



AICAD Careers Toolkit

Common career trajectories for graduates of art and design programs

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Introduction

Welcome to the AICAD Art & Design Toolkit, a data informed resource to help prospective students learn about the career opportunities and professional futures that are made possible by an arts and design education.

We know that, “What are you going to do with that?” is a question that many prospective arts and design students have heard from parents and other trusted adult advisors about pursuing a degree in the creative fields. We also know that while many middle and high school students have strong interest in art and design, they and their parents lack knowledge about the different educational and career opportunities available in the creative fields.

Prospective students and their families/support networks need greater access to reliable information about the wide range of educational and career opportunities that exist. To address this need, AICAD worked with CareerMap, a data insights company, to conduct a study of alumni career outcomes. In particular, AICAD and CareerMap sought to document career trajectories for graduates of creative degree programs over the first 7 to 15 years post-graduation. Using data from LinkedIn, a comprehensive database was created, containing all the education and work events of a representative sample of over 1,200 graduates from 16 AICAD schools, who graduated between 2007 and 2015.

Eight majors (or discipline domains) were selected for an in-depth analysis of career outcomes. These majors represent popular programs across AICAD schools. Majors/Domains included in the study were: Architecture, Fine Arts /Craft, Fashion Design, Graphic / Communication Design, Illustration, Industrial Design, Digital Arts / Media Arts, and Photography.

Salary data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics was also included where appropriate to provide an economic dimension to the career trajectories. (More information about methodology is available in Appendix.)

How to Use the AICAD Art & Design Careers Toolkit

The information in the following sections is provided for AICAD members to use in a variety of settings. Unlike other data collection we do, this Toolkit is intended for use in marketing materials and other public venues. Getting this information in the hands of prospective students and their adult advisors is critical to better supporting interested prospective and current students. We imagine that this information could be incorporated into professional practice courses as fodder for discussion on the multiplicity of paths available to students upon graduation and information to inform them on the length of time they are likely to spend at various position levels. The career maps could be used on institutional websites and other materials aimed at prospective students to showcase the variety of professional paths tied to different areas of study. As AICAD invests in redesigning aicad.org this information will find its way there, but member institutions should feel free to use this information in their own materials as well.

Summary of Findings

Specific information about career outcomes for each of the Major / Domain areas is provided in the following sections. However, there were some overarching observations that warrant sharing here. The results of the CareerMap investigation reveal a wide range of successful professional trajectories of arts and design alumni. While early career paths may meander a bit and be marked by frequent change, they often lead to positions of leadership and financial reward. In this sample, alumni held an average of 6.4 jobs in their first 10 years after graduation. Job changes included shifts in position, employer, and industry. Given the project-based nature of much of the work in creative fields, this is not surprising. Certain fields, such as fashion, film /media production, and the video game industry, were distinguished by fairly high rates of churn. Nonetheless, roughly seven years and four jobs into their careers, alumni appeared to either commit to their chosen occupational path, often by taking on a leadership role, or transition to a new occupation and/or industry.

This data clearly demonstrates that art and design skills are useful in many industries and occupations; however, there were some employment areas that emerged as dominant. Regardless of their major, many AICAD alumni gravitated to careers in product design, user experience design, and advertising/marketing (Figure 2). These three fields made up 43% of the jobs held by the 1,200 graduates at the time of data collection in 2022 (7-15 years post-graduation) and represent well-compensated professions.

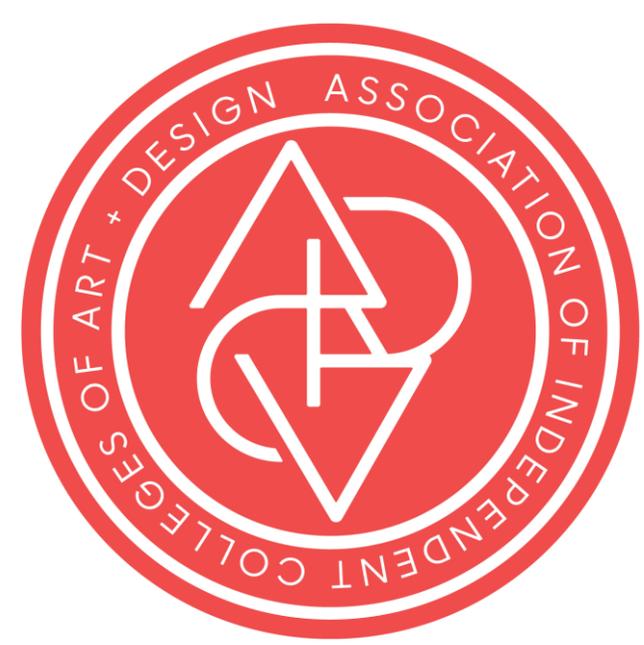
Figure 2. Comparison of top occupations -- First job vs current job

Top occupations	First job	Average salary*	Current job	Average salary*
Advertising / Marketing / Public Relations	11%	\$48,750	16%	\$172,210
Commercial / Industrial design	9%	\$57,070	15%	\$98,680
User interface / User experience design	7%	\$44,580	12%	\$98,030
Business & financial operations	9%	\$53,410	9%	\$100,220
Graphic designer	15%	\$39,820	5%	\$74,700
Fashion designer	5%	\$50,630	5%	\$101,320
Educational / Instructional occupations	5%	\$33,310	3%	\$72,370
Office and administrative support	4%	\$30,180	3%	\$48,490
Art directors	3%	\$57,220	3%	\$135,350
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	3%	\$62,590	3%	\$128,030
Sales and related occupations	3%	\$26,830	2%	\$48,980

It is also evident that art and design alumni are in high demand in science and technology industries, though not necessarily immediately out of school (Figure 3). Innovation in today’s technological world necessitates creativity and well-honed design skills. AICAD graduates from a range of academic disciplines appeared to accumulate experience and sharpen their skills during their early careers, paving the way for moves into product development and brand marketing management roles. The adaptability and mobility of AICAD graduates speaks to the value of their training and the opportunities it affords for meaningful, practical work experiences.

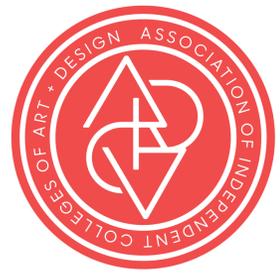
Figure 3. Alumni who work in the science and technology sector (First job vs current job)		
Academic Major	First job after graduation	Current job (7-15 years after graduation)
Graphic Design	4%	8%
Industrial Design	3%	11%
Fine Arts	0%	6%
Digital / Media Arts	6%	10%
Illustration	0%	11%
Photography	0%	5%
Architecture	0%	12%

Taken as a whole, this research highlights the importance of looking beyond “first destinations” to better understand and appreciate the career outcomes of graduates of arts and design programs. The work experiences of this sample of AICAD alumni indicate that an education in a creative discipline is valuable in many industries and roles and thus, provides graduates with considerable professional flexibility. Currently, many students make choices about majors without concrete information about what that decision could mean for the five-to-fifteen-year timeframe after they graduate. The data collected here allows AICAD schools to make more robust statements about the ROI of an education in the creative disciplines, giving them greater control over, and confidence in, their value proposition. Collecting and sharing quantifiable evidence (in addition to anecdotal success stories) about how degrees in the arts and design are connected to future occupations and financial outcomes is critical to sustaining post-secondary education in creative fields, encouraging prospective students, and changing public perception.



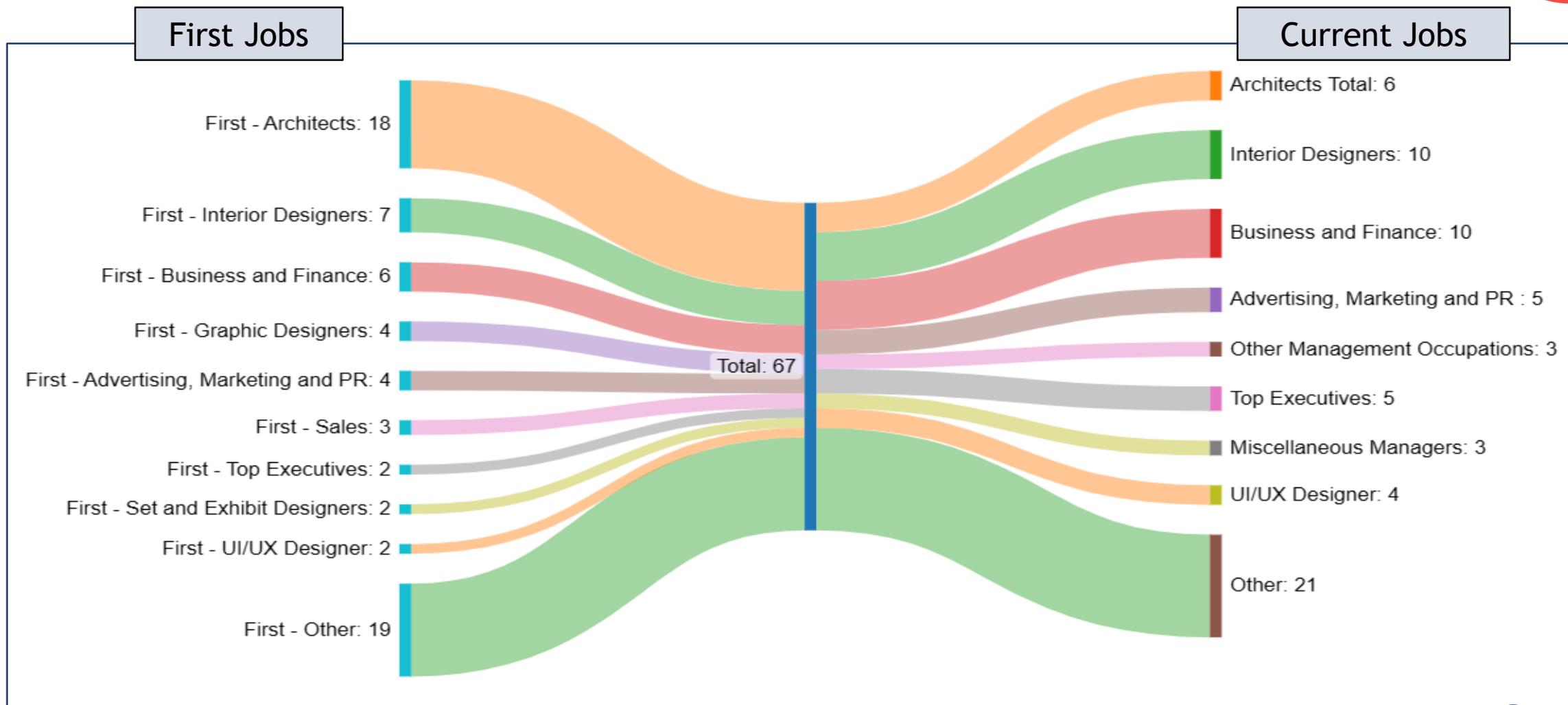
Architecture Majors

Overview for Architecture Majors

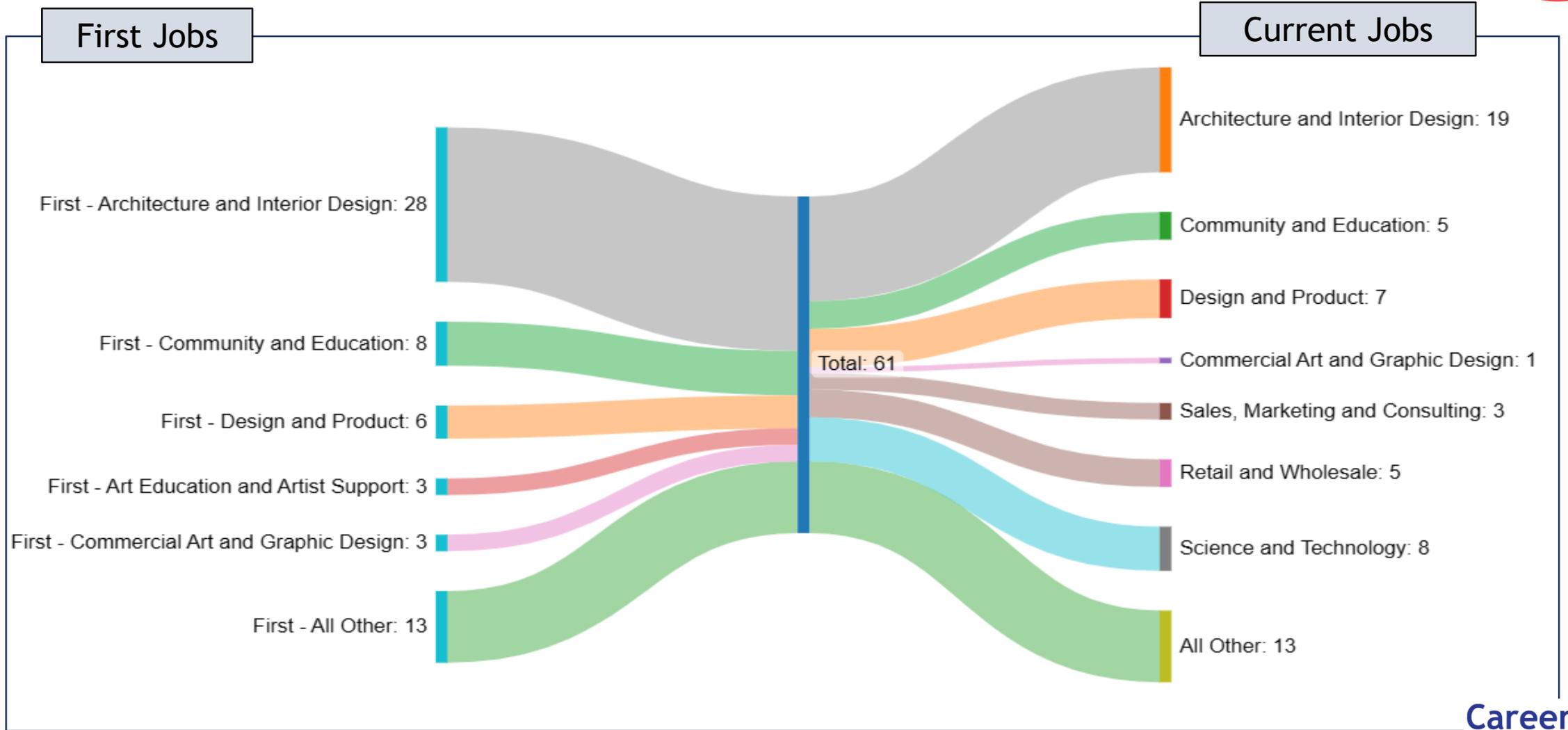


- Predominant **degree** earned – BFA
 - About 37% of Architecture majors earned a graduate degree (M.Arch; M.Des)
- Half of the Architecture majors in this study did an **Internship**.
- 42% of Architecture major alumni's **first jobs** were in the fields of architecture or interior design.
- Architecture majors attained management roles earlier than other majors.
- Architecture alumni have high levels of job stability, but may move away from their primary industry over the course of their career trajectory.
- The **median annual wage** for architects is about \$94,000, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
- **Top job titles:**
 - Architect
 - Interior Designer
 - Designer

Occupations: Architecture Majors Concentrate in Interior Design and General Business Occupations



Industry: Architecture majors move away from their primary industry over the course of their careers





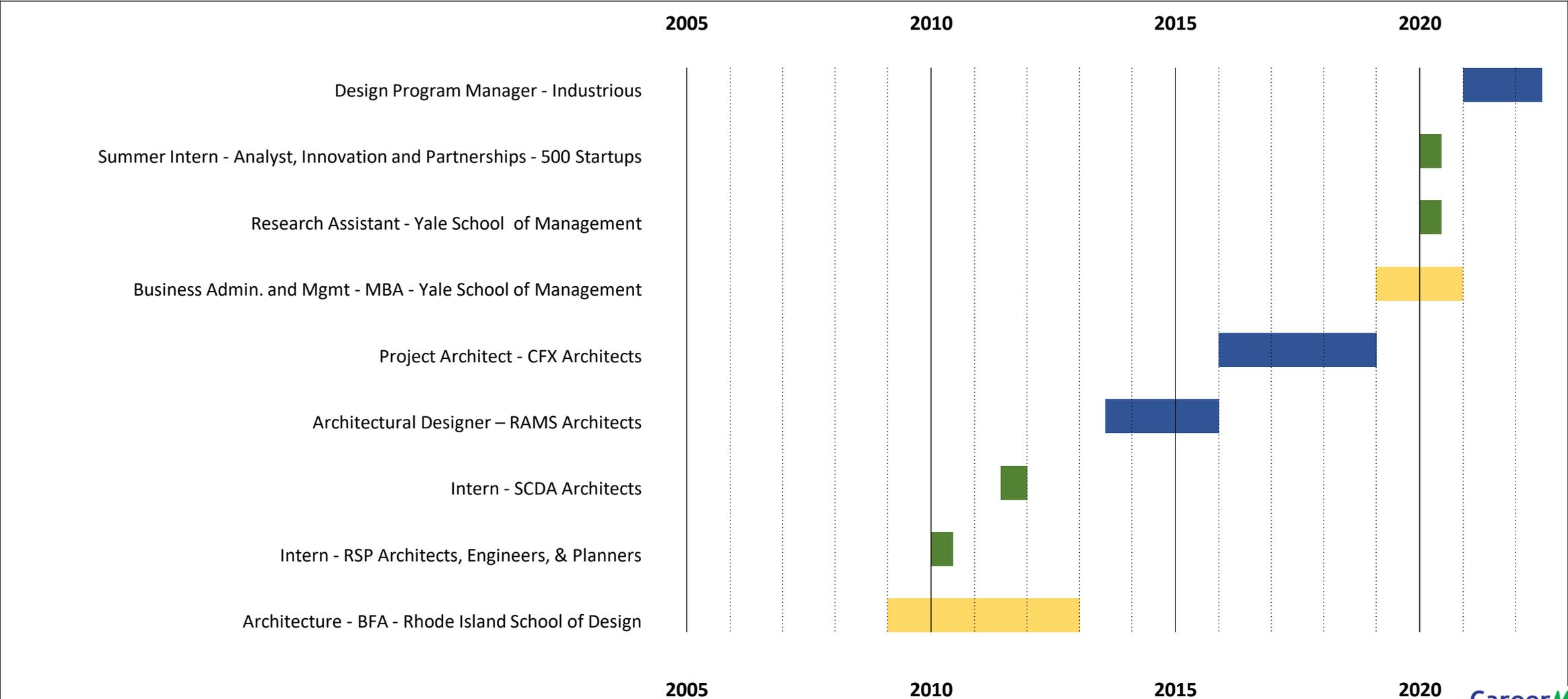
Architecture Majors Maps

Real examples of career trajectories of AICAD school alumni who earned a degree in Architecture.

