

First Destination Survey and More | Class of 2025

Executive Summary

The First Destination Survey (FDS) for the Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) Class of 2025, which includes undergraduate graduates from summer 2024, fall 2024 and spring 2025, achieved a knowledge rate of **90.5%**. Of the **1,515** graduates, we collected post-graduation outcomes for 1,371 individuals, while 144 graduates' outcomes remain unknown. This year's data reveal marked shifts in primary destinations compared to the Class of 2024, particularly in the percentage of graduates entering full-time employment versus pursuing advanced education.

Key Findings:

Ninety-five percent of graduates achieved positive career outcomes within six months of graduation, including full-time employment, advanced education, and other outcomes such as military service and volunteer/service programs. The sections below provide a breakdown by outcome category.

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

- 53% of graduates secured full-time employment post-graduation [**↑ 5 percentage points from 48% in the Class of 2024**]
- 36% of graduates are pursuing advanced education [**↓ 6 percentage points from 42% last year**]
- 5% of graduates were still seeking opportunities at the time of the survey [**↑ 0.7 percentage points from 4.3% last year**]
- 7% of the remaining graduates pursued other primary destinations such as entrepreneurship, military service or post-graduate fellowships [**↑ 0.7 percentage points from 5.9% last year**]

Workforce Trends

The Class of 2025 continues to outperform national trends in degree-related employment. Of the students entering full-time work, **79% reported that their position is directly related to their degree**, in contrast to data from the recent [Cengage Group Graduate Employability Report](#), which found that just 30% of 2025 graduates nationally had secured full-time positions aligned with their degree. Despite the slight 0.7% uptick in the still-seeking rate, the Class of 2025 continues to demonstrate resilience in a competitive job market. While the national rate reported in Cengage Group's 2025 Employability Report was notably higher with 33% of graduates still seeking employment at the time of taking the survey, **our outcomes are similar to or better than many peer institutions.**

While a smaller percentage of graduates immediately entered advanced education compared with last year, 24% of the class took a growth year, and approximately 83% of these students are using this period to prepare for competitive terminal degree programs, including medical, dental, law, and PhD programs. This aligns with Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) data showing that 50% of 2025 MD matriculants took one to two growth years. These experiences reflect a deliberate approach to strengthening credentials and positioning graduates for admission to highly selective programs.

Class of 2025 Employment Outcomes

The Class of 2025 demonstrated strong momentum in navigating a challenging job market. Nationally, graduates began their job search slightly earlier than the previous year—6.4 months

before graduation, compared to 6 months for the Class of 2024, according to [National Association of Colleges and Employers](#). **CWRU students were even more proactive, starting their search an average of 9.6 months before graduation**, positioning themselves competitively in a constrained market. Among graduates pursuing permanent employment (excluding those taking a growth year), **88% secured full-time roles by graduation**, with an additional 10% doing so within three months.

These results highlight the intentionality with which CWRU students approach their career pathways—starting early, engaging consistently and leveraging resources such as the Center for Career Success, which was used by 90% of the Class of 2025.

Salary Trends

The median salary range for all graduates, including those in growth year roles, is **\$70,000–\$74,999**, the same as last year’s record high for our students. When excluding those taking a growth year, **the median salary range rises to \$75,000–\$79,999**.

Broken down by college and school, the **median salary ranges** for graduates **in permanent, non-growth year employment** are:

- Case School of Engineering: \$80,000–\$84,999 (no change from 2024)
- College of Arts and Sciences: \$65,000–\$69,999 (up from \$60,000–\$64,999 in 2024)
- Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing: \$65,000–\$69,999 (down from \$67,500–\$72,499 in 2024)
- Weatherhead School of Management: \$70,000–\$74,999 (no change from 2024)

Top Employers and Locations

The Class of 2025 secured employment at more than 430 unique organizations nationally and internationally. The top employers hiring three or more graduates were: Cleveland Clinic (51), University Hospitals (22), Epic (18), KeyBank (9), CWRU (8), Northwestern Medicine (7), McMaster-Carr Supply Company (6), Amazon (4), Lincoln Electric (4), Deloitte (3), P&G (3), Honda (3), EY (3) and McKinsey & Company (3).

Other prestigious organizations that hired our graduates include Abbott, Apple, Bank of America, BNY Mellon, Boeing Company, Bristol Myers Squibb, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Eli Lilly & Company, Google, Johns Hopkins University and Applied Physics Laboratory, JPMorganChase, Mastercard, Microsoft, NBCUniversal, NVIDIA, PepsiCo, Qualcomm, Rockwell Automation, Rolls-Royce plc, Tesla and The Walt Disney Company.

