Job hunting's a breeze for these graduates

SMU's 2007 cohort get better salaries and most find work within 6 months of graduation

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THEY are finding better paying jobs and finding them sooner, even though their graduating cohort of 711 graduands is 84 percent bigger than that of the previous year's 386.

Of the graduates surveyed by the Singapore Management University (SMU), the top 20 percent wage earners enjoy monthly starting salaries of $5,600.

Most of these highly-paid graduates are employed in investment banking or management consulting. According to SMU, its top nine highest wage earners draw between $8,000 and $10,000.

Overall, close to 100 per cent of those who responded to the annual survey — 618 graduates — found a job before or within six months of their graduation last year.

Out of these respondents, 519 graduates, or 84 per cent did so within a month.

The average salary of those in full-time permanent employment is up 6.7 per cent to $3,040. Those who graduated cum laude (with distinction) or better are getting monthly starting salaries of $3,540, up 7 per cent from 2006.

About two-thirds of respondents had received multiple job offers, ranging from between two and 10 offers.

Meanwhile, about 3 per cent surveyed are economically inactive, pursuing postgraduate studies, travelling or other personal choices.

Mr Bernard Chen, 26, an SMU graduate now working as a foreign exchange trader at Citibank, told TODAY: "I think one reason more graduates are finding better-paying jobs earlier is because there's a competitive atmosphere at SMU."

"When you see your seniors getting jobs early, you will want to work hard to do the same, or even better. The professors also advised us to start looking early because the difference provided by an SMU education.

"We will continue to ensure that our undergraduates have opportunities for global exposure to widen their perspectives as well as platforms for character development."

Said SMU president Howard Hunter: "Over the years, our graduates have earned the confidence of employers who saw the difference provided by an SMU education. We will continue to ensure that our undergraduates have opportunities for global exposure to widen their perspectives as well as platforms for character development."