Note: Identifying information has been redacted within the “maps” to preserve anonymity



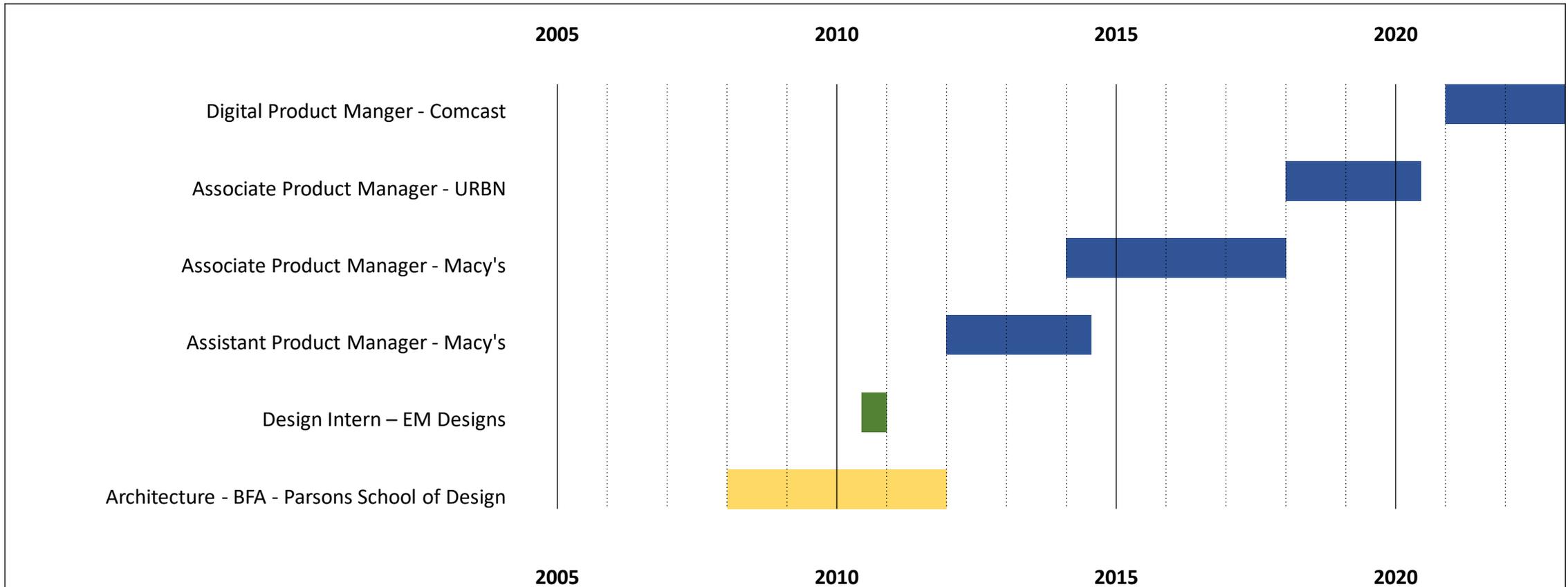
Architecture Major Pivoted to Management with an MBA





Architecture Major

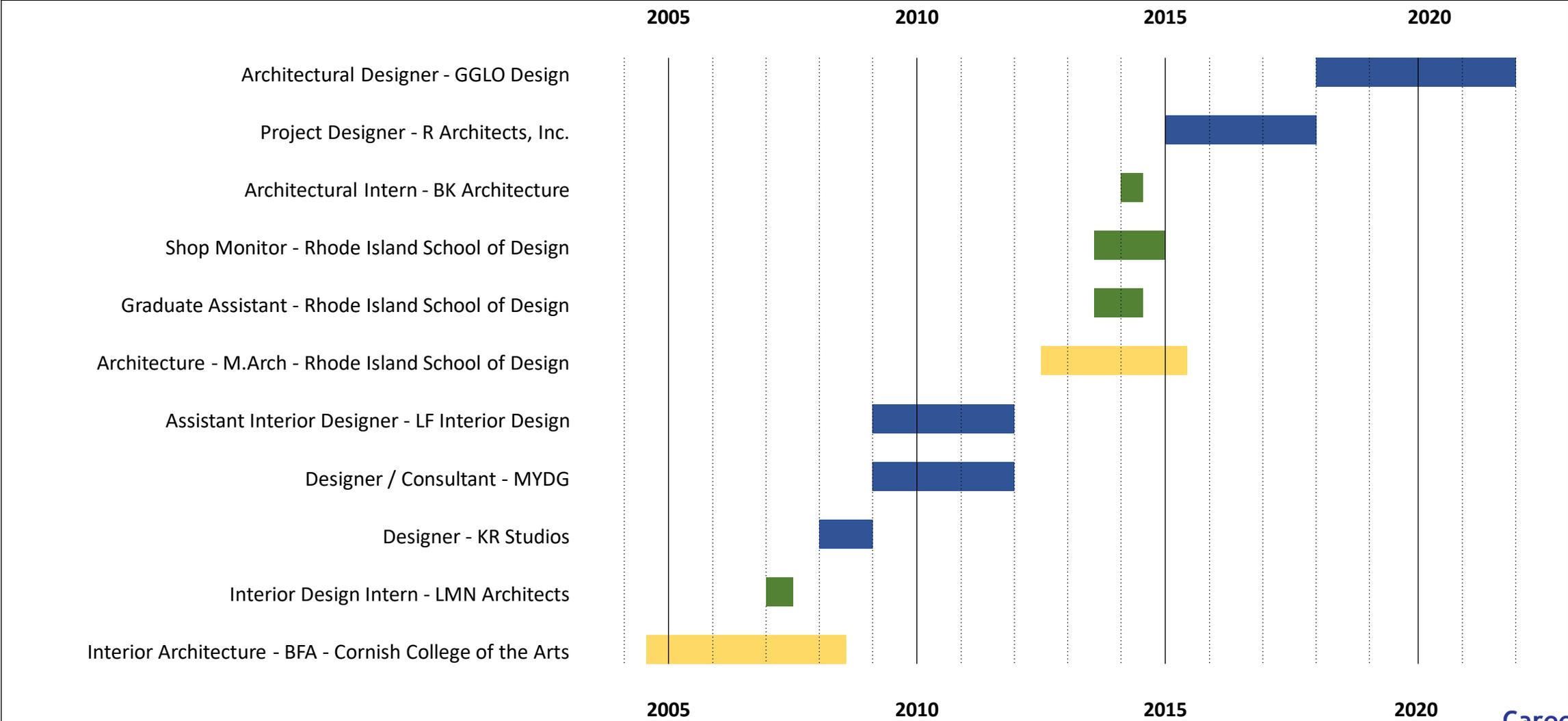
Pursued career in product management





Architecture Major

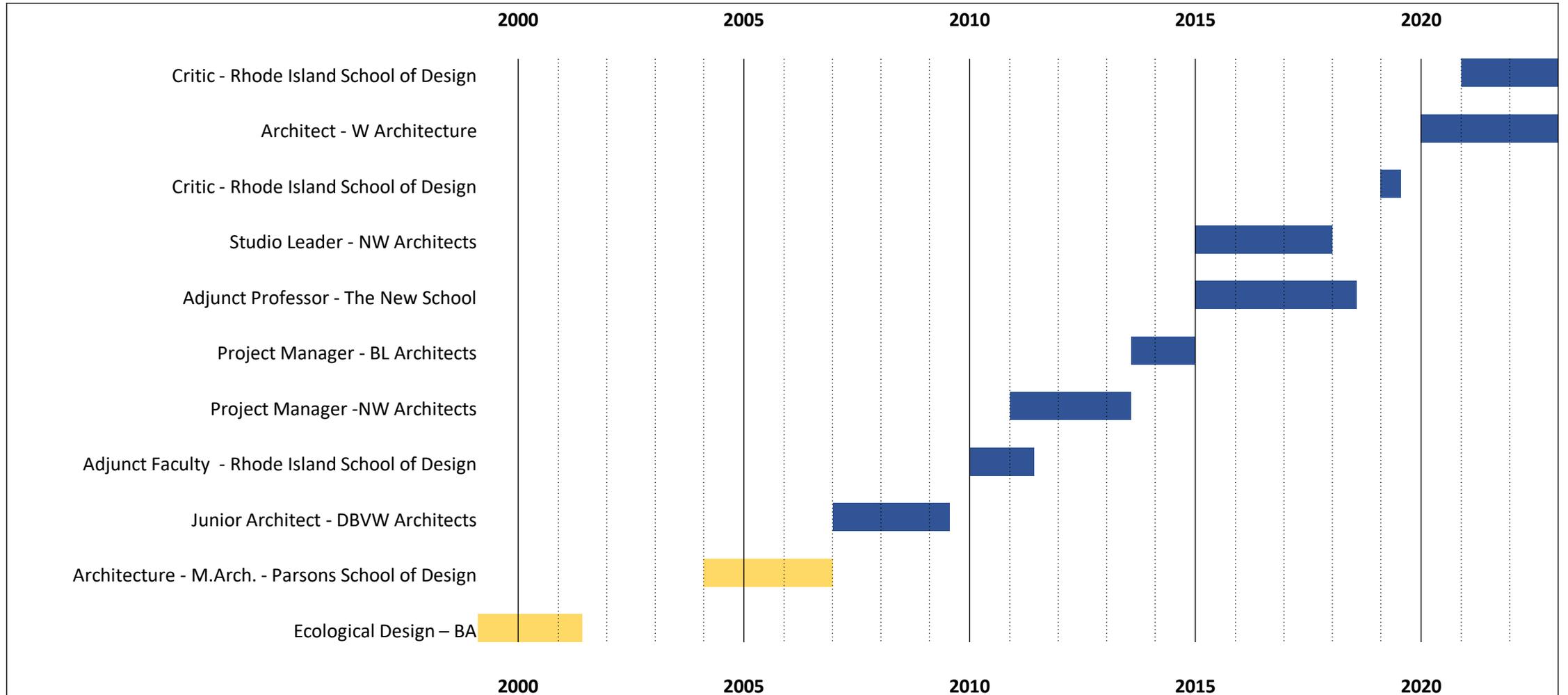
Common pathway to a career in Architecture

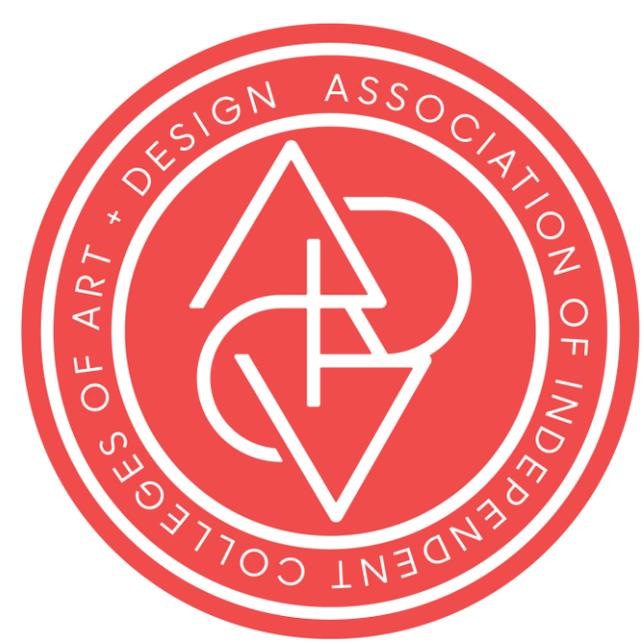




Architecture Major

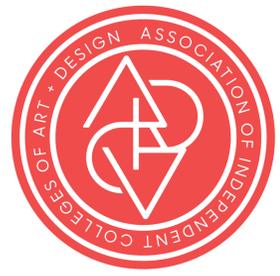
Forged successful career as a professional architect and academic





Fashion / Apparel Design Majors

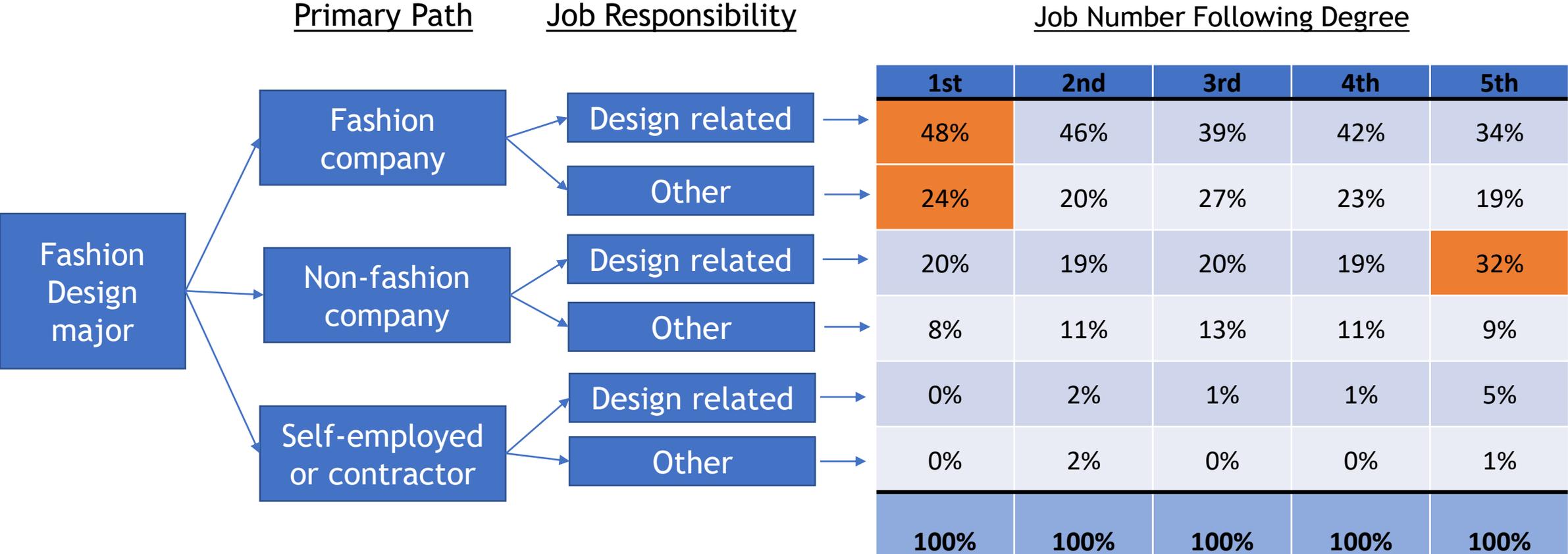
Overview for Fashion / Apparel Design Majors



- Predominant **degree** earned – BFA
 - Very few Fashion / Apparel Design majors pursue a degree beyond a BFA
- **Internships** are an important point of entry into the fashion industry
 - 65% of fashion design majors in the sample completed at least one internship (pre- or post-graduation)
 - 80% of alumni who completed an internship were still working as fashion designers 5-15 years post-graduation
- 72% of Fashion / Apparel major alumni's **first jobs** were in the Fashion & Apparel industry
 - Of those, 80% were designers
 - Others worked in the fashion industry in another role.
- As they progressed in their **career trajectory**, many took on greater managerial / leadership roles (e.g., Senior Designer; Design Director) within the fashion industry.
- Those who migrated out of the fashion industry often maintained design-focused roles.
- Fashion majors appear to have **longevity within the industry**, but may move to positions at different companies
 - Of the majors that were explored, fashion and apparel design majors were the least likely to change occupations or industry. Job changes tended to reflect changing companies within the industry.
- **Top job titles:**
 - Designer
 - Design Director
 - Product Development Manager
 - Buyer

