

What are you hopeful about?

Whether unemployed or working, in school or graduated, these Millennials show confidence, skepticism and a smidge of delusion when answering the question. By **Madeline Szrom**



ERIN NEELMAN, 20, Columbia College sophomore, theater major/art-history minor

"This is a rough economy so why not go for my dreams? With art history, I'd want to curate somewhere like the Art Institute of Chicago. I'm a realist. I know acting isn't that steady so I'm hoping to have something to fall back on."



BRIAN TRAM, 22, DePaul University junior, finance/economics major

"Well, seeing how I'm a junior there's a lot of downsides in finance. [But] despite the people who are cut, there are still jobs being created. Every finance [major] imagines being on Wall Street, but sometimes you have to step back and take the opportunities you're offered."



SARAH BOCKEL, 23, has a music/theater degree, works on shows at the Shedd Aquarium and as a server at Rosebud restaurant

"If I stick around long enough and work hard enough and know enough people, I'll succeed. The great thing is there is never a lack of art, even in hard times, but still, a lot just doesn't pay well. I hope the job pay gets better."



SEBASTIAN CLARK, 24, has an English degree, works as a food demonstrator for gourmet dip-mix company the Pantry Club

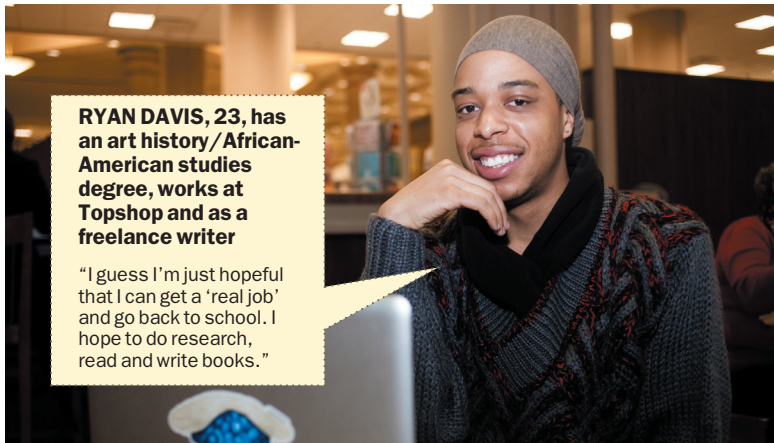
"I hope to go to grad school to [study writing]. I just moved to Chicago so I'm trying to get my feet on the ground. I'm waiting for the perfect job, which for me would be teaching, so I need to go to grad school."



RAVEN HARPER, 25, Illinois Institute of Art-Chicago senior, film major

"Just finding a nice place to work. Usually you have to work your way up. I don't even want to pay my dues, really, but for me that would be assistant editor or producer, which I'm okay with, but I ultimately want to write and direct."

PHOTOS: NICOLE SCHNEIDER, NICOLE RADJA, ANDREW NAWROCKI



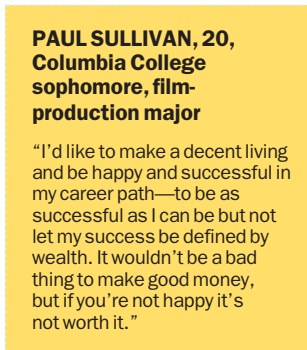
RYAN DAVIS, 23, has an art history/African-American studies degree, works at Topshop and as a freelance writer

"I guess I'm just hopeful that I can get a 'real job' and go back to school. I hope to do research, read and write books."



SARA SCHROEDER, 22, has a philosophy/religious-studies degree, unemployed

"I'm hopeful I'll be able to work to live, not live to work. That's the simplest way to put it. We're overstimulated and overworked; that's not what our parents' generation wanted for us."



PAUL SULLIVAN, 20, Columbia College sophomore, film-production major

"I'd like to make a decent living and be happy and successful in my career path—to be as successful as I can be but not let my success be defined by wealth. It wouldn't be a bad thing to make good money, but if you're not happy it's not worth it."



MOLLY WALLACE, 20, Columbia College sophomore, theater major

"Coming here and being in the city, I'm very hopeful I'll be making a decent living. Columbia really focuses on helping students get connections. I'm not going to be a waitress trying to be an actress—I'm confident I can do it."



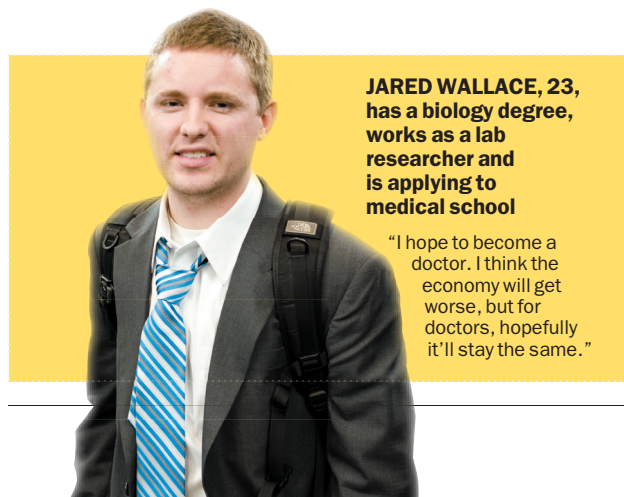
RACHEL PIECZURA, 18, Roosevelt University freshman, political-science major

"I'm going to be famous someday, mark that. I will make it big and be famous for music, but for a certain artistry. I want to represent the outcasts, but not just the outcasts, the outcasts of the outcasts. Eventually I want to be part of the Senate—right now that's a shady business."



ASHLEY HOUSTON, 23, has a fashion-design degree, works as a visual assistant at Forever 21

"I hope that some day I can get a line in major boutiques or department stores. It's a hope, a long-shot hope."



JARED WALLACE, 23, has a biology degree, works as a lab researcher and is applying to medical school

"I hope to become a doctor. I think the economy will get worse, but for doctors, hopefully it'll stay the same."



MEGHAN BURTON, 20, DePaul University junior, marketing major

"I hope there's more job opportunities and the economy recovers. As of right now I'm not completely hopeful. I don't want to be stuck in a dead-end job. I want to be able to move up."