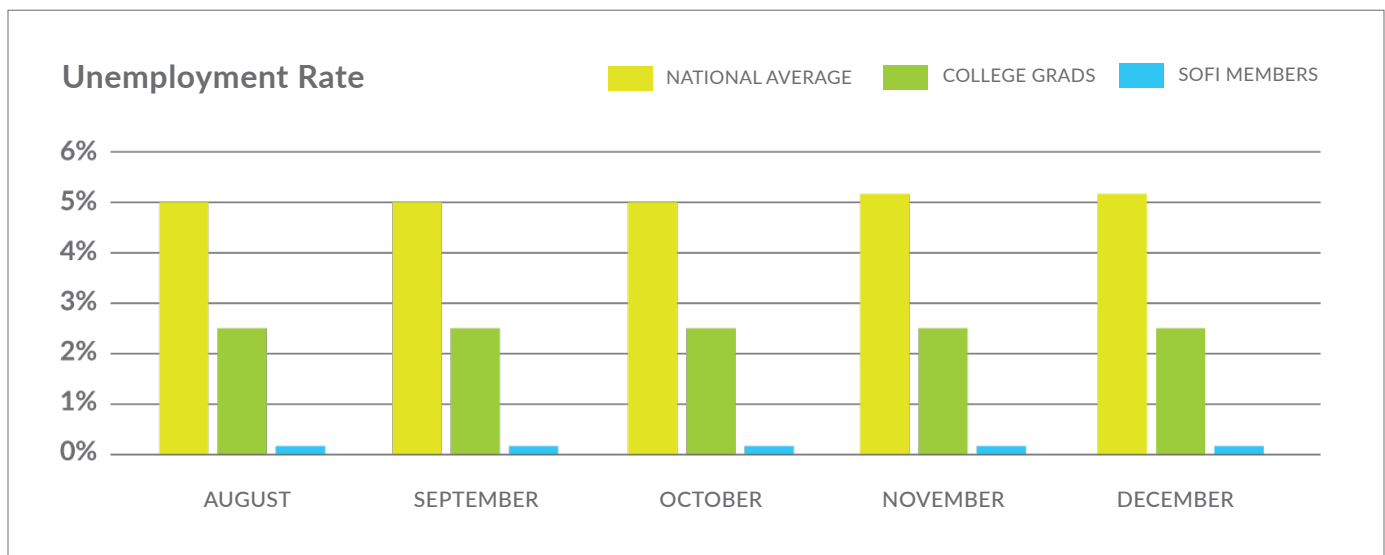
Here are a few highlights form this quarter's report:

- **SoFi members continue to outperform the market in terms of employment and compensation.**

- **MBAs and JDs outpace average wage growth over the last decade, but only by a small percentage.**

- **This could be a great year to ask for a raise, given low unemployment numbers.**

- **Data suggests the legal market is poised for strong growth in compensation this year.**

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The national unemployment rate remained flat at 5.0% for the quarter, despite the economy creating more jobs than any other quarter in the year. In fact, a broader measure of unemployment, which includes people stuck in part-time jobs or too discouraged to look for work, neared 10%. We may not see a substantial drop in unemployment until the percentage of underemployed candidates is reduced and the discouraged workers are absorbed.

People with a college degree or higher continue to post very low unemployment rates, closing 2015 at 2.5%. **SoFi members** dramatically outperformed both those with college degrees and without, posting an unemployment rate of 0.1% at year-end.

Unemployment Rate

NATIONAL AVERAGE COLLEGE GRADS SOFI MEMBERS

	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
National Average	5%	5%	5%	~5.2%	~5.2%
College Grads	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
SoFi Members	~0.2%	~0.2%	~0.2%	~0.2%	~0.2%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; SoFi data

WHAT JOBS ARE IN DEMAND?

If you're thinking of job searching in 2016, **new research** from CareerBuilder and Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI) could help. The organizations analyzed 700 occupations to uncover industries where the number of monthly job postings outpaces the number of actual hires. The full list includes other data points, such as job growth and salary, to help candidates make informed decisions.