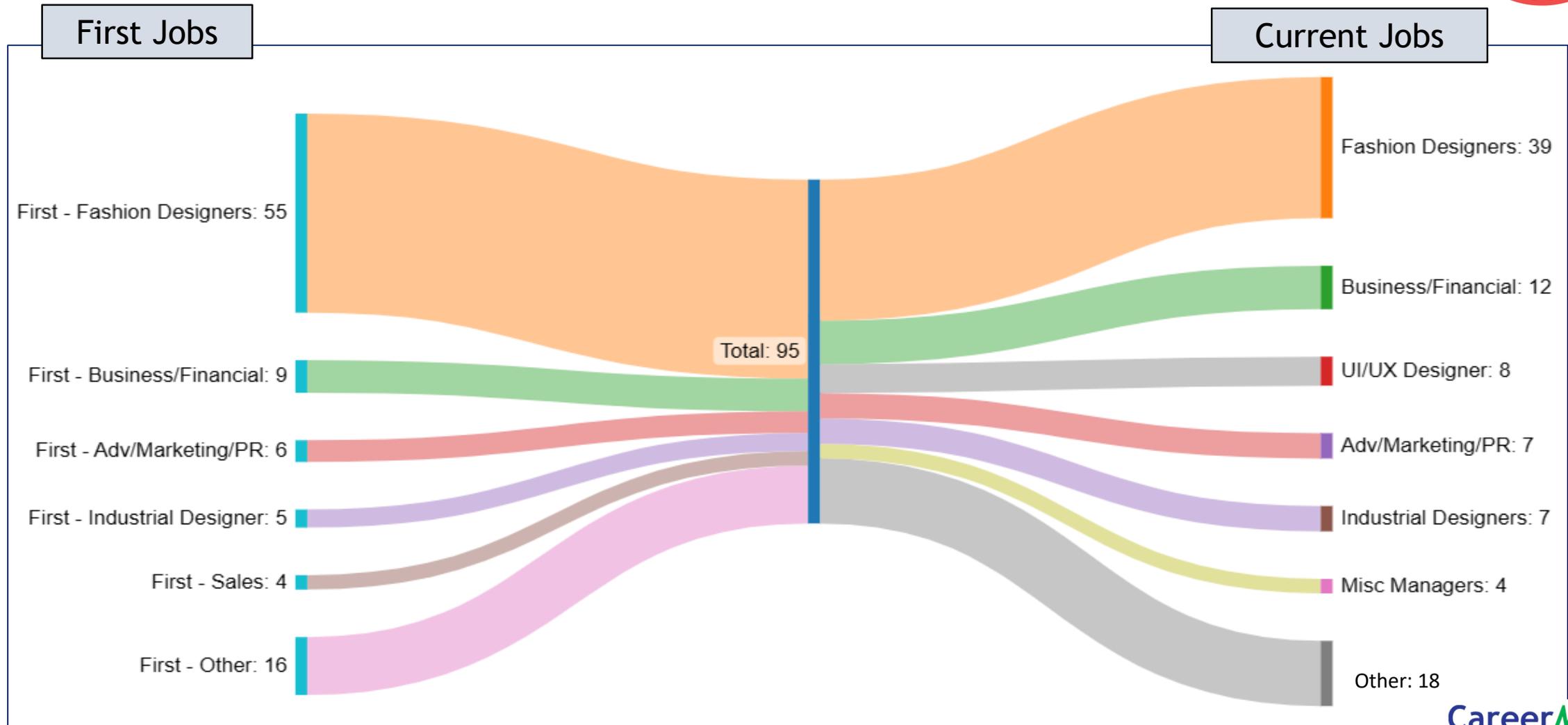


As fashion design majors progress in their careers, many remain in the industry. Those who migrate away from fashion companies tend to stay in design roles.



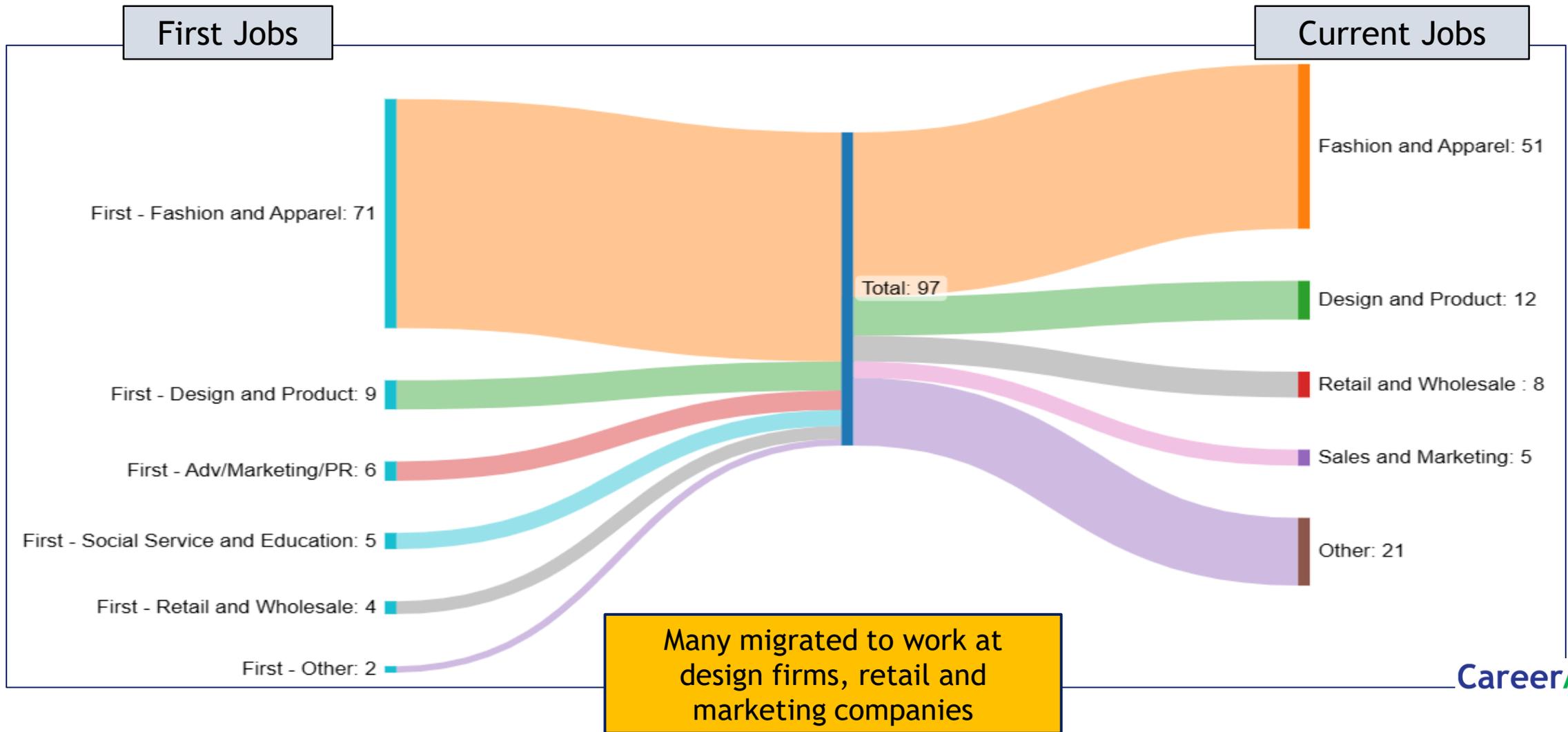


Occupation: 71% of alumni who were Fashion Designers in their first job remained in that occupation.

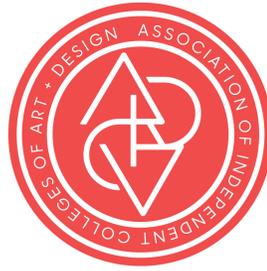




Industry: 72% of alumni whose first job was in the Fashion and Apparel industry remained in that industry



Annual Salary Ranges for Designer Occupations



	10%	25%	50% Median	75%	90%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	29,010	37,270	51,190	79,200	122,420
Art Directors	57,220	77,490	100,890	135,350	194,130
Craft Artists	22,760	28,830	35,930	47,170	61,290
Fine Artists, Including Painters, Sculptors, and Illustrators	19,430	37,310	60,820	96,580	125,930
Special Effects Artists and Animators	46,000	61,300	78,790	102,660	131,370
Artists and Related Workers, All Other	21,750	38,310	61,580	95,910	115,020
Commercial and Industrial Designers	44,840	57,070	77,030	98,680	128,210
Fashion Designers	37,480	50,630	77,450	101,320	130,870
Floral Designers	22,830	27,830	29,880	36,770	44,820
Graphic Designers	31,310	39,270	50,710	74,700	98,260
Interior Designers	30,930	46,420	60,340	77,700	99,070
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	26,560	29,240	32,060	37,930	47,290
Set and Exhibit Designers	30,810	39,180	54,860	78,910	100,550
Designers, All Other	30,230	44,580	62,310	98,030	129,990



Fashion and Apparel Design Majors Maps

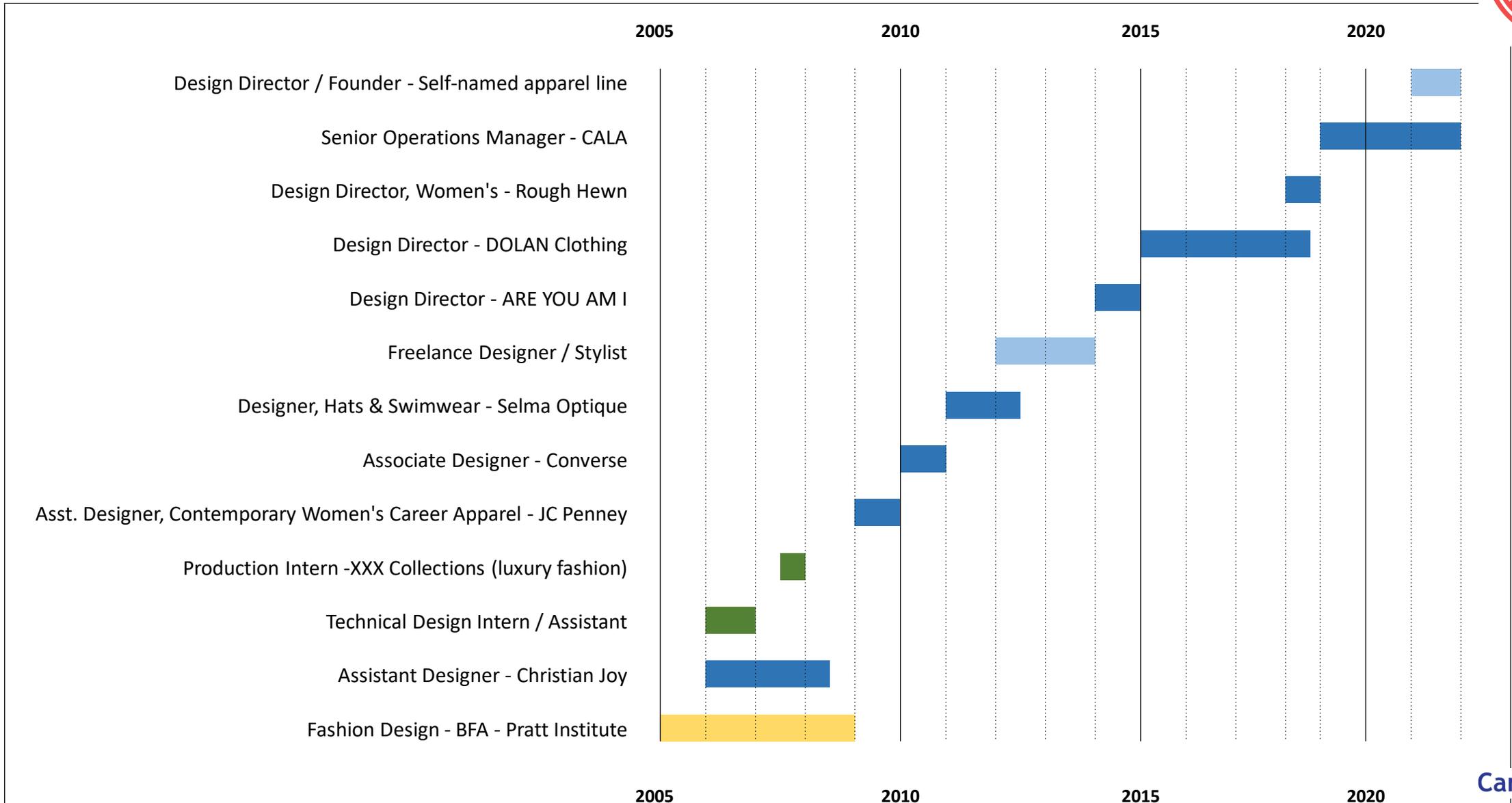
Real examples of career trajectories of AICAD school alumni who earned a degree in fashion / apparel design.

Note: Identifying information has been redacted within the “maps” to preserve anonymity

CareerMap™

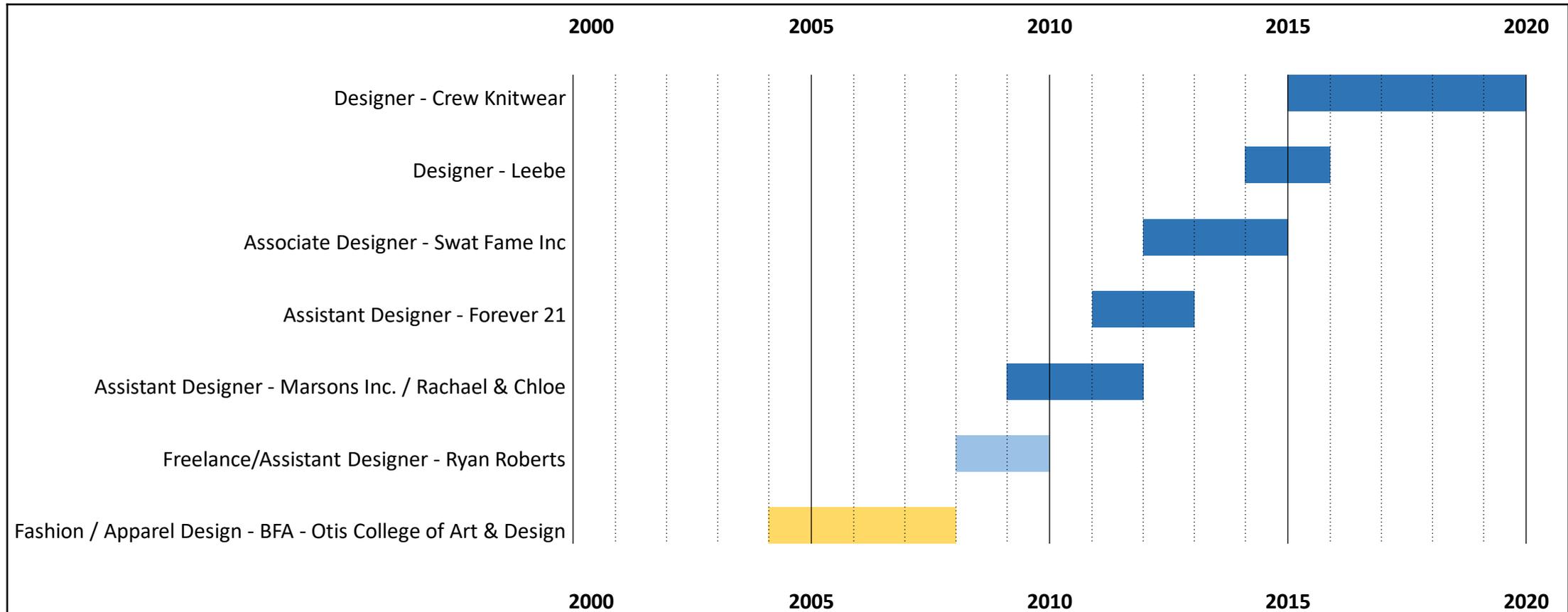
Fashion Design Major

Broad industry experience + development of independent clothing line



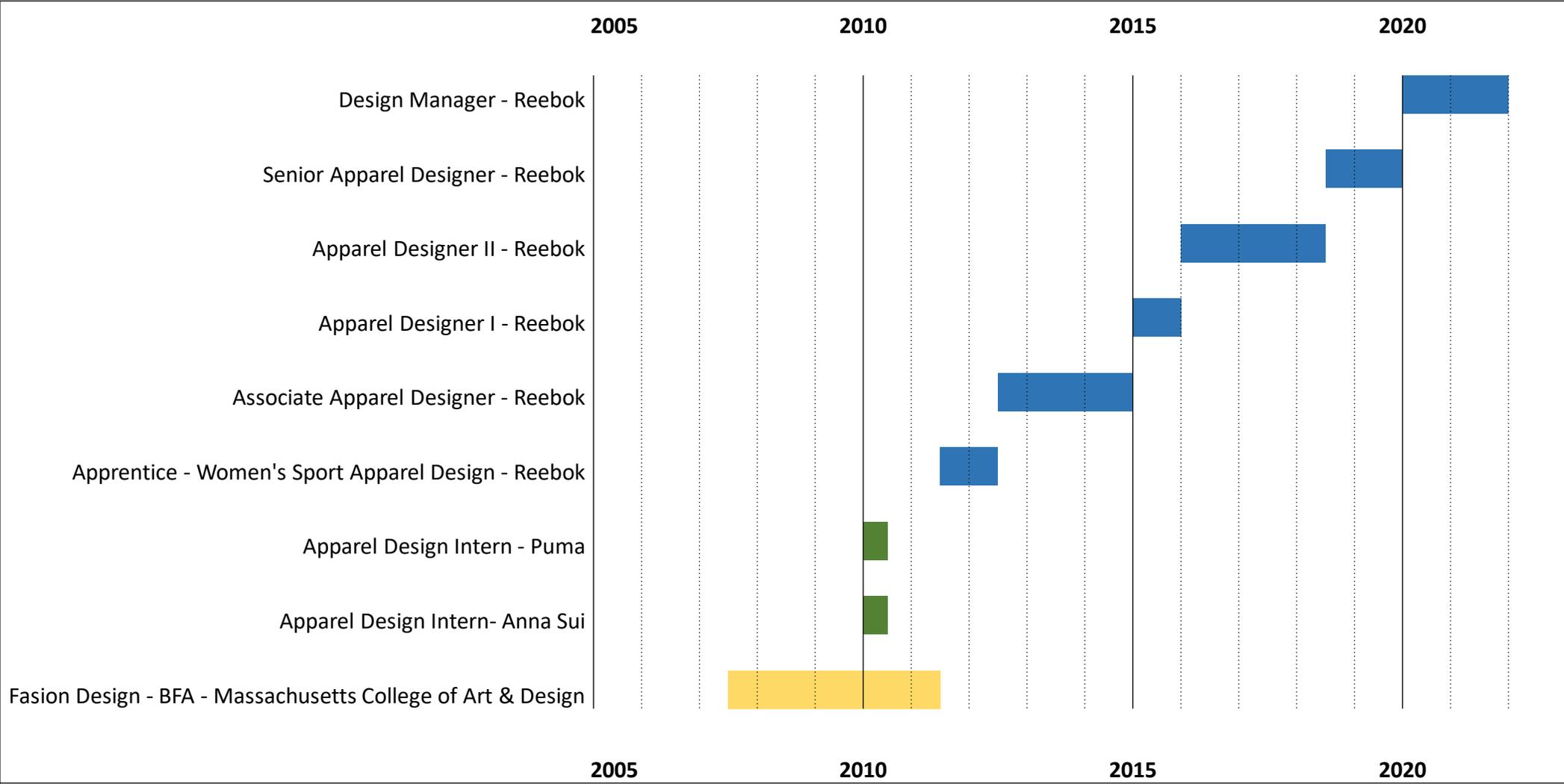
Fashion Design Major

Series of positions at different companies, advancing from assistant to designer at an industry leader



