



## **2008 ASCP Resident Council Fellowship & Job Market Survey**

By Thomas J. Bollinger, MD, MPH

For the third consecutive year, the ASCP Resident Council conducted its Annual Fellowship and Job Market Survey of pathology residents and fellows in conjunction with the Resident In-Service Exam (RISE) administered by the ASCP.

### **Demographics**

Of the 2,512 individuals surveyed, 86% are currently in a dual AP/CP program, while 11% are solely AP and 3% solely CP. Fifty percent are in a university-owned public hospital, 26% in a university-owned private hospital, 18% in a community based teaching hospital, 2% in a military hospital, and 4% in “other” institutions. Sixty-six percent of the respondents were US medical graduates, 27% were international medical graduates, 3% were US international medical graduates, and 4% responded “other”. Of the respondents, 25% were PGY1, 25% PGY2, 25% PGY3, 22% PGY4, and 3% fellows.

### **Subspecialty Grants**

The ASCP sponsors subspecialty grants for study at outside institutions in the subspecialty fields of the participant’s choice. This marks the third year in which survey participants were asked to identify the subspecialties they would choose if they were to apply for a grant. The top five selections this year are:

- Hematopathology (17%)
- Gastrointestinal Pathology (13%)
- Dermatopathology (11%)
- Cytopathology (8%)
- Breast Pathology (6%)

For more information regarding the ASCP Resident Council Subspecialty Grant Program, please see the 2008-2009 ASCP Resident Handbook or visit the ASCP website [www.ascp.org](http://www.ascp.org).

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Dr. Bollinger is in residency training at the Orlando (FL) Regional Medical Center and has been a member of the ASCP Resident Council for two years.



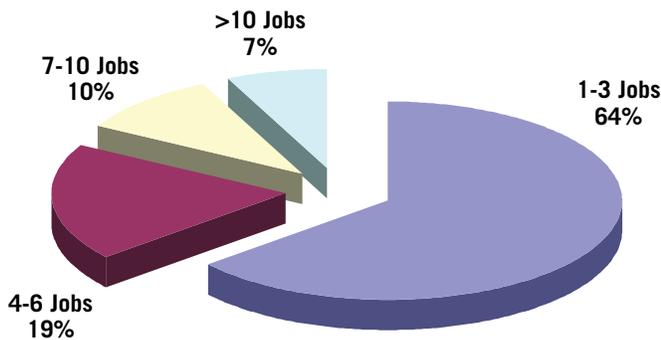
# Job Market

Six hundred twenty of this year's survey participants were PGY4 or greater. Of those, 268 (43%) had either already applied or were planning on applying for a job; 142 of the job applicants also applied for or intended to apply for a fellowship.

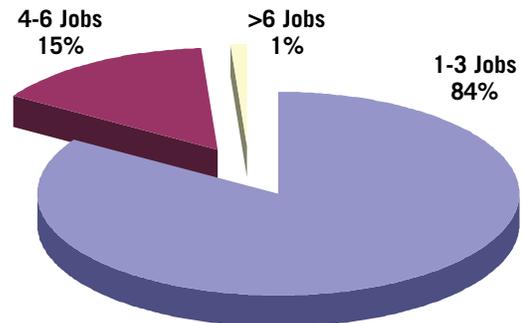
Of the 268 job applicants, 174 formally applied for jobs, i.e., sent in a CV or resume. Of those: 64% applied for 1-3 jobs, 19% for 4-6 jobs, 10% for 7-10 jobs, and 7% for >10 jobs. Eighty-one percent (142) of those 174 applicants formally interviewed for jobs, with: 85% interviewing for 1-3 jobs, 15% for 4-6 jobs, <1% for 7-10 jobs, and 1 person interviewed for more than 10 jobs. Of the 174, 148 received job offers, with: 57% receiving at least one offer, 26% receiving two offers, and 17% receiving 3 or more offers.

Eighty-nine percent of the 148 job hunters searched for less than six months before finding a job, with: 41% finding a job in less than a month, 28% finding a job in 1-3 months, and 20% finding a job in 3-6 months. Seventy eight (53%) of the 148 respondents pursuing a job were offered positions in their own residency/fellowship program, with: 36% declining this position for another offer, 38% accepting and planning on staying at their program, and 26% accepting but continuing to look for other offers.