Top 10 in-demand occupations that require a college degree:

1. **Registered nurses**
2. **Software developers, applications**
3. **Marketing managers**
4. **Sales managers**
5. **Medical and health services managers**
6. **Network and computer systems administrators**
7. **Industrial engineers**
8. **Computer systems analysts**
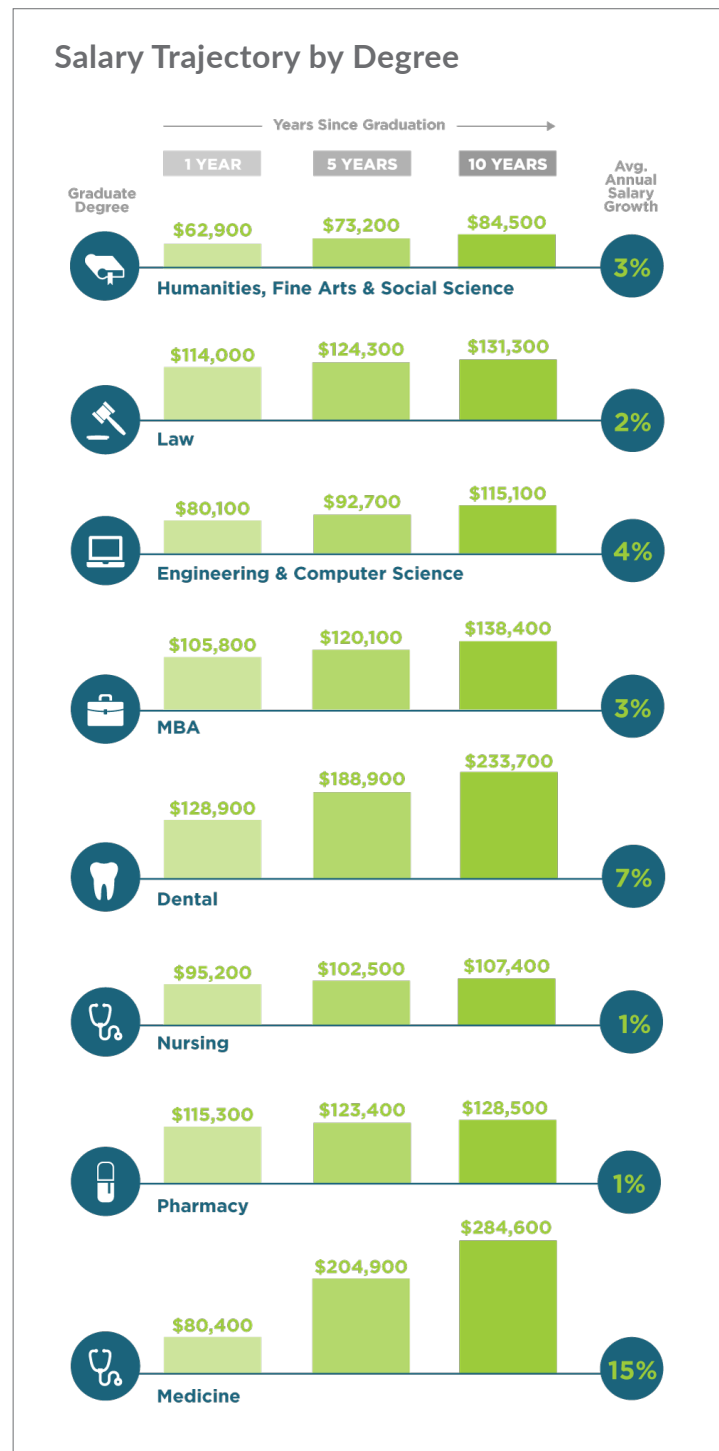9. **Web developers**
10. **Financial managers**

COMPENSATION TRENDS

Although wage growth continued to lag behind job growth, there is some good news to report. Unlike the past two years, when growth in wages barely exceeded inflation, 2015 will show a positive gain in real wages (approximately 2%). Unfortunately, this has more to do with low inflation than an increase in compensation.

Professionals with advanced degrees continue to outperform on wage increases, but not by a substantial amount. In fact, candidates with a JD or MBA have only averaged increases of 2% to 3% over the last ten years as indicated in the chart at right. The only exception to modest growth in income is from candidates with a MD or DDS, where the increases are much higher over the same period.

Given the low unemployment rate for degreed professionals, this sluggish wage growth is surprising. This could partly be attributed to candidates failing to negotiate better offers or **ask for pay increases**. According to a recent **PayScale** study, 57 percent of those surveyed have never asked for a raise in their current field.

It is important to take time to understand your market value and determine when there is an opportunity to increase compensation. Join our **webinar series** on salary negotiation to learn more about how to approach the pay raise conversation.

Salary Trajectory by Degree

Years Since Graduation

| Graduate Degree	1 YEAR	5 YEARS	10 YEARS	Avg. Annual Salary Growth
Humanities, Fine Arts & Social Science	$62,900	$73,200	$84,500	3%
Law	$114,000	$124,300	$131,300	2%
Engineering & Computer Science	$80,100	$92,700	$115,100	4%
MBA	$105,800	$120,100	$138,400	3%
Dental	$128,900	$188,900	$233,700	7%
Nursing	$95,200	$102,500	$107,400	1%
Pharmacy	$115,300	$123,400	$128,500	1%
Medicine	$80,400	$204,900	$284,600	15%

Source: SoFi data

SPOTLIGHT ON COMPENSATION TRENDS FOR JDs

The legal job market has been challenging over the last ten years, with many candidates struggling to make the transition from campus to career. This could be the primary reason for the Juris Doctor degree's poor return on education (as indicated in the chart above).