Fashion Design Major

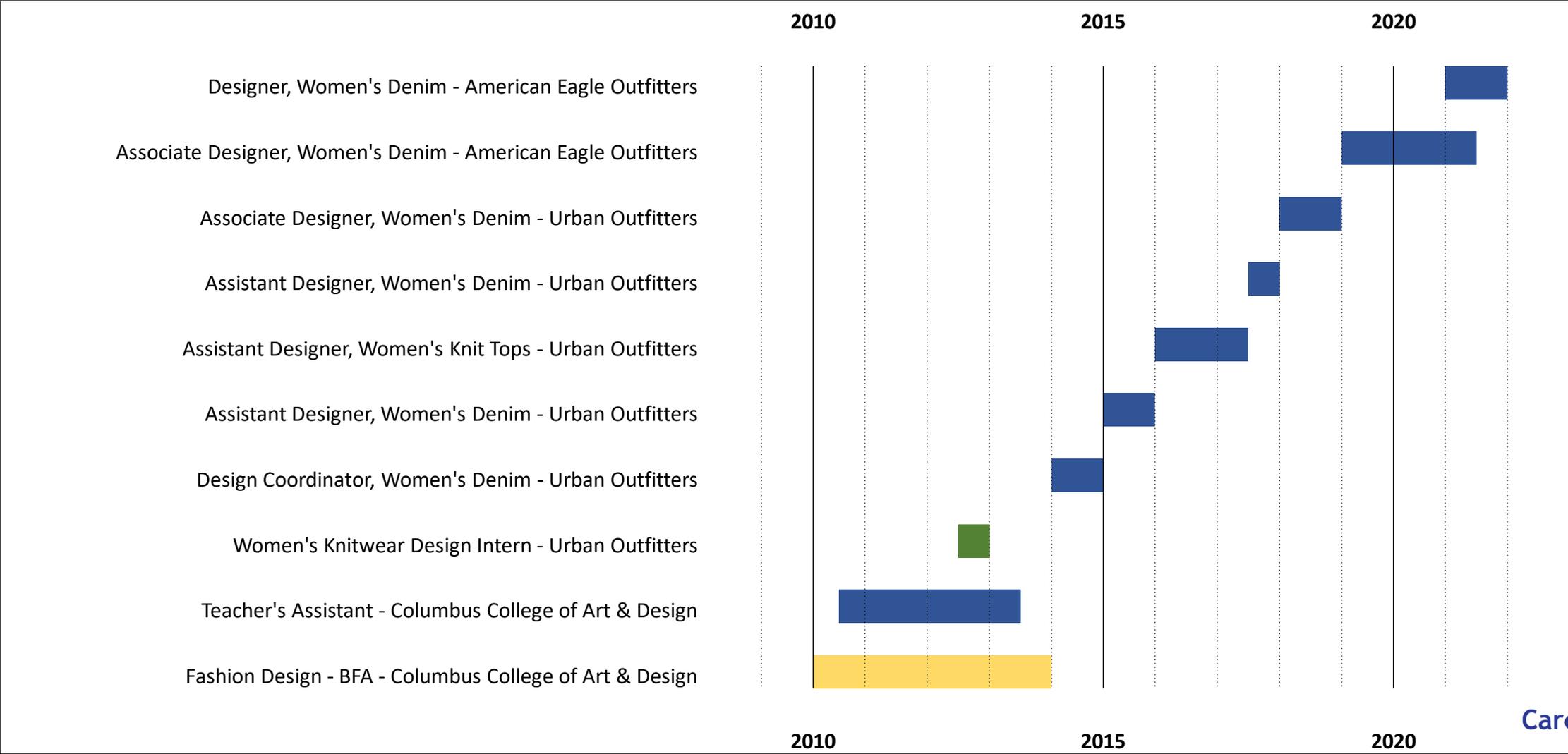
Advanced through positions at industry leader





Fashion Design Major

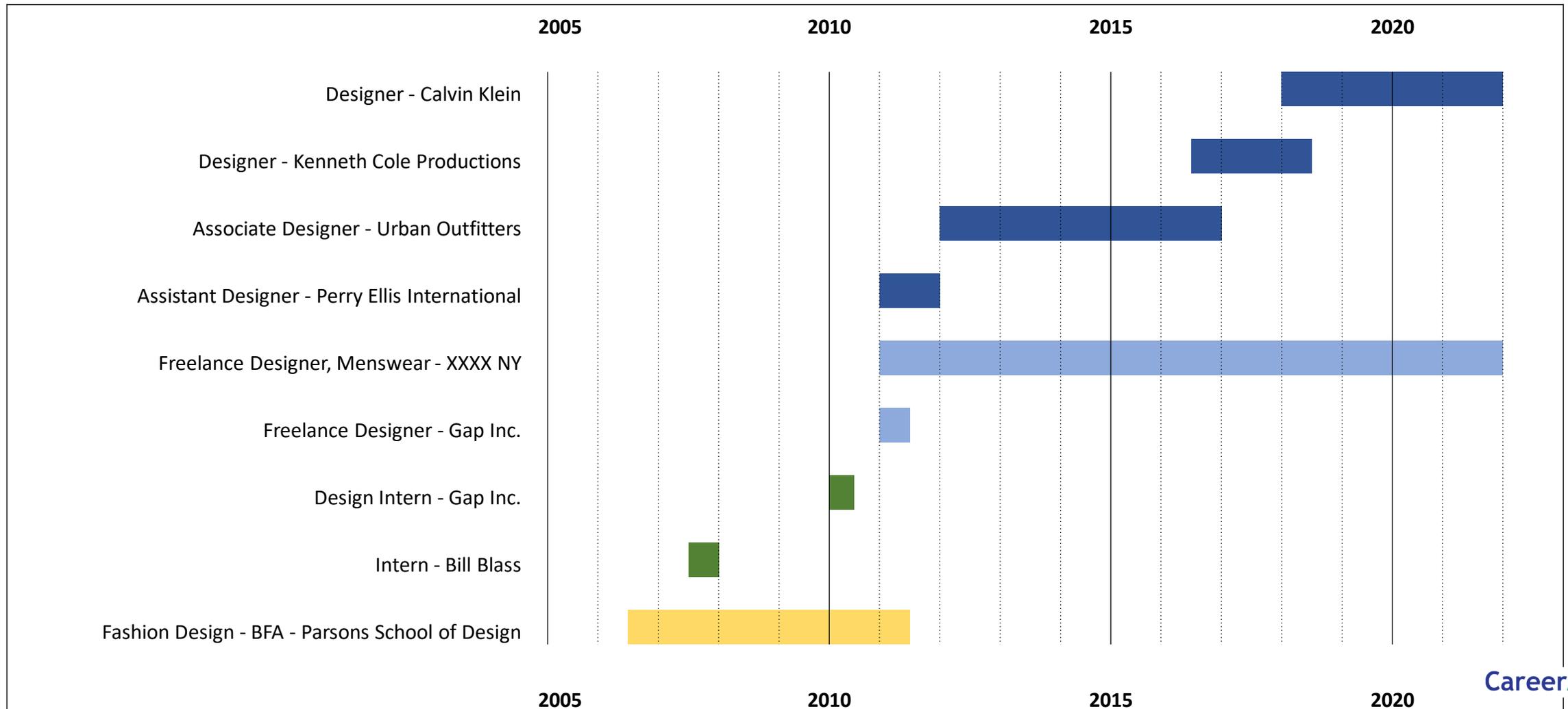
Advanced through positions at industry leaders, specializing in denim





Fashion Design Major

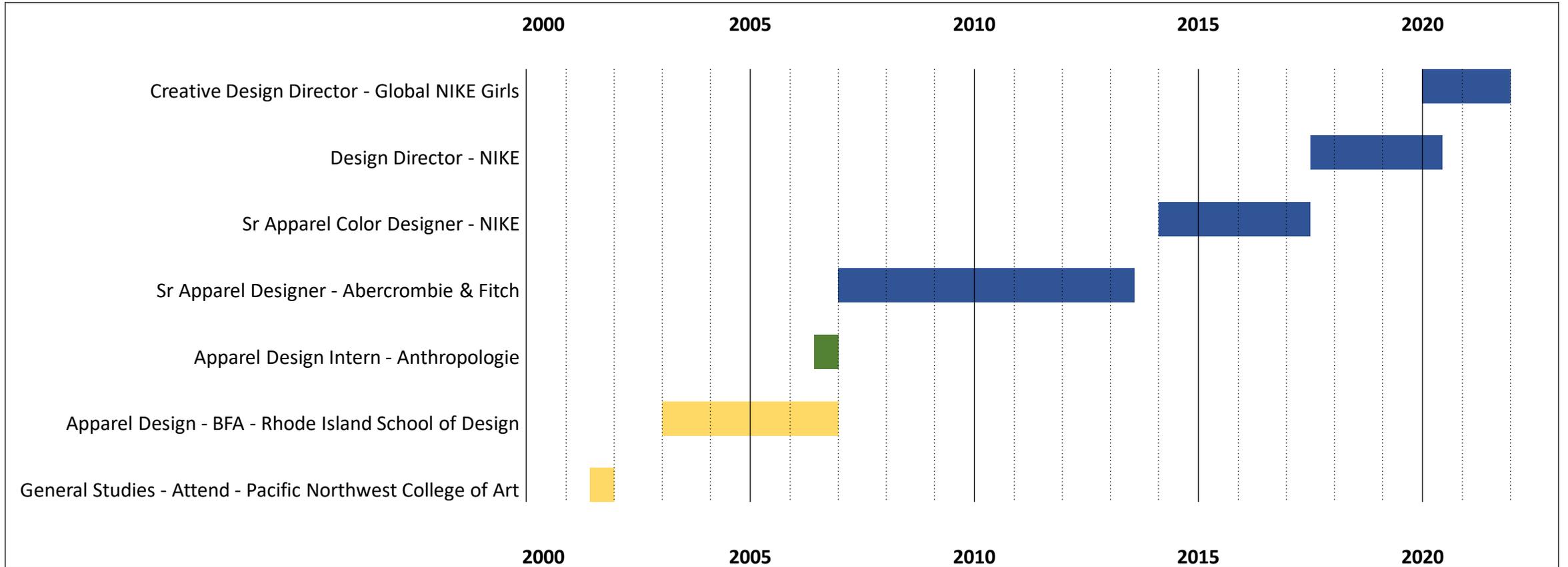
Full-time industry employee while also freelancing





Fashion Design Major

High-achieving designer at industry leaders





Fine Arts & Craft Majors

Overview for Fine Arts & Craft Majors



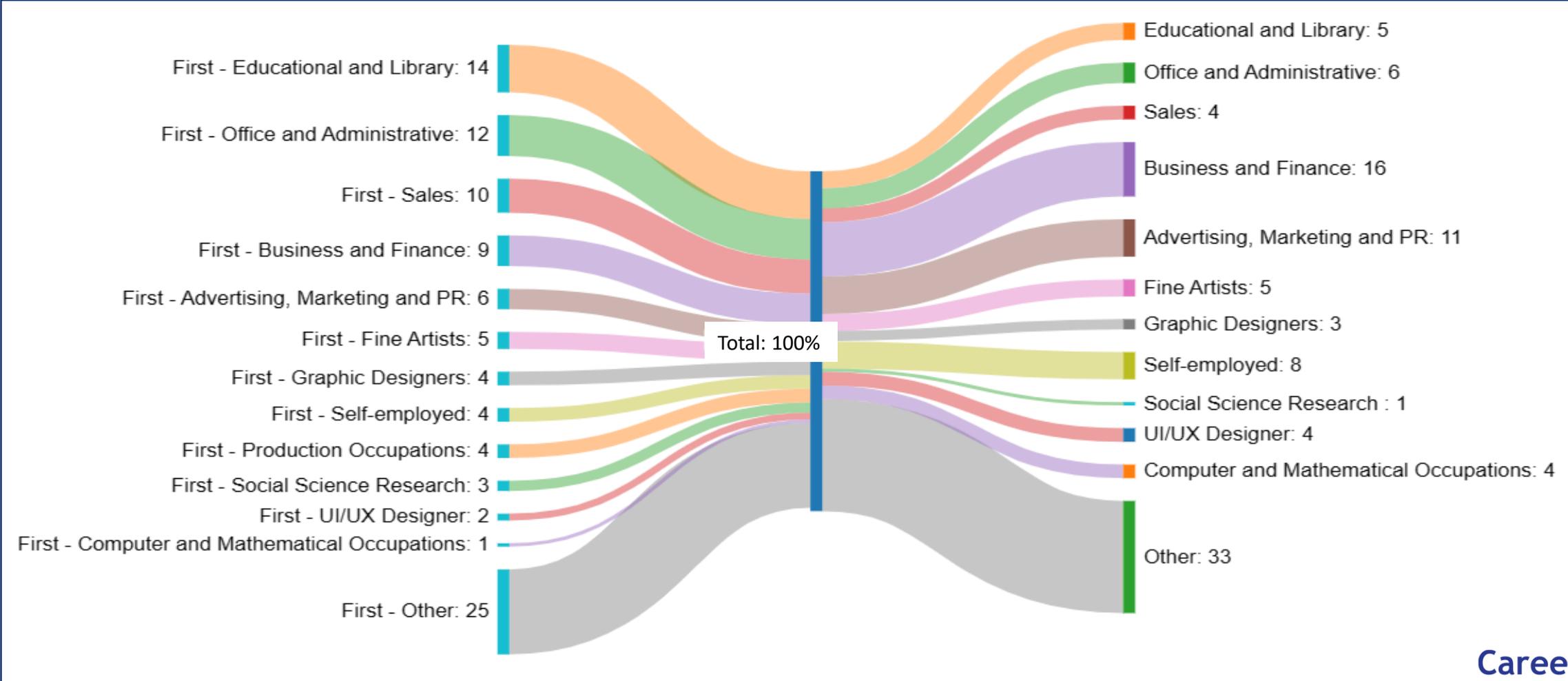
- Predominant **degree** earned – BFA
 - 40% of Fine Arts / Craft majors earned a graduate degree, predominantly an MFA
- Fine Arts / Craft majors are the least likely of AICAD alumni to have done an **Internship**
 - Only 20% did internships
 - Internships were in a range of industries – fashion & apparel, galleries & museums, product design, educational settings
- Fine Arts / Craft alumni may work in a range of roles and industries across their career trajectories.
- These alumni often maintain a private studio practice while working in a non-arts related field as their source of primary income.

