Introduction to the Career Forum Column

Welcome to the second installment of the Career Forum column. The column, which debuted in the September 2001 issue, aims to provide career advice and practical information to graduating students and database professionals. In addition to the standard, 6-page articles that cover broad topics, we plan to solicit shorter articles (1-2 pages). Shorter articles will present multiple (and probably different) views on specific questions. Taking this a step further, we will also experiment with online surveys, in order to provide hard-to-find quantitative data on a variety of career-related topics (a salary survey is one such example). Survey data will be collected over the web and tabulated into short articles for the print edition. Finally, we are organizing the resources mentioned in the Career Forum articles together with other helpful web pointers into a separate section of SIGMOD Online, tentatively under **www.acm.org/sigmod/career/**. Look for this special online section in December 2001.

In order for the Career Forum column to be successful, active participation from the database community is required: a) we need feedback from students and junior database professionals to make sure that we are covering the right topics, and b) we need members of the database community to share their experience and advice on career-related issues. Please email me at *labrinid@cs.umd.edu* if you want to suggest topics/questions for articles or contribute to the column.

Before closing, I would like to thank Ling Liu and Rich Snodgrass for giving me the opportunity to serve as the associate editor for the Career Forum column, as well as for their suggestions. I would also like to thank Alberto Mendelzon for co-authoring the "Career-Enhancing Services at SIGMOD Online" article in the September issue and Ugur Cetintemel for writing the very informative article in this issue. Ugur Cetintemel recently graduated from the University of Maryland and joined Brown University as an assistant professor. His article, "On the Academic Interview Circuit: An End-to-End Discussion," is based on recent personal experience and is filled with helpful advice for performing an effective and enjoyable job search. The article is a "must read" for all of you that plan on interviewing for university positions in 2002.

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October 2001