**Number of Jobs Applied For**



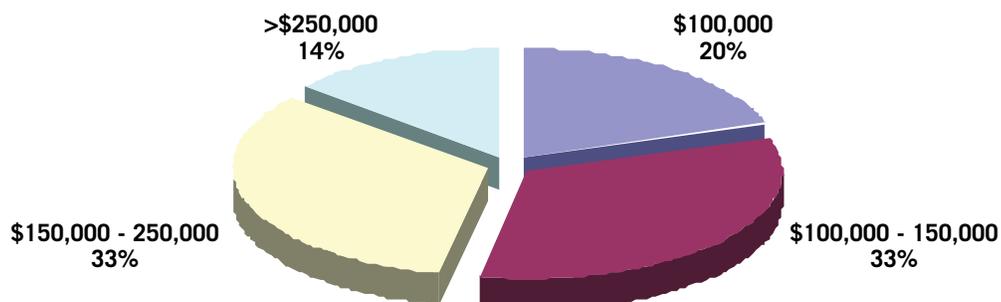
**Number of Jobs Interviewed For**



# Salary

A question regarding the range of starting salaries (excluding benefits) was answered by 121 respondents. Of those, 17 indicated that they received a starting salary of more than \$250,000, while 40 people indicated they were offered \$150,000-\$250,000. Another 40 participants stated they received offers in the \$100,000-\$150,000 range; 24 respondents were offered less than \$100,000.

**Starting Salary**

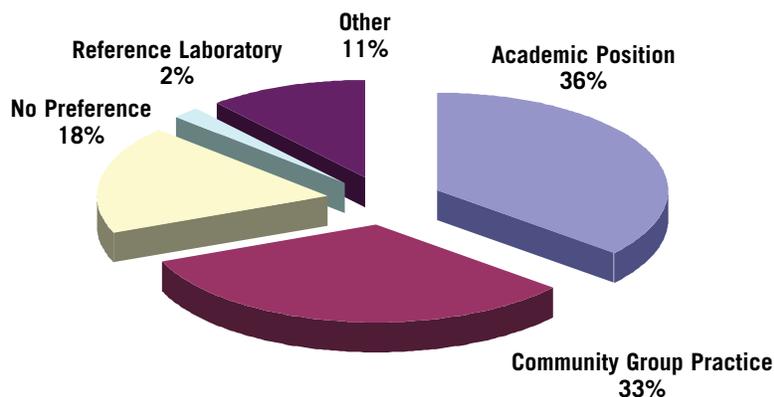




# Factors in Job Search

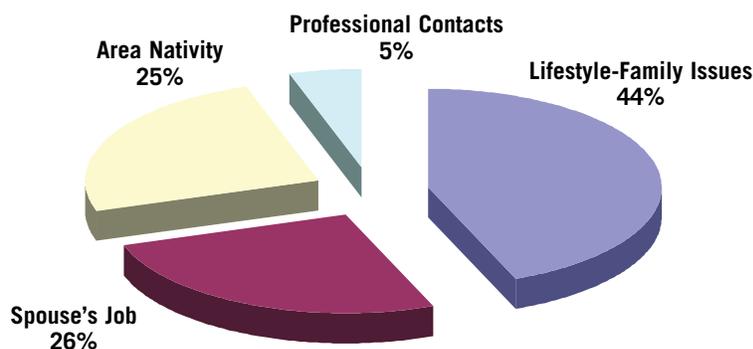
**Type of Practice:** According to the survey results, 36% of respondents indicated a preference for an academic practice position, while 33% sought community group practice jobs, 17% had no preference, and 2% wanted a reference lab job. These interests are reflected somewhat in the anticipated job market, where 43% of 267 respondents felt that academic practice held the most job openings, 40% felt community group practice offered the most opportunities, and 2% felt reference labs were most available.

## Practice Position Desired



**Geographic Region:** Sixty-two percent of 267 job hunters restricted their job search to a specific region. The most common reason for their restriction was “lifestyle/family issues” (43%), with spouse’s job (26%), area nativity (25%), and professional contacts in the region (5%) being mentioned as other reasons. The most popularly searched region was the Southeast United States (23%), with other regions’ popularity as follows: 20% Northeast, 15% Southwest, 14% Midwest, 13% Canada, 10% “other,” and 5% Northwest.

## Reasons Job Search Restricted To A Geographical Region



**Other Factors:** For those seeking a job, multiple job factors rank at varying levels of importance to each applicant. The applicant’s perception of staff and institution was ranked highest in level of importance, with family factors, job availability in geographic regions, long term job security, and opportunity to practice a subspecialty next in importance. Salary considerations, fiscal pressures (loan repayments, etc.), research opportunities, and career advancement opportunities were secondary.