Fine Arts & Crafts majors work in a range of roles across their career trajectories

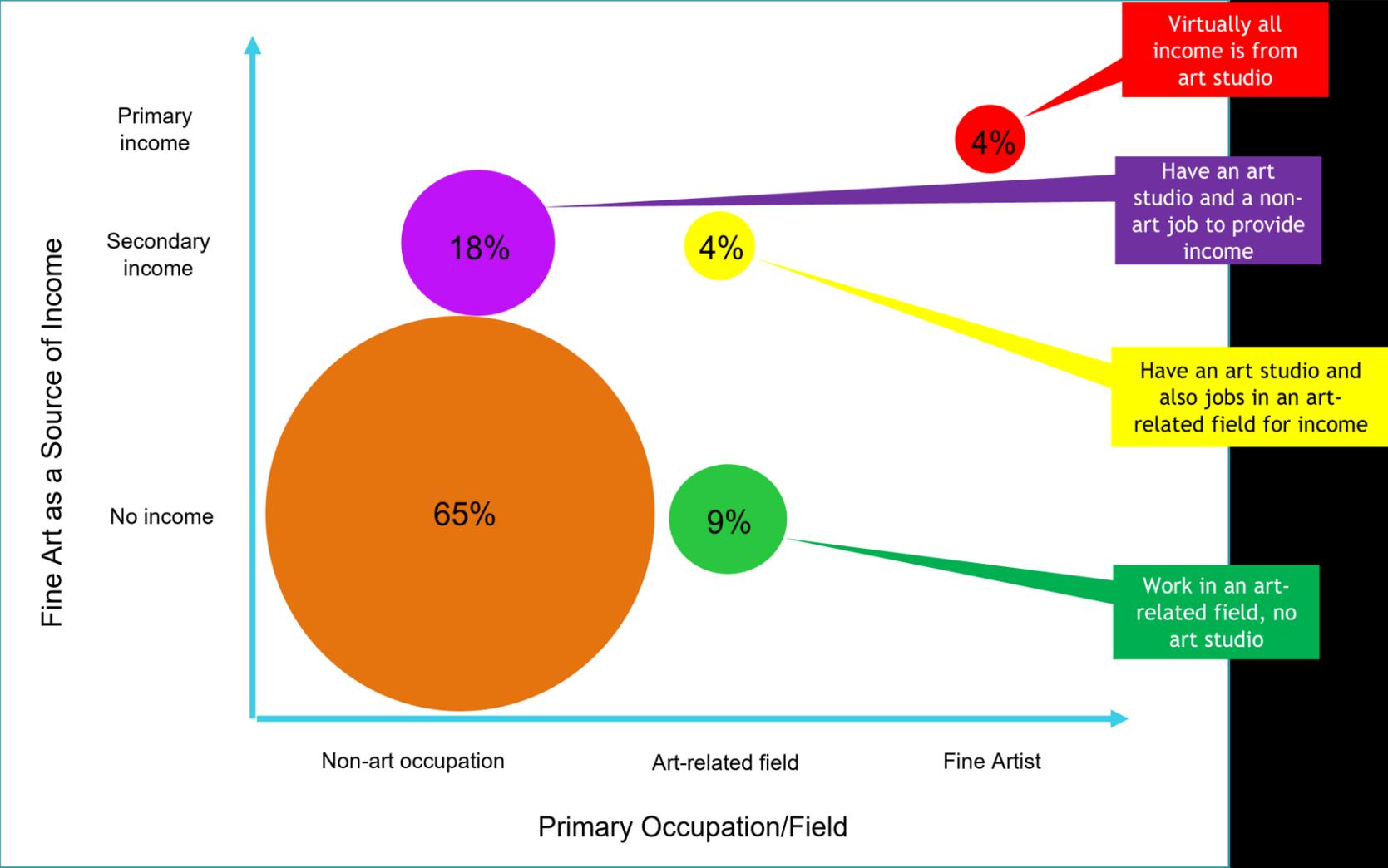


First Jobs

Current Jobs



Income Sources for Fine Arts Majors





Fine Arts and Crafts Majors Maps

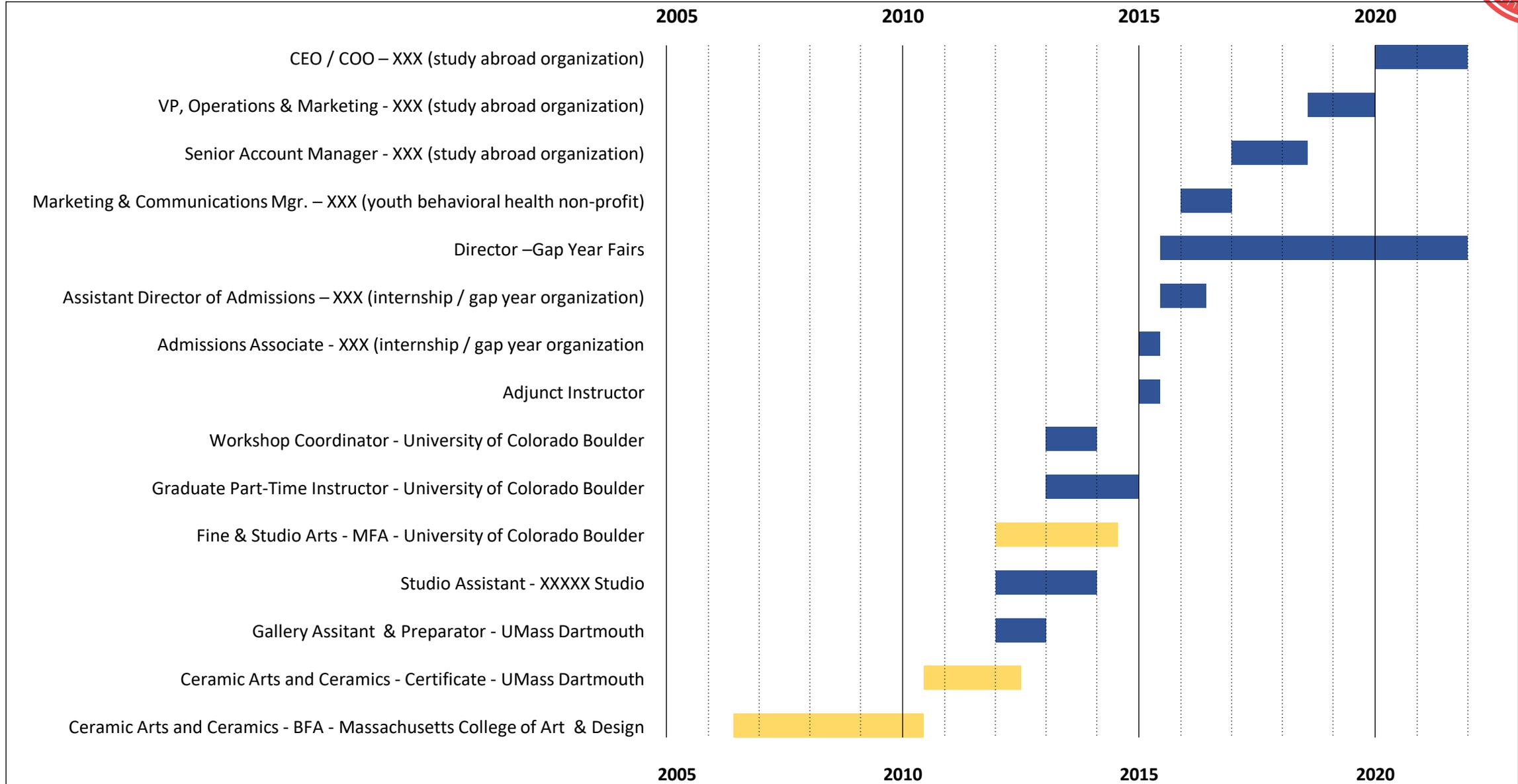
Real examples of career trajectories of AICAD school alumni who earned a degree in one of the fine arts or crafts.

Note: Identifying information has been redacted within the “maps” to preserve anonymity