Forty-two percent of graduates working full-time chose to remain in Ohio. Of those, **40% are employed in Northeast Ohio, up from 31% in 2024**, demonstrating a continued commitment to the local region while also spreading the impact of CWRU graduates at home and abroad. Among Ohio-native graduates for whom outcomes are known, 72% remained in the state for full-time employment. In addition, 125 graduates working in Ohio are not originally from the state, underscoring the university’s role in both retaining local talent and contributing to regional “brain gain.” Of the Class of 2025 graduates who chose to work outside of Ohio, the top destinations were California (28 graduates, 6%), New York (24, 5%), Illinois (21, 5%), Wisconsin (21, 5%) and Massachusetts (17, 4%). Other states with substantial numbers of graduates include Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, New Jersey and Washington. Additionally, five graduates (1%) reported fully remote employment.

Top Job Functions

The top five job functions for full-time employed graduates of the Class of 2025 remain largely consistent with previous years. Engineering continues to lead at 30% (up from 26% in 2024), followed by nursing at 13% (down from 14%) and research and science at 13% (down from 14%). Healthcare and public health grew to 11% (up from 8%), moving into the top five this year, while information technology grew to 9% (up from 7%). Other notable career paths include financial services (5%), consulting (4%), business/administration (3%), marketing/sales (2%) and education/teaching (2%). In addition, several graduates accepted prestigious post-graduate fellowships, including positions at the National Institutes of Health, Rothman Institute and Princeton in Asia. One graduate secured a highly competitive economist role with the United States Postal Service despite broad government sector layoffs. These fields continue to represent the primary career trajectories for our graduates.

Continuing Education Outcomes

Thirty-six percent of the Class of 2025 (491 students with known outcomes) pursued continuing education immediately after graduation, enrolling in graduate and professional programs across the United States and internationally. While this represents a decrease from 42% in 2024, the FDS captures only the first step graduates take after commencement. Many students pursuing highly competitive professional degrees strategically delay enrollment to gain full-time work experience and strengthen their candidacy. Nearly a quarter of the Class of 2025 reported taking a growth year, and approximately 83% of those students are using that time to prepare for programs such as medicine, dentistry, law and doctoral study. As Tom McKenzie, assistant director of admissions at the CWRU of Medicine, notes, “It’s important to stop and reflect on the journey to medicine.”

Because the FDS focuses on immediate outcomes, it does not always capture the eventual success of students who pursue graduate or professional school after one or more growth years. Recent examples from CWRU graduates illustrate how these intentional pauses can strengthen applications and lead to exceptional outcomes:

- **2024 graduate:** Committed to two growth years to gain additional research and clinical experience while preparing for the MCAT. During the 2025–2026 medical school application cycle, they received **17 interview invitations** and already secured **10 medical school acceptances**, with several decisions still pending.
- **2023 graduate:** Graduated with a **3.97 GPA and 523 MCAT**, spent two growth years working as a **Clinical Research Coordinator at University Hospitals**, and has received **16 interview invitations** and **10 medical school offers**, from institutions such as UCLA, Mount Sinai, University of Pennsylvania, Vanderbilt, Yale, Johns Hopkins and more.

These examples highlight how growth years can serve as meaningful and strategic steps toward highly competitive professional programs.

Advanced Education Outcomes Through the FDS

The following continuing education outcomes were identified through the FDS. Our students are pursuing graduate and professional programs at Ivy League institutions, other selective U.S. programs, and highly regarded programs internationally. Of those with known outcomes, 35% chose to continue their education at CWRU, demonstrating confidence in the institution’s academic and research offerings.

Notable Institutions Attended:

Ivy League Universities:

Columbia University – 6

Cornell University – 2

Harvard University – 2

Princeton University – 2

University of Pennsylvania – 8

Yale University – 3

Other Prestigious Institutions:

Boston College – 1

Boston University – 2

Carnegie Mellon University – 2

CWRU – 150

Duke University – 7

Emory University – 2

Georgetown University – 4

Georgia Institute of Technology – 5

Johns Hopkins University – 4

Massachusetts Institute of Technology – 2

New York University – 6

Northwestern University – 6

Ohio State University – 14

Purdue University – 3

Rice University – 1

Stanford University – 1

University of California-System – 7

University of Chicago – 6

University of Michigan – 7

University of Notre Dame – 1

University of Rochester – 1

University of Southern California – 5

Vanderbilt University – 1

Washington University in St. Louis – 3

Renowned International Institutions:

In addition to prestigious institutions in the United States, CWRU graduates matriculated to highly esteemed international institutions, reflecting the global reach and academic excellence of our students.

- Edinburgh Napier University (Scotland): Known for strong programs in business, computing and applied sciences.
- Politecnico di Milano (Italy): Consistently ranked among the top engineering and design schools in Europe.
- Sorbonne Université (France): A world-renowned research university with historical prominence in the sciences, medicine and humanities.
- Technion – Israel Institute of Technology (Israel): Recognized globally for engineering, computer science and innovation.
- Mila/Université de Montréal (Canada): A leading center for artificial intelligence research and graduate studies.