That said, expectations are high that compensation growth in the legal field will improve this year. According to Robert Half's **2016 Legal Salary Guide**, average starting salaries for attorneys at law firms are expected to increase

3.5 percent in 2016. This bodes well for SoFi members who are lawyers, and who already outperform the market on compensation. Ranging in experience from two to seven years, our members posted an average of $153,431 compared to the national average of $90,062.

Compensation can vary for attorneys depending on the type of employer as the data in the chart below demonstrates.

Compensation by Firm Type
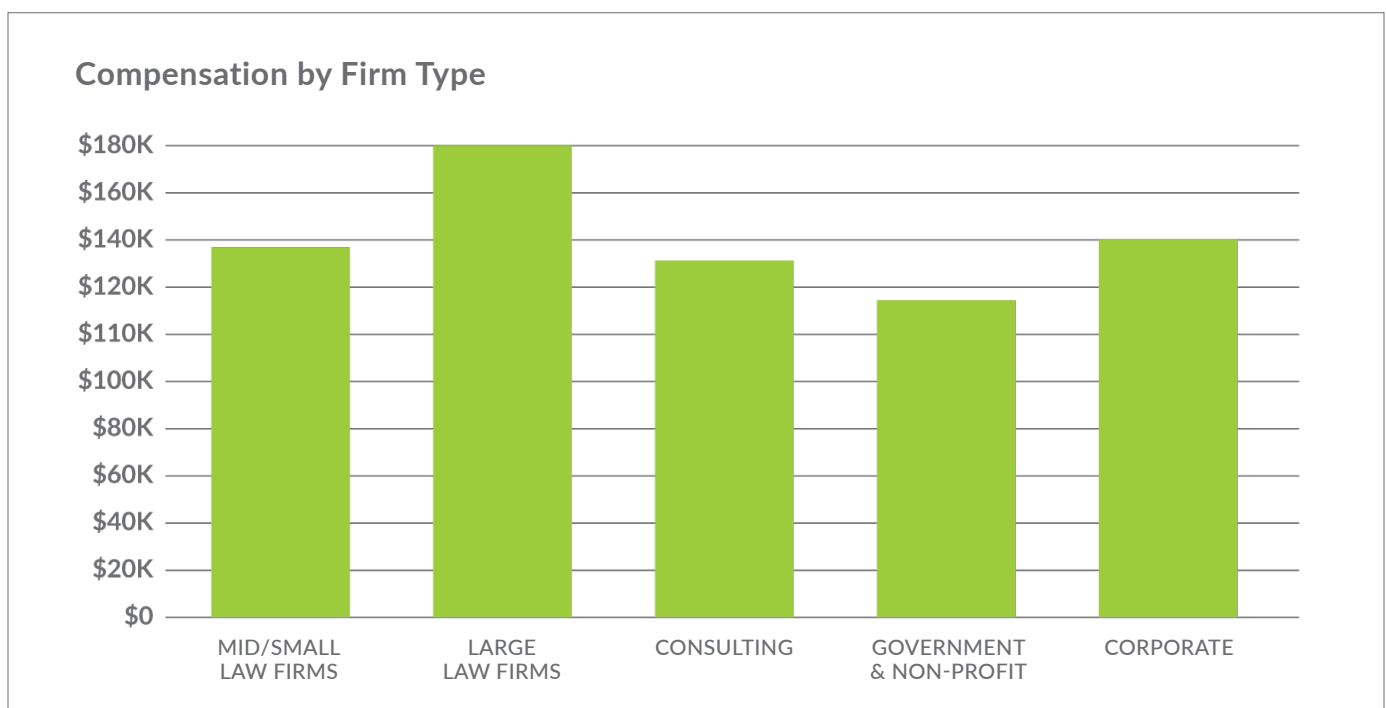
Source: SoFi data

SOFI's IMPACT ON CAREER SUCCESS

In addition to providing our members with significant savings on their student loans, we invest in their professional success by offering customized, one-on-one career management and job search advisory services. Whether it's maximizing compensation during offer negotiation, improving your professional online presence, or providing

assistance with job-related questions and goals, SoFi is committed to having a positive impact on your career. Since the beginning of 2015, SoFi has assisted more than 70 borrowers with finding new, improved career opportunities.

Contact us today to learn more about the benefits and services offered by our Career Services team.

✉ careerservices@sofi.com   www SoFi.com/career-services