CareerMap™

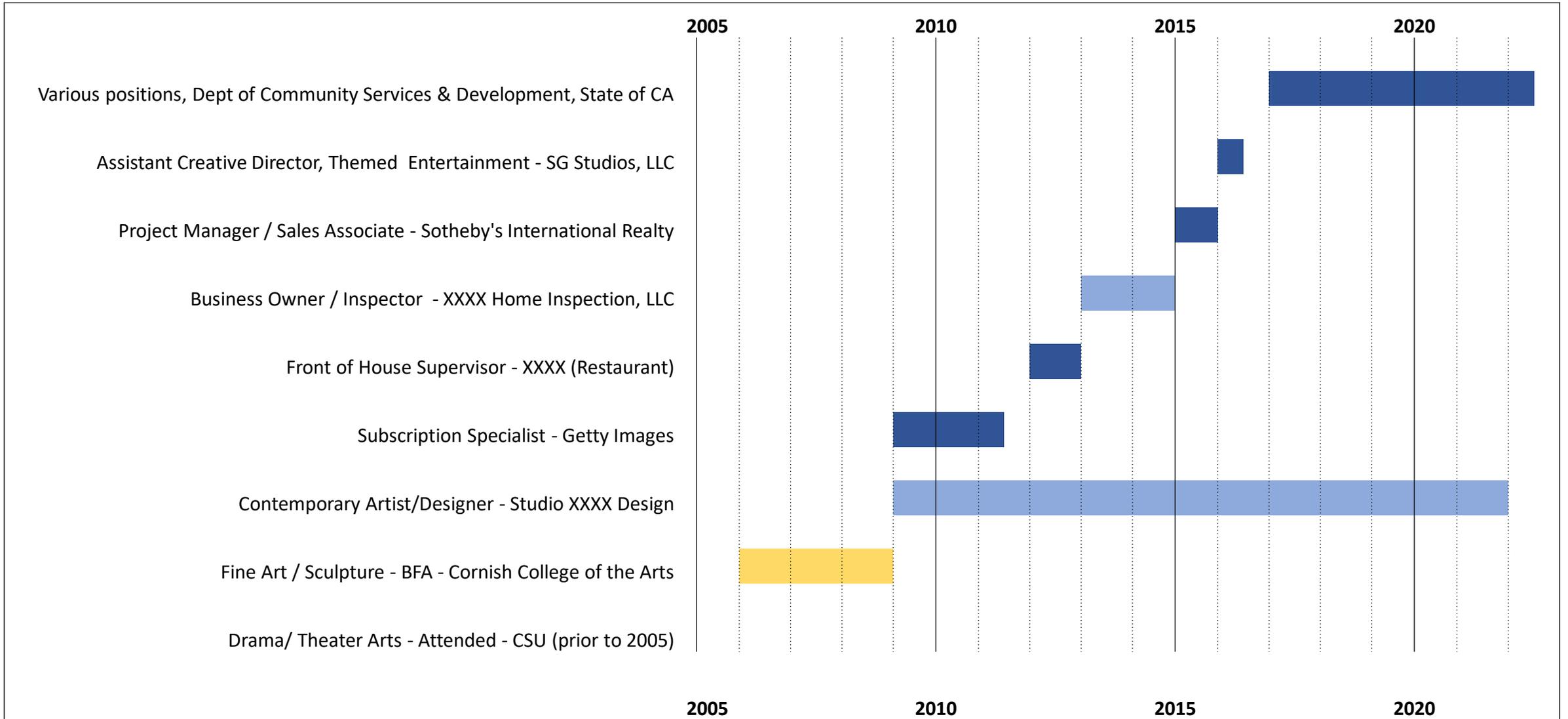
Fine Arts/Craft - Ceramics Major

Explored academia and then transitioned to higher education adjacent career path



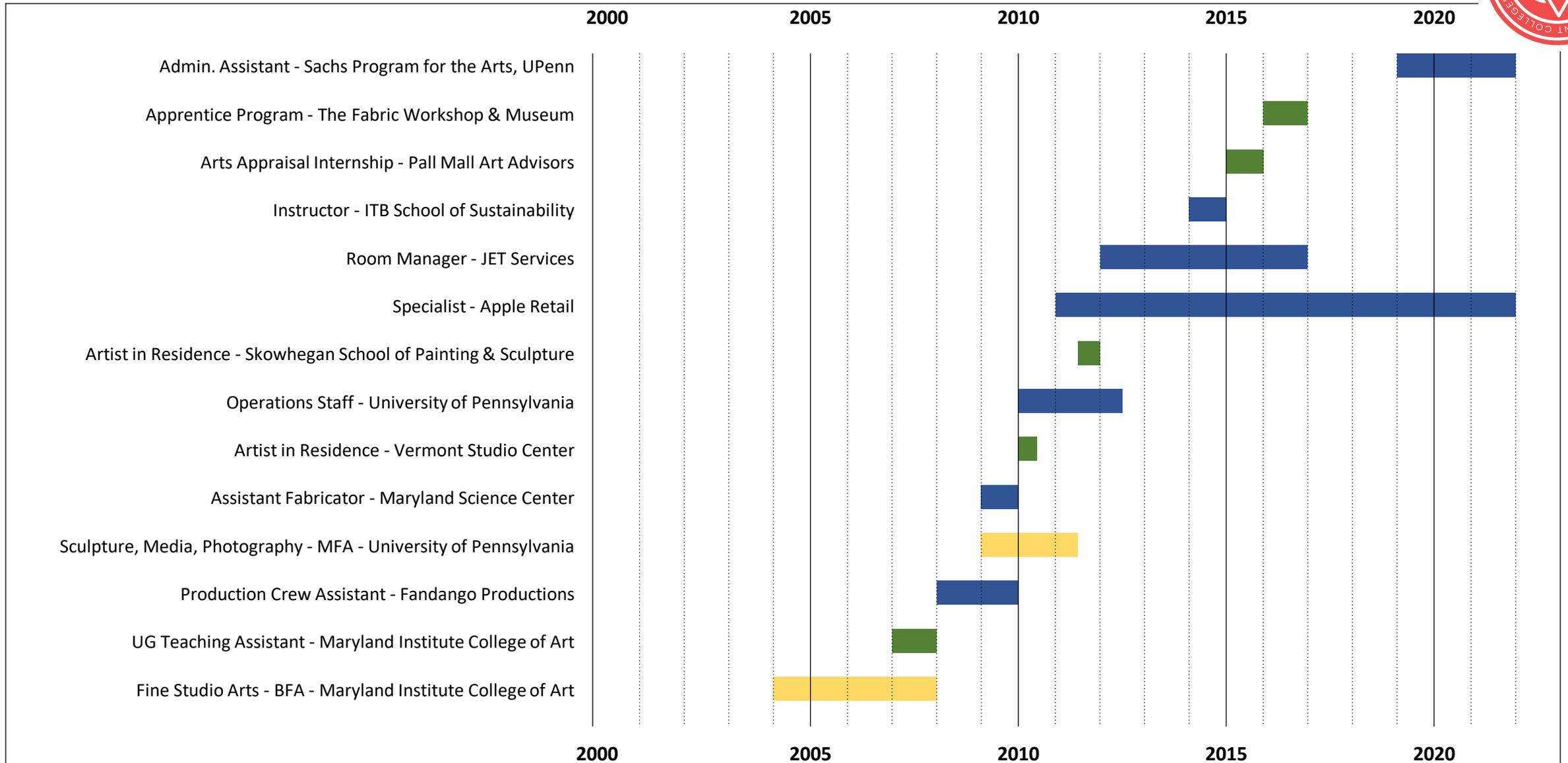
Fine Arts Major

Day jobs support independent art and design studio



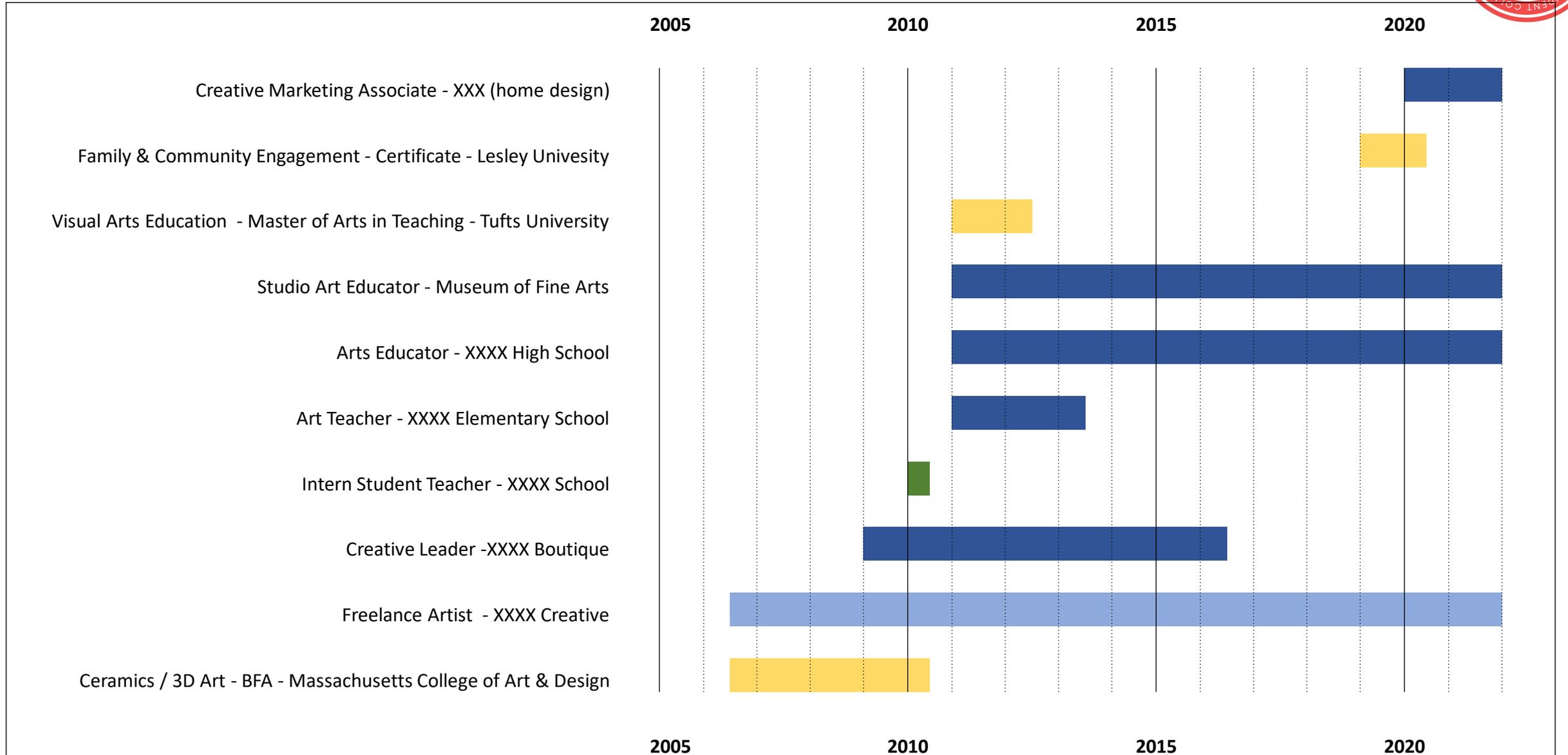
Fine Arts Major

Pursued opportunities in the arts while maintaining side jobs



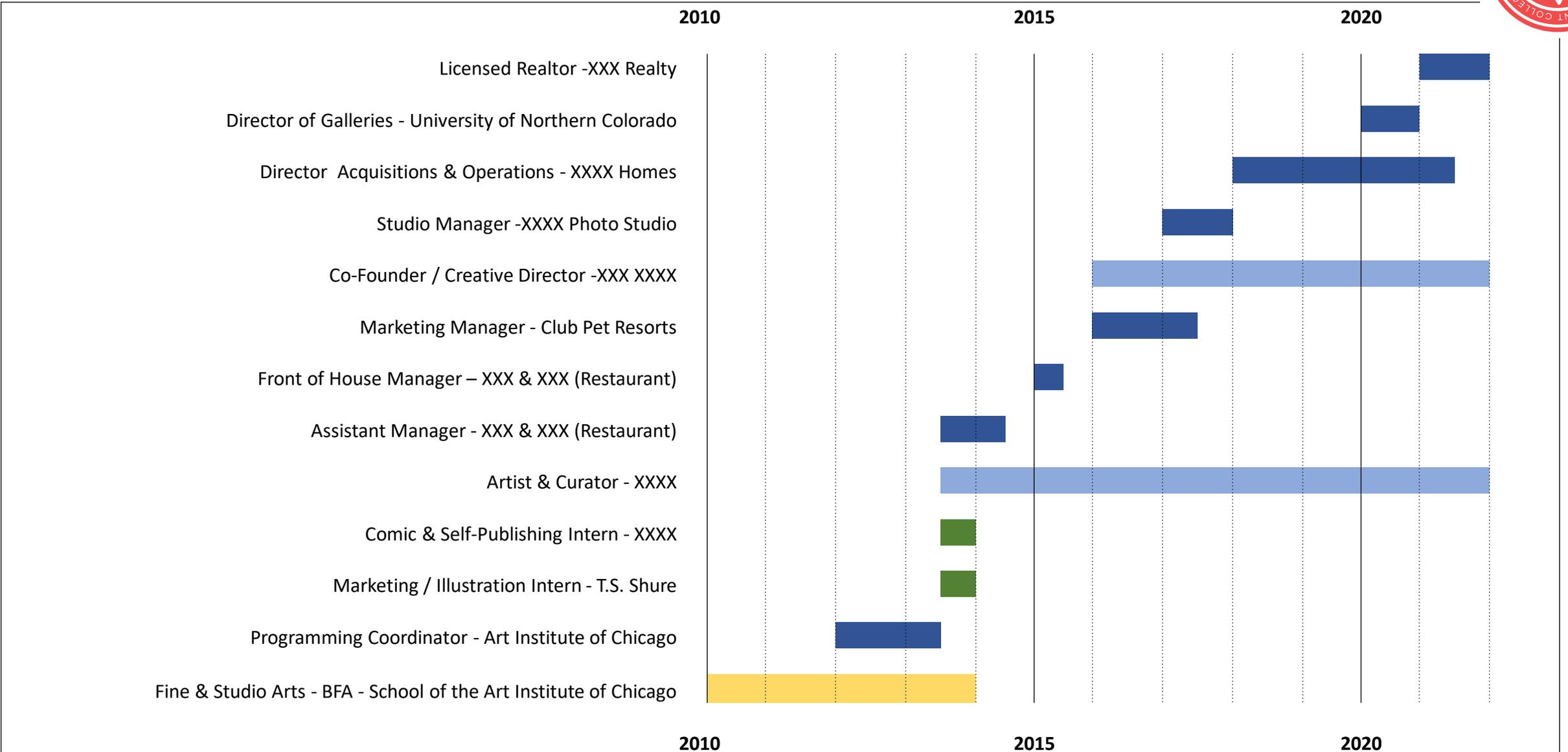
Fine Arts Major

Dual Career - Freelance Artist and Educator



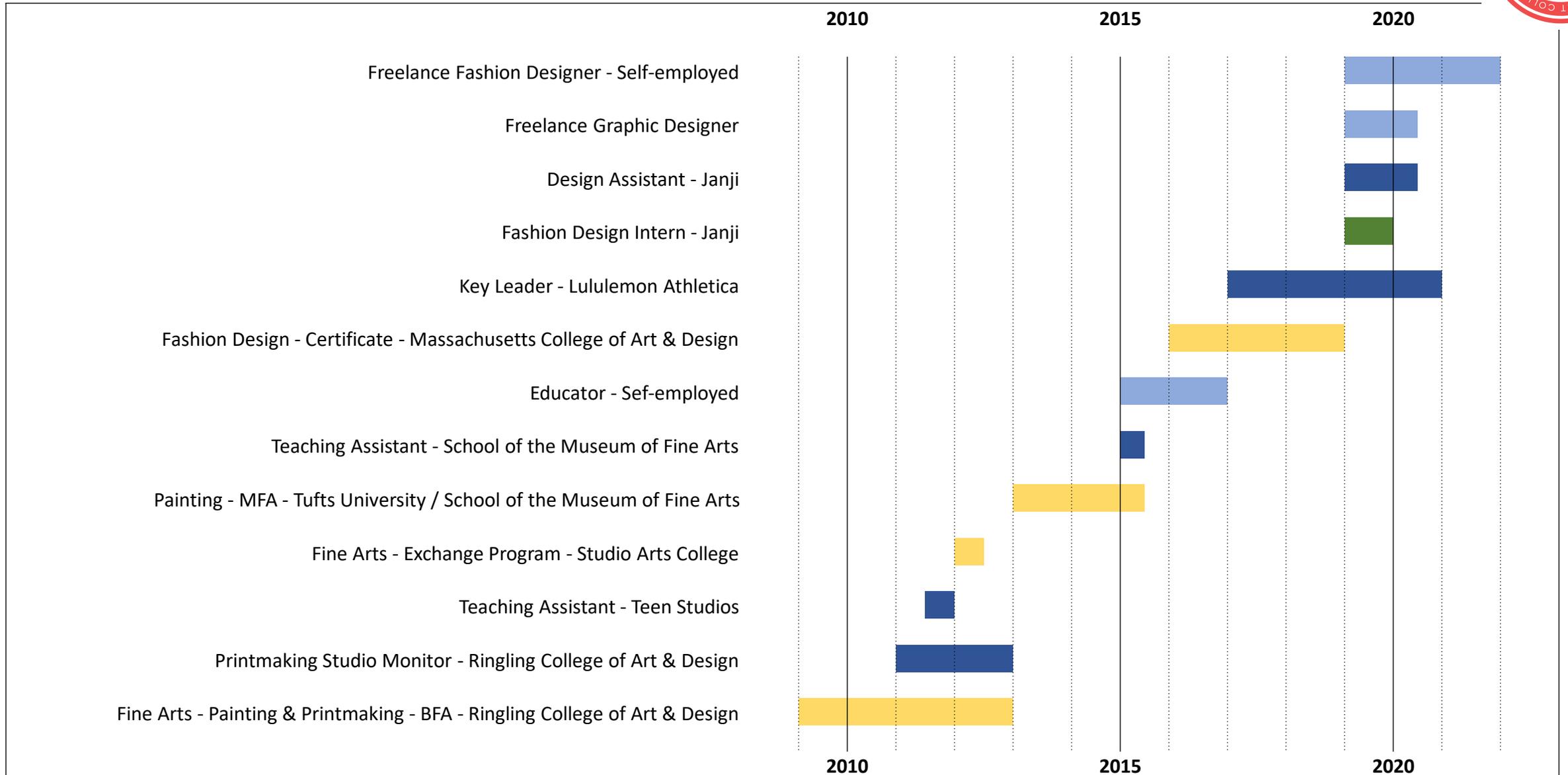
Fine Arts Major

Pursuing career in real estate while maintaining creative work



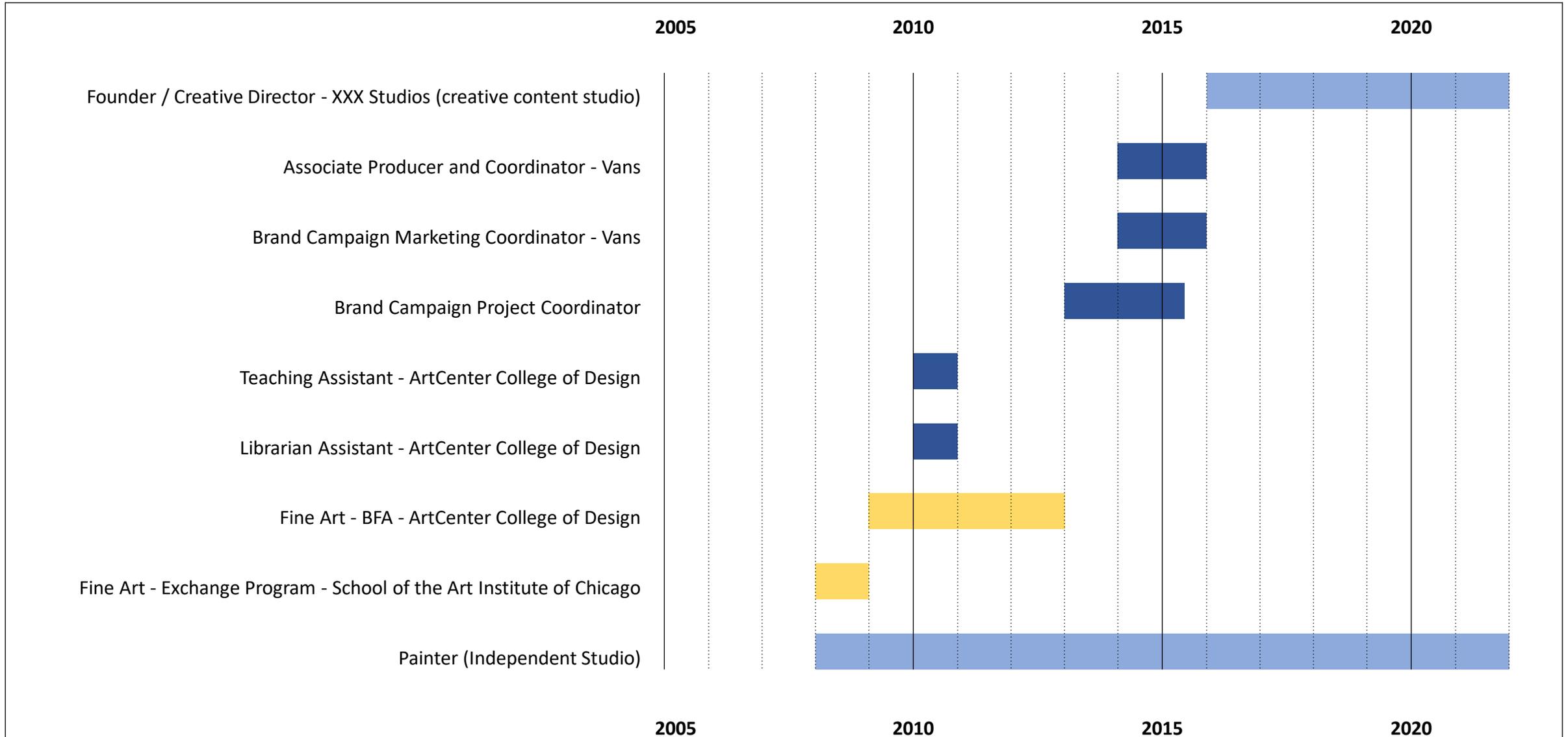
Fine Arts Major

Pivot to Fashion Design



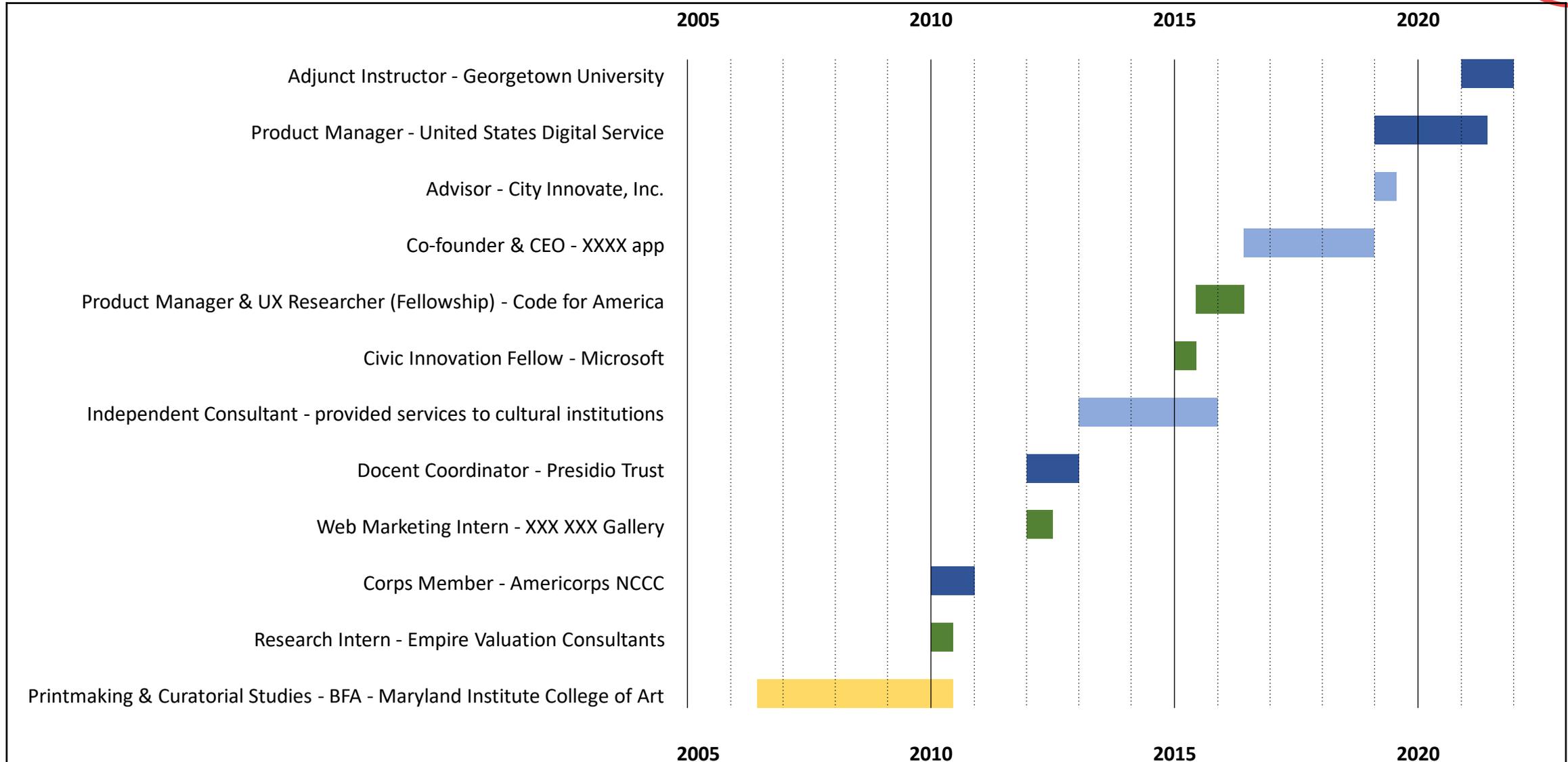
Fine Arts Major

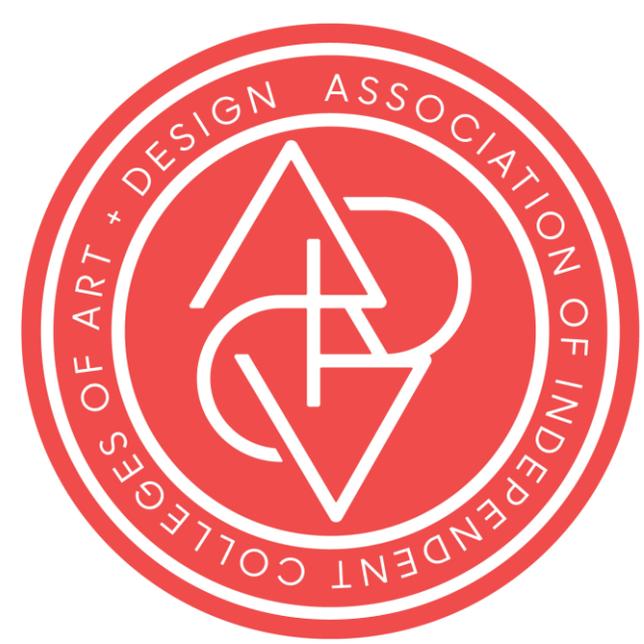
Pursued work in branding and marketing, then founded a creative media studio, while maintaining an independent painting studio



