



# GIA Newsroom

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## News Releases

### Record Attendance Marks GIA's New York Career Fair

New York, NY – A standing-room-only audience packed the opening session of the Gemological Institute of America's (GIA) Career Fair at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York July 27, and that was only the first contingent of what became a record-setting number of more than 1,100 who attended the 11th annual event.

As hundreds more filed into the jewelry industry's premier recruiting event, they found not only a bevy of hiring representatives from the industry's top firms, but also an impressive agenda of panel discussions, one-on-one counseling, and workshops on essential topics, like interviewing skills and designer marketing. For these aspiring jewelry industry professionals – a mix of GIA students, current industry employees, and "career changers" – it was a day filled with hope, promise, questions, answers, and advice.

In his welcoming remarks, GIA President Bill Boyajian told the attendees, "Today is for you. We want to motivate you, encourage you, and challenge you to be the best you can be." Boyajian then introduced the opening panel, "Working to Win," composed of top jewelry industry executives, including Steven Lagos, president of design-firm Lagos, Inc., Lee Berg, president of Lee Michaels Fine Jewelry, Esther Fortunoff, executive vice president, Fortunoff Fine Jewelry, and Martin Rapaport, president, Rapaport Information Systems.

Each of these distinguished and highly experienced industry executives offered advice on how to enter and succeed in the world of diamonds and gemstones and fine jewelry. Lagos pointed out, "The jewelry business is all about people. But the real key is hard work. You have to set goals, and go after them." Fortunoff said it is important to be well rounded and technically proficient, and "to keep learning and growing."

Berg spoke about developing a career by setting priorities. He said he knew he wanted to "wake up every day and enjoy what I do. If you have that passion, have that desire, you'll be successful." Berg said in the jewelry industry, "You'll be helping people celebrate life's special occasions. If you give it everything you've got, you'll get tremendous rewards."

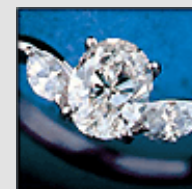
Rapaport provided further perspective to those seeking to enter the jewelry industry. "When you sell a diamond, you're not selling the stone, you're selling the emotion behind the reason people are buying that stone. This is an industry about people and emotion." He added, "Your reality is defined by you, more than anybody else. Find out what you want, and go after it."

The 35 firms who sent on-site recruiters represented a range of the industry, from diamond dealers such as David S. Diamonds, Inc., Diamonds International, and Eugene Biro Corp. (all of New York), to auction houses like Sotheby's and Christie's, to retailers, including Tiffany & Co., Cornell's Jewellers, and Kristin's Fine Jewelry, to name just a few. From the moment their tables opened, these firms welcomed lines of candidates anxious for a chance to turn in their resumes and talk about job opportunities.

Sanjay Ghulati, a student in the Graduate Gemologist (G.G.) program at GIA's New York campus, liked the reaction he received from recruiters. "I'm in a fortunate position," said the smiling Ghulati as he left the Lux Bond & Green table. "There are more opportunities than there are candidates, so I'm optimistic." He said his GIA education will be important as he looks to his career potential in the jewelry industry. "Recruiters want people with the professional credentials needed to represent their firms."

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John Green, president of Lux Bond & Green, was quite satisfied with the job seekers coming to his company's table. "We're seeing a higher quality of candidate this year," said Green. "They have both experience and a GIA education."

One-on-one counseling was another very popular Career Fair stop for the attendees. One of the counselors was Gary Roskin, G.G., a senior editor with JCK magazine. "Most of the candidates I spoke with want to change careers," he said. "They said they have left, or want to leave, their current occupation and get into the jewelry industry." Roskin said he was impressed with how "intent they are on finding a way to enter the industry." He also noted, "This is a different situation. In the past, they usually were mainly GIA students ready to enter the field of jewelry." He remarked that jewelry-career candidates should remain focused and network actively with industry organizations like the GIA Alumni Association, Womens Jewelry Association, American Gem Society, and Jewelers of America, in their geographic area.

Mila Woods of West Palm Beach, FL said she was thoroughly pleased with her one-on-one counseling experience. After speaking with award-winning designer Holly Croft, G. G., Woods said, "I received the guidance that I truly needed, and the encouragement to motivate me came through clearly in talking with Holly." A resident of West Palm Beach, FL, Woods learned about Career Fair when she contacted GIA for information on the Graduate Gemologist diploma program. Woods, who has worked in bench jewelry and as a jewelry design instructor at a magnet high school in West Palm Beach, said, "I wanted to restructure my career, to concentrate on designing jewelry, so I contacted GIA," she said. As a result of her counseling session with Croft, Woods said she intends to pursue a G.G. diploma.

Marc Dorio, author of "The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Perfect Interview," advised a room full of job candidates attending his Interviewing Skills Workshop to focus on the skills they can offer to an employer.

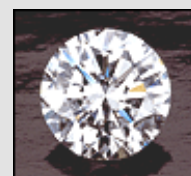
"Positioning Yourself for Success" brought job seekers together with image consultant Lauren Solomon and strategies and connections specialist Linda Zimmer in a panel moderated by Julie Livingston, president of Luxury Marketing Group. Zimmer provided a personal coaching consultation for many job-seekers who remained in the room long after the scheduled session ended.

Career Fair founder Kathryn Kimmel, vice president of marketing and public relations for GIA, said this year's record-breaking event demonstrates how lucrative the jewelry industry is as a career choice in the American business environment. "It was very gratifying to see so many bright and focused people here to learn about careers in the jewelry industry. Whether GIA students, current jewelry industry professionals, or professionals in other fields, an enjoyable and rewarding career in this exciting industry can be theirs with the right training and career preparation."

Kimmel said Career Fair is designed to offer the most assistance in the least possible time. "We've tried to offer practical assistance and counseling in the important subjects, like interviewing, image development, and one-on-one counseling for specific skills. Along with the presence of so many recruiters from top jewelry and diamond firms, this provides candidates a one-stop event that can be extremely helpful."

Career Fair New York is just the first of two Career Fairs GIA will hold this year. The second will be held at the Institute's world headquarters in Carlsbad, CA, Oct. 12. Career Fair was founded by GIA and the 24 Karat Club of Southern California. Prime sponsors of Career Fair are National Jeweler and Jewelers of America, Inc. Sponsors are JCK International Publishing Group and Professional Jeweler, and affiliate sponsors are The Johnson Family's Diamond Cellar and Samuel Gordon Jewelers.

If you are an employer interested in participating in Career Fair 2001, contact GIA's Career Services office at 800-421-7250, ext. 4255. If you are a job seeker wishing to attend, call GIA's Jewelry Career Fair hotline at 800-421-7250, ext. 4100, visit [www.gia.edu](http://www.gia.edu) or email [careerfair@gia.edu](mailto:careerfair@gia.edu).

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