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## The case for the liberal arts, Part IV: Oh, the places you'll go

Michael Hemesath

*College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University*, [mhemesath@csbsju.edu](mailto:mhemesath@csbsju.edu)

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## Quad 136

### The Case for the Liberal Arts, Part IV: Oh, the Places You’ll Go

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## The Case for the Liberal Arts, Part IV: Oh, the Places You’ll Go

Recently there was an interesting [StarTribune article](#) on Carleton’s response to external pressure to make the case for the liberal arts. They have put together a nice [website](#) to give students a “pathway” to different careers. Their organizing scheme is from career back to courses and institution-based resources like alumni, faculty and staff. This is a useful model and an especially relevant reminder that careers are often long and winding paths from unlikely liberal arts beginnings.

At the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University we have opted for a slightly more concrete model (no pun intended, given Saint John’s well-known love of concrete!) in which we provide [student specific data](#) on exactly what graduates are up to in their first years after college. St. Olaf has a similar website though they aggregate their [data for recent graduates](#). (Somewhat smugly, I’d note that CSB/SJU had their site up nearly a year ago and St. Olaf was even ahead of us.)

What may be most interesting about this trend is that a top-ranked liberal arts school like Carleton, consistently in the *US News* Top 10 National Liberal arts schools, is feeling some pressure to make the case for liberal arts, something a faculty member noted in the *StarTribune* article might have been considered even slightly objectionable twenty years ago.

Regardless, those of us at liberal arts institutions should absolutely not fear such scrutiny. Looking at the data provided by any of these fine liberal arts schools reveals that a liberal arts education can take one to many interesting and rewarding places and train one for a career, not just a job.

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### About the

Author:

Michael  
Hemesath



Michael Hemesath is the 13th president of Saint John's University. A 1981 SJU graduate, Hemesath is the first layperson appointed to a full presidential term at SJU. You can find him on Twitter [at] [PrezHemesath](#).