

## WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH FRENCH?

**“...It’s been very helpful in volunteer work I’ve done with African refugees from former French colonies and, obviously, speaking French fluently is a requirement for my current job....French has become part of my daily life.”**

-Jeanette Jackson, Assistant Director,  
French-American Chamber of  
Commerce, Chicago

**My knowledge of the language was imperative [to] my current job at the French Consulate in Chicago where I am surrounded by native French speakers.**

-Claire March, Assistant Press Officer,  
French Consulate in Chicago

**It was not a dream...But it still feels like one. ...I have to note a major improvement in my foreign language skills....I still can’t believe it myself.... Four months of studying in Paris did more for my French than three years of studying in Chicago.**

-Olya Ermak, graduate of Lake Forest College

**I am an Arabic and Italian major... pursuing a minor in French.... During my sophomore summer, I was an intern at the French Consulate General of Chicago. After years of studying French, it is rewarding to finally put French to use outside of the classroom, and ... [it] has proven to me that if I want to use French in the future, I will surely be able to, even if I stay right here in Chicago.**

-John Deppe, undergraduate at Georgetown University

**“...as Coordinator of Research and Development for the City of Chicago Department of Environment...I was asked to attend a meeting (with delegates from Paris) during which we discussed our recycling initiatives...[at] a dinner...hosted by the Paris committee of Chicago Sister Cities International...[I was] seated next to one of the delegates... At the end of the meal, my dining companion turned to me and asked if I was interested in coming to work for the City of Paris... I’ve been in Paris since last July, working for the Direction des Espaces Verts et de l’Environnement.**

- Matthew Lagod, former employee of the City of Chicago

**I am sitting in Nogent-le-Rotrou France. I graduated in May of 2008 and moved to France to become an English language teacher in primary schools. It is very important for my job that I can communicate clearly in French.... I am the only person in my graduating high school class that works abroad, or even out of the state...**

-Alexander Hutchins,  
graduate of Western Illinois University

**I discovered that French is incredibly relevant to my interests. My particular interest in nineteenth-century art and music has been greatly enriched by knowing French. I love soaking up its culture and history and my French is an essential tool to do this.**

-Jessica Jacobson, Graduate Teaching  
Assistant, U of IL, Champaign-Urbana

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**I have worked in a non-profit organization with a mission to promote French language and culture in the United States. The fact that I had retained a moderate level of French comprehension from the study of French in high school and college was certainly a plus on my résumé.**

- Nora Delaney, Director of Cultural Programs,  
Alliance Française de Chicago

**I have had the opportunity to work with an international non-profit organization that does humanitarian work where I had the opportunity to speak with both folks in France and in Africa on international projects, like digging wells for communities which don't have clean drinking water . . . I was also a consultant for a while, and one of our big projects that I worked on in Canada happened in Quebec . . . where the working language was French. Now I'm working with the Quebec Government Office here in Chicago. It's really a great opportunity, especially considering the importance of Quebec and Canada, in general, in the Midwest and in North America. Canada is one of the largest trading partners to the U.S., actually *the* largest trading partner, so French definitely has a role in the relationship between Canada and the U.S.**

- Del Phillips, International Relations  
Consultant

**"Last year I worked in a Congolese Refugee Camp in Zambia...with an American NGO... [With] my familiarity of French ...I did not need a translator... Knowing French allowed me to learn Swahili much easier because the Congolese were so good at translating from Swahili to French. However...I always used French for explaining important financial and organizational matters that required more details. . . I am majoring in Earth Systems but I've continued studying French. I am a tour guide at Stanford and I gave a tour to a group of French entrepreneurs that were visiting. Within a month I was contacted by one of them offering me a job at a Clean Technology business in Paris. I couldn't accept since I still have school to finish but it was pretty cool."**

-John Mulrow, student, Stanford University

**I'm using French in my career as a programmer for Apple. . . When I go to the (Apple developer) conference, it amazes me that French is almost like a second language, there are so many developers that speak French. . . You hear all these words, like Exposé, Bonjour, Rendez-vous. It's because there are a lot of French people at Apple . . . When the Apple employees and other developers find out that you speak French, it allows you to communicate with them on some other, additional level and get a little bit more inside information. . . You bond in a way you probably couldn't have done otherwise because you are able to relate to them on some personal level that they just don't do in English, for example.**

- Matthew Taylor, Computer Engineer