Fine Arts - Printmaking and Curatorial Studies Major

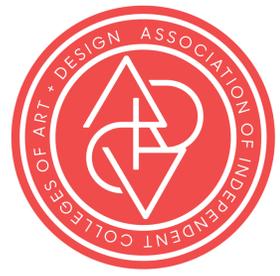
Consulting and project-based career trajectory





Graphic Design / Communications Design Majors

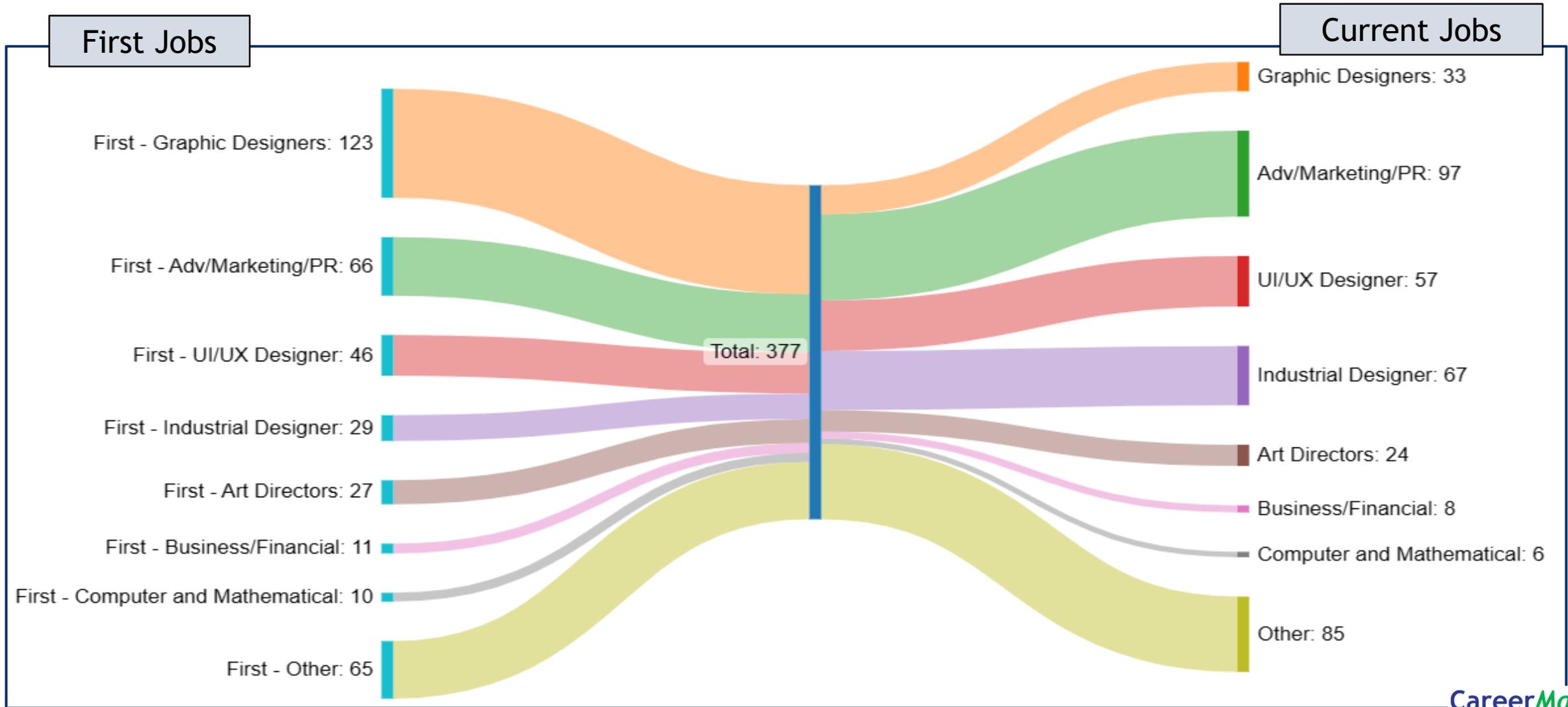
Overview for Graphic Design / Communications Design Majors



- Predominant **degree** earned – BFA
 - About 13% of graphic design majors earned a graduate degree
- **Internships**
 - 63% of graphic design majors in the sample completed at least one internship (pre- or post-graduation)
- 50% of Graphic design majors **first jobs** were either as independent contractors /freelance designers or within an agency specializing in advertising and/or marketing
- Graphic design majors’ tend to **persist in creative design** roles throughout their **career trajectories**
 - Their careers are often a series of **short-term projects and contracts**.
 - Graphic design alumni in this study averaged about 7 job “events” per person over a 10 year time period. These “events” could be permanent employment or projects undertaken as an independent contractor, freelancer, consultant.
 - Job changes might involve industry pivots, occupation pivots, and company pivots
 - Only 10% of graphic design alumni jobs persisted for more than three years
- Graphic design majors work in a variety of **industries**, for example:
 - Advertising / Branding
 - Product design
 - Publishing / Media communications
 - Science / Technology
- As they progressed in their career trajectory, many graphic design alumni took on greater **leadership roles** (e.g., Senior Designer; Creative Director)
- Graphic design majors have a great deal of **flexibility**. They exercise the freedom to work in a small agency, pursue freelance projects, or launch their own business.

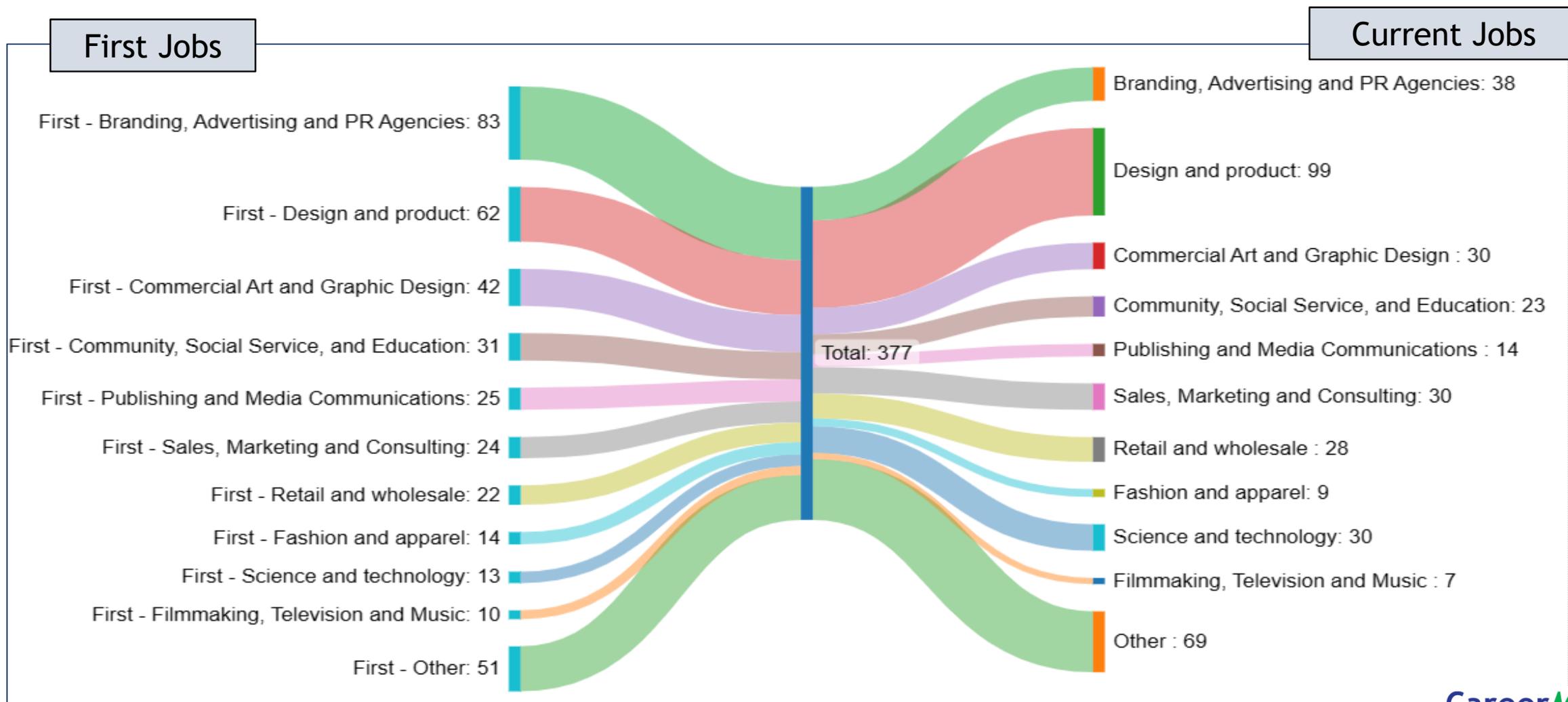


Occupations: Only 27% of alumni who were graphic designers in their first job remained in that role. As they gained creative experience and opportunities, graphic design majors moved to roles with greater responsibility.

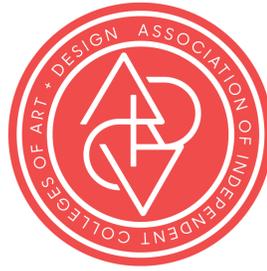




Industries: Career opportunities for graphic design professionals are present in a wide range of industries



Annual Salary Ranges for Designer Occupations



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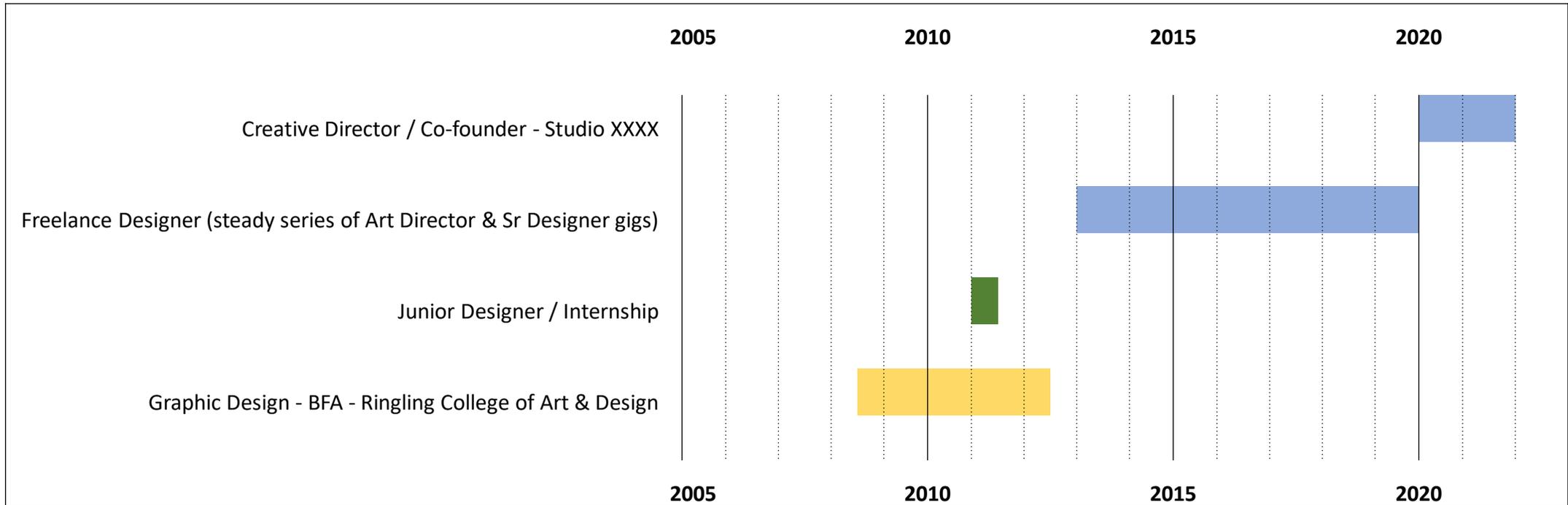
Graphic Design / Communication Design Majors Maps

Real examples of career trajectories of AICAD school alumni who earned a degree in communication/graphic design.

Note: Identifying information has been redacted within the “maps” to preserve anonymity

Graphic Design Major

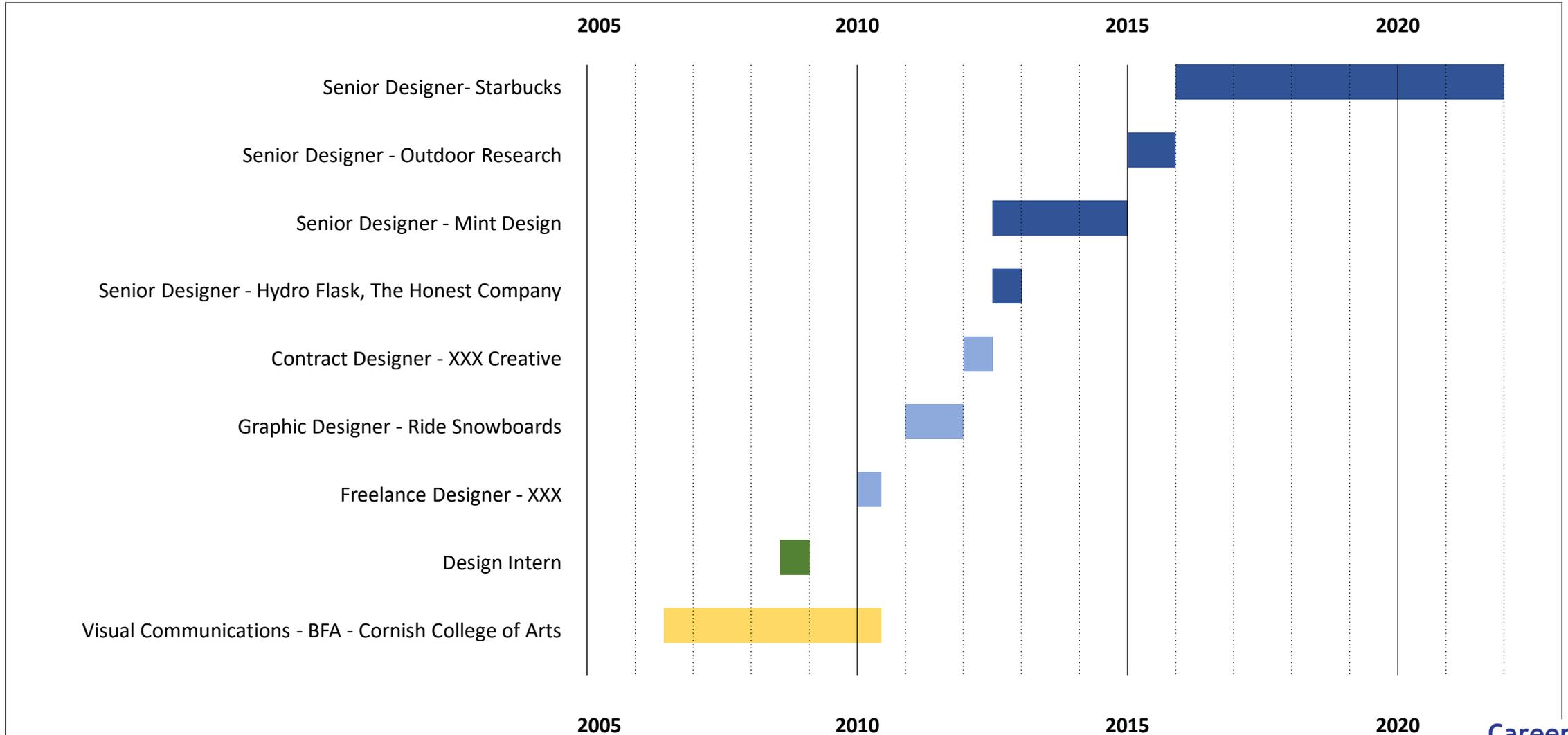
Successful career as freelancer, then founded design studio