When searching for a job, referrals from faculty and word of mouth were ranked as most helpful, at 77%. Random mailings/calls were ranked next in importance (19%), followed by CAP listings (15%), ASCP Job Finder (8%), the *American Journal of Clinical Pathology* (6%), executive recruiters (5%), and the *New England Journal of Medicine* (3%). The Internet also played a pivotal role in finding job opportunities for residents, with 107 respondents identifying sites such as mdconsult.com, careerweb.com, and monster.com as most helpful.



# Fellowship Market

Of 2,241 respondents not pursuing job opportunities, 59%, or 1,327, applied for or intended to apply for fellowships.

Of the 1,034 fellowship applicants who formally applied, 49% applied for 1-3 fellowships, with 21% applying for 4-6, 12% for 7-10, and 18% for more than 10. Of those, 53% received 1 offer, 20% 2 offers, 9% 3 offers, 7% >3 offers, and 11% no offers.

The majority of prospective fellows (69%) finalized their plans in their third year of residency, with 13% in the second year, 12% in the fourth year or later, and 6% before or during the first year. Eighty percent of those who were offered fellowship positions accepted the offer and did not seek a job, while 11% accepted the offer and received no job offers, 7% accepted the fellowship and declined a job offer, and 2% accepted the offer but later took a job.

Most prospective fellows sought fellowship for long term career interests (69%), while 27% felt it was required for employment, and 2% did so because the job they had wanted was not available after their residency.

Prospective fellows were most interested in the following fellowships:

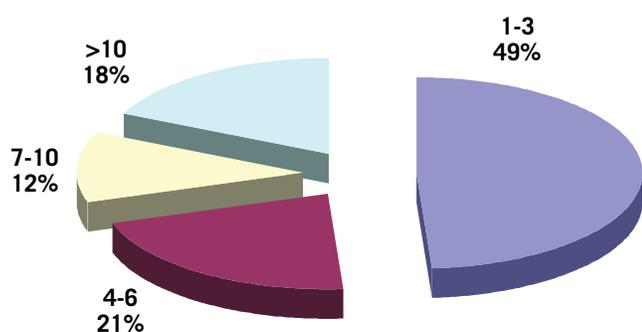
- Surgical Pathology (34%)
- Hematopathology (32%)
- Cytopathology (27%)
- Gastrointestinal/Hepatic Pathology (25%)
- Dermatopathology (19%)

## Fellowship Application Process

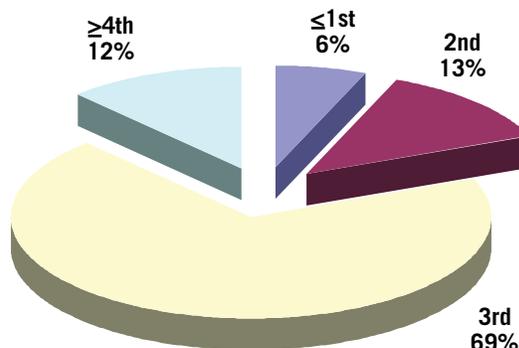
There has been much discussion regarding a perceived need among pathology department chairs, residency and fellowship program directors, and fellowship applicants for a uniform application process. In 2007, a majority of residents applying for fellowship (63%) felt there should be a uniform sign-up day, while 61% felt that there should not be a formal National Resident Matching Program-supported match day. This year that percentage went up, with 81% of 1,456 respondents indicating that there “should be a universally accepted fellowship application.” And, 81% also indicated that there “should be a universally accepted timeline for fellowship applications.”

Most respondents (73%) preferred to apply during PGY3, from October to December or July to September and would prefer to finalize fellowship plans during PGY3 (57%) or PGY4 (39%) during the first quarter (44%) or second quarter (24%).

Number of Fellowships Applied For



Year of Residency Fellowship Plans Finalized



## Resident Participation in National Organizations

This year, a question regarding support for resident participation in national organizations was added to the survey. Ninety-eight percent of 2,510 respondents indicated that their residency program supports participation in national organizations, such as the ASCP and the College of American Pathologists.



# Outlook

2008 is the 12th year in which the ASCP Resident Council has tracked the resident fellowship & job market, and the third year it has been associated with the RISE exam.

The job market continues to improve, and fellowship opportunities remain competitive. Of residents and fellows applying for jobs, 85% received job offers (up 9% from last year and up 1% from 2006). Of those applying for fellowships, 87% received offers (down from 94% last year and down 1% from 2006). This decrease in fellowship offers and increase in job offers might be explained by late effects of the reduction in the length of pathology residency training from five years to four years that occurred in 2006.