Programs of Study

In 2025, CWRU graduates continued to pursue advanced education across a wide range of fields. **The largest groups of students advanced their studies in medicine (72), engineering (69) and biomedical sciences (54)**, reflecting enduring interest in these disciplines. Other prominent fields include math and natural sciences (24), business and financial services (23), law (22) and technology

(17). Smaller but notable groups pursued public health (13); dental medicine/dentistry (12); counseling and psychology (11); social work (8); nutrition (7); nursing (7); Allied Health professional programs such as physician assistant, physical therapy and anesthesiology assistant (6); pharmacy (5); speech, language and hearing sciences (5); education (4); and public policy (3).

Degrees Pursued:

Nearly half (48%) of graduates pursuing advanced education enrolled in doctoral programs. These choices demonstrate the broad academic interests and professional aspirations of our graduates.

- Master's Degrees (including Master of Business Administration, arts and sciences master's degrees, Master of Public Health and other professional master's degrees): 51%
- Doctor of Medicine/Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine: 21%
- Doctor of Philosophy: 15%
- Juris Doctor: 6%
- Doctor of Dental Surgery/Doctor of Dental Medicine: 3%
- Other healthcare doctoral degrees: 3%
- Other: 1%

Competitiveness for Professional Schools

For the third consecutive year, CWRU has complemented the FDS with data from centralized application services, including AMCAS (allopathic medical schools), AACOMAS (osteopathic medical schools), LSAC (law schools), AADSAS (dental schools), CASPA (physician assistant programs) and others. By incorporating this additional data, we gain a richer and more complete understanding of our graduates' first destinations, the competitiveness of their applications and the prestigious programs that welcome them.

Competitiveness for Medical Schools

Students pursuing **MD** programs in the Class of 2025 achieved outstanding outcomes, with a **69%** acceptance rate to allopathic medical programs, well above the national rate of **45%**, and a combined MD and DO acceptance rate of **78%**. **Graduates received multiple offers, with CWRU students averaging 1.8 MD acceptances and 2.8 DO acceptances.** One student far exceeded these averages, earning **13 MD program admissions, the highest number recorded for a CWRU applicant.** Accepted students matriculated to highly competitive schools, including **Mount Sinai, Northwestern, Mayo Clinic and Georgetown**, demonstrating the exceptional preparation and competitiveness of our graduates.

Competitiveness for Other Professional Programs

- For programs in dentistry, CWRU graduates achieved a 100% acceptance rate, with an average DAT score of 22 (vs. 20 nationally) and GPA of 3.92 (vs. 3.68 nationally). Students secured spots at prestigious schools such as the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine, Columbia University College of Dental Medicine and Harvard University.
- All Physical Therapy applicants from the Class of 2025 were accepted (100% vs. 69% nationally), with matriculations to leading institutions.
- The Optometry and pharmacy programs both maintained perfect acceptance rates (100% vs. 70% and 100% vs. 83% nationally, respectively).
- In veterinary medicine, CWRU graduates achieved a 100% acceptance rate (vs. 48% nationally),

with an average GPA of 3.88 (vs. 3.56 nationally), including acceptance to programs such as Cornell University.

- Law school applicants from the Class of 2025 were highly successful, with a 91% acceptance rate (vs. 76% nationally). Admitted students achieved an average GPA of 3.69 (vs. 3.61 nationally) and LSAT score of 161 (vs. 156.7 nationally), gaining entry to top 14 (T14) law schools including University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School and Northwestern Pritzker School of Law.

These results showcase the exceptional preparation and success of CWRU graduates in earning admission to top professional programs nationwide.

Excellence in Experiential Education

Hands-on learning continues to define the CWRU student experience, with 99% of the Class of 2025 engaging in at least one experiential opportunity. Our students took full advantage of real-world experiences that prepare them for both careers and graduate study.

Sixty-six percent of graduates completed at least one internship, while 68% participated in an internship, practicum or cooperative education experience. **Research continues to stand out as a hallmark of the Case Western Reserve experience with 84% of graduates participating in research or creative endeavors.** Research participation increased between the Class of 2024 and the Class of 2025, rising from 548 to 604 students, a 10.2% year-over-year growth that reinforces the university's strong culture of inquiry. This level of research engagement aligns with the university's expanding research enterprise, as Case Western Reserve is now the #1 fastest-growing research university in the Association of American Universities, according to the National Science Foundation. Other widely pursued experiences included community service (48%), education abroad (47%), shadowing/externships (37%) and entrepreneurship (14%), highlighting continued growth in innovation and global engagement.

Many students explored multiple types of experiential learning with 49% completing three or more distinct experiences, gaining diverse skills in problem-solving, collaboration and critical thinking. Confidence in their preparation remains high, reflecting CWRU's commitment to equipping students for success no matter their next step: 98% of graduates shared that CWRU prepared them for their next steps, with those entering full-time employment feeling ready to secure jobs and those pursuing graduate or professional programs feeling prepared for advanced study.

As the Class of 2025 embarks on their careers and continued education, we celebrate their achievements and anticipate the impact they will make.