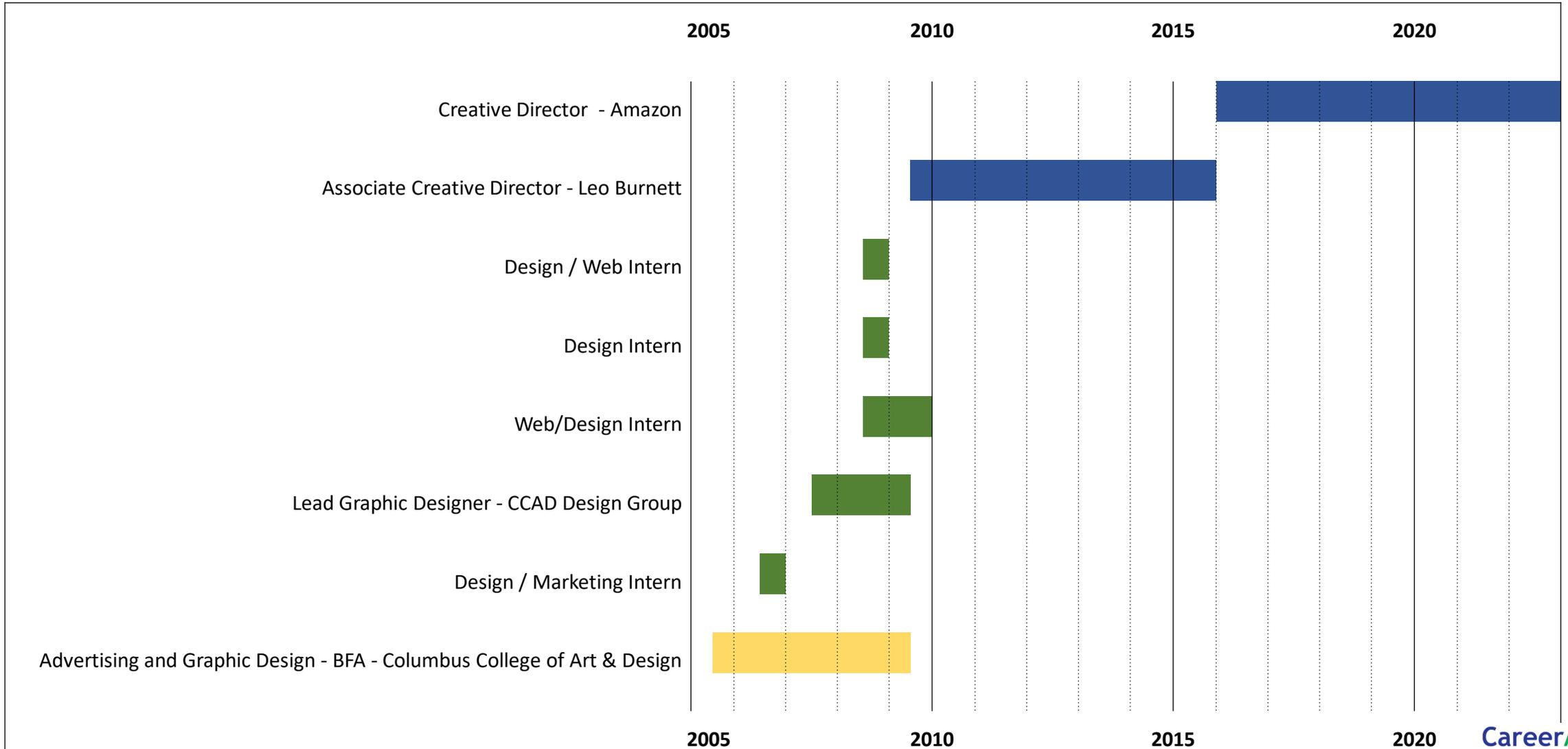
Graphic Design Major

Series of freelance gigs before long-term designer positions



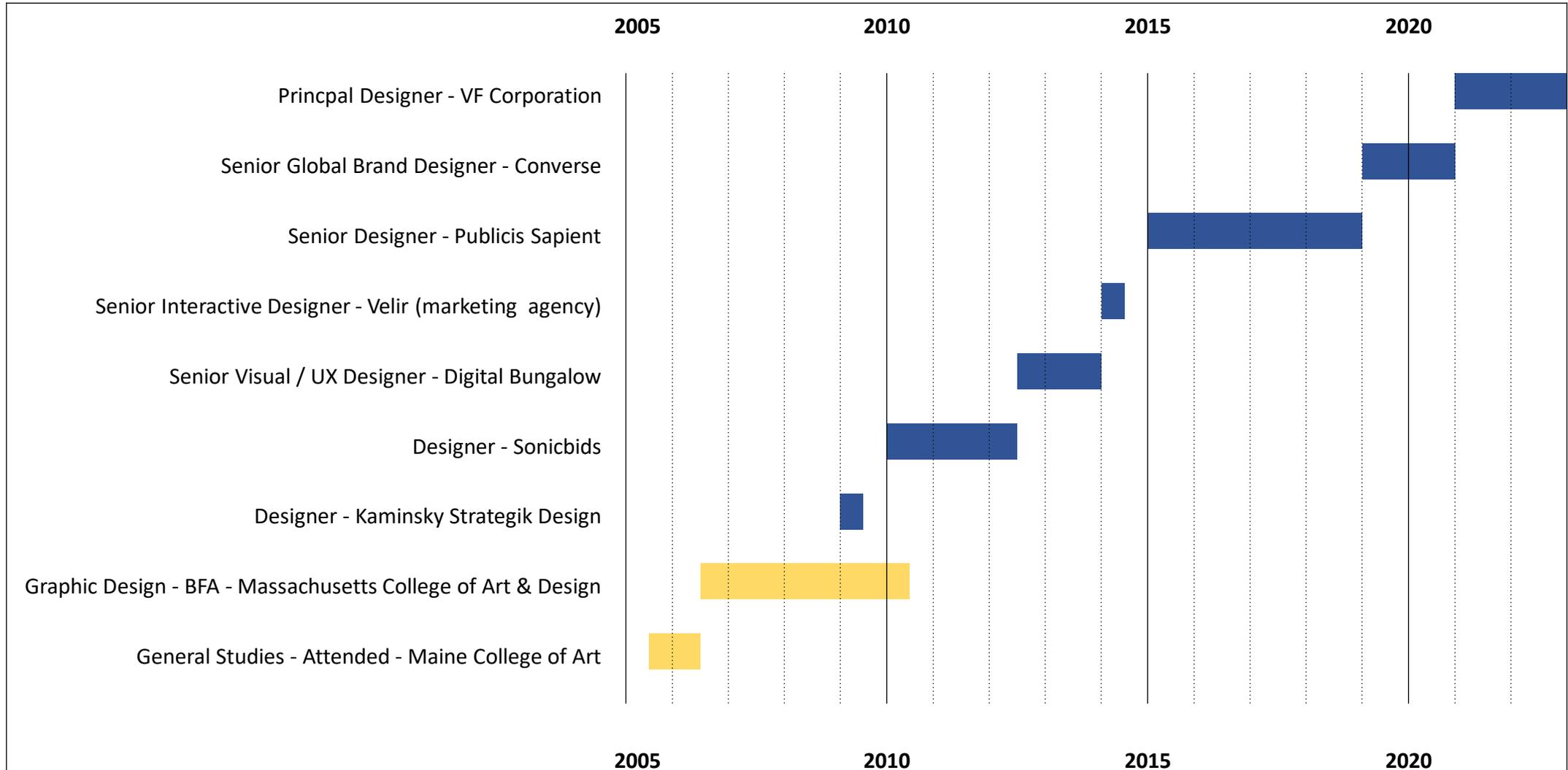
Graphic Design Major

Longterm positions in advertising at industry leaders



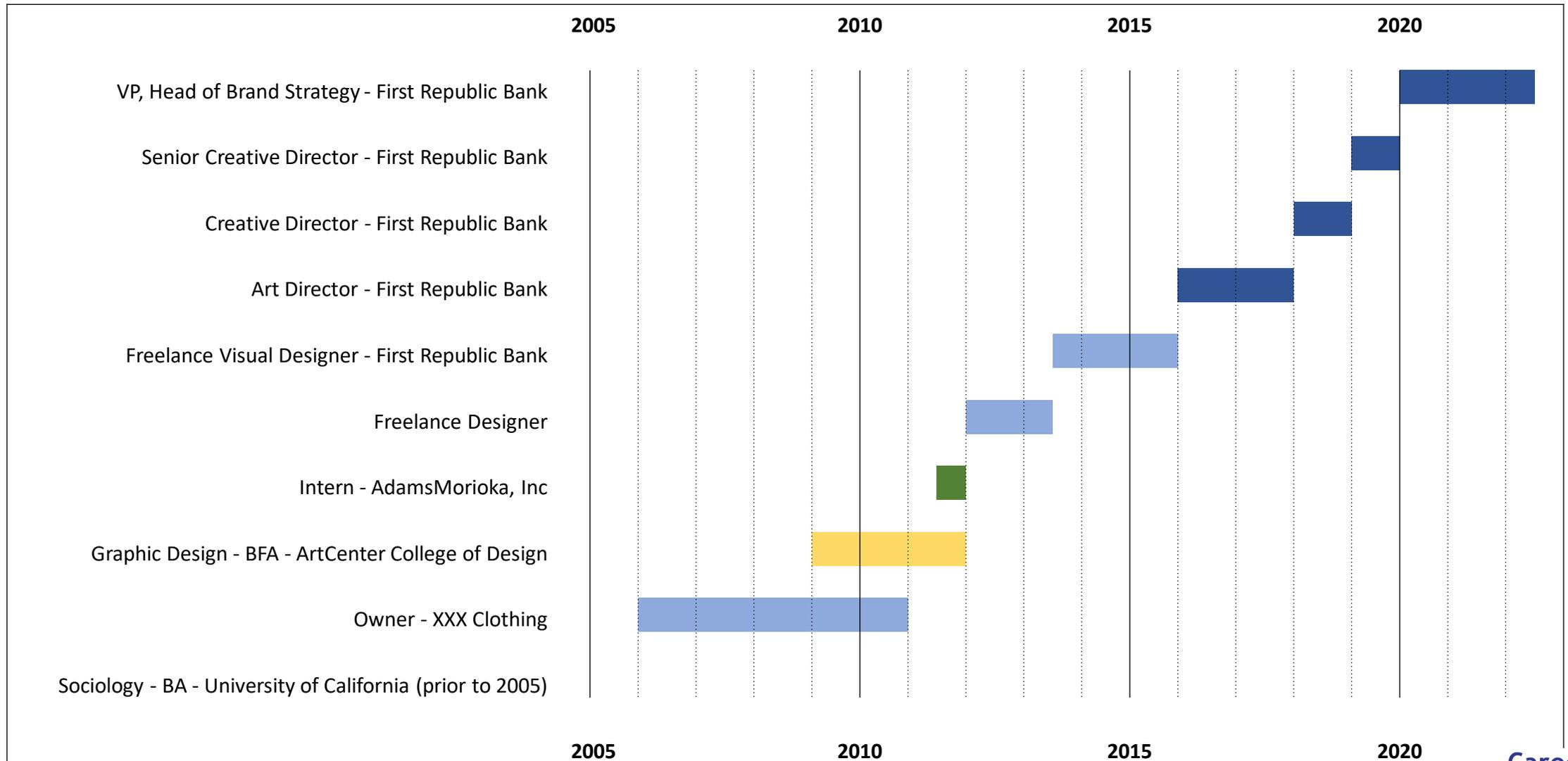
Graphic Design Major

Advance career by changing companies



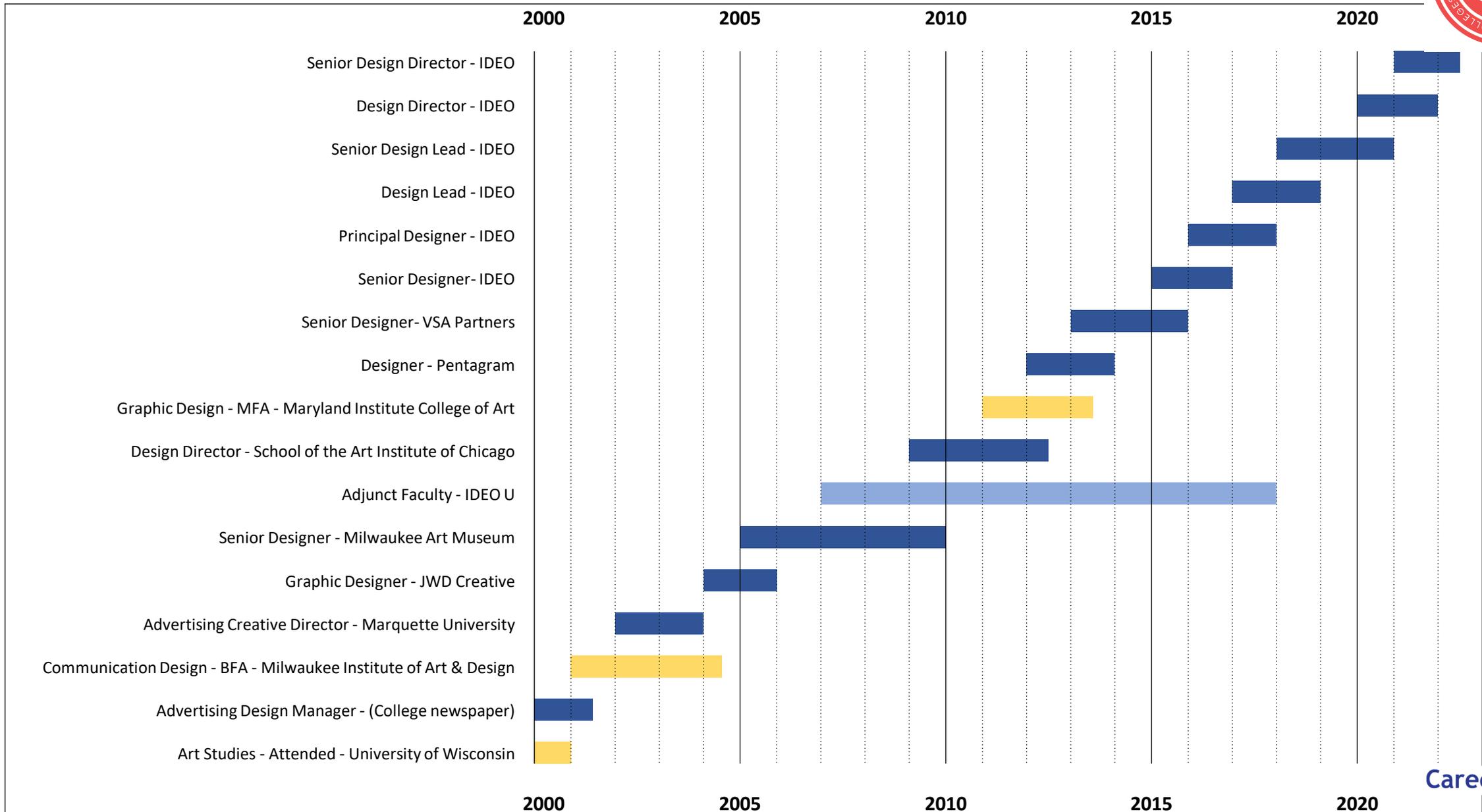
Graphic Design Major

Climbed to head of internal branding team at a large company



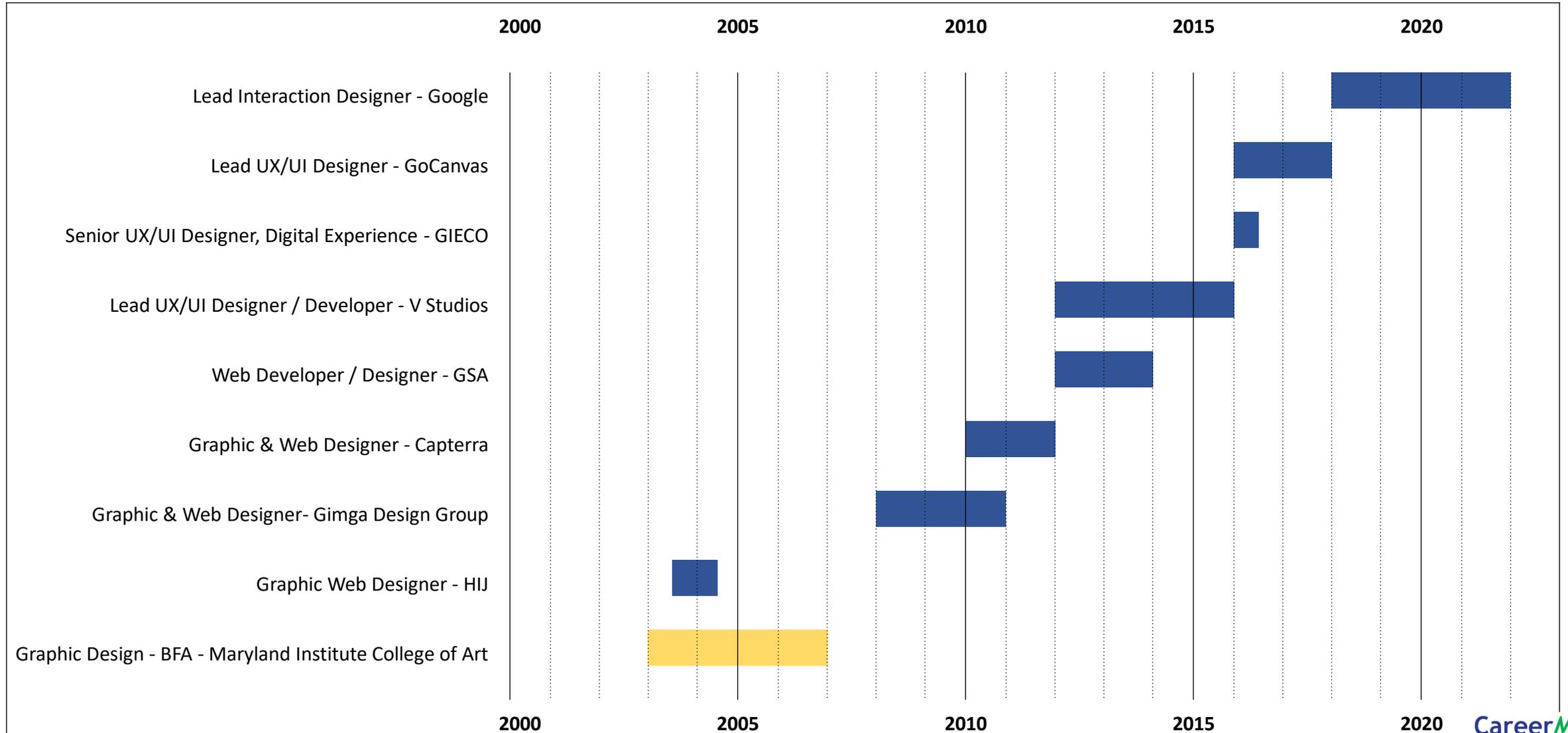
Graphic Design Major

Climbed the creative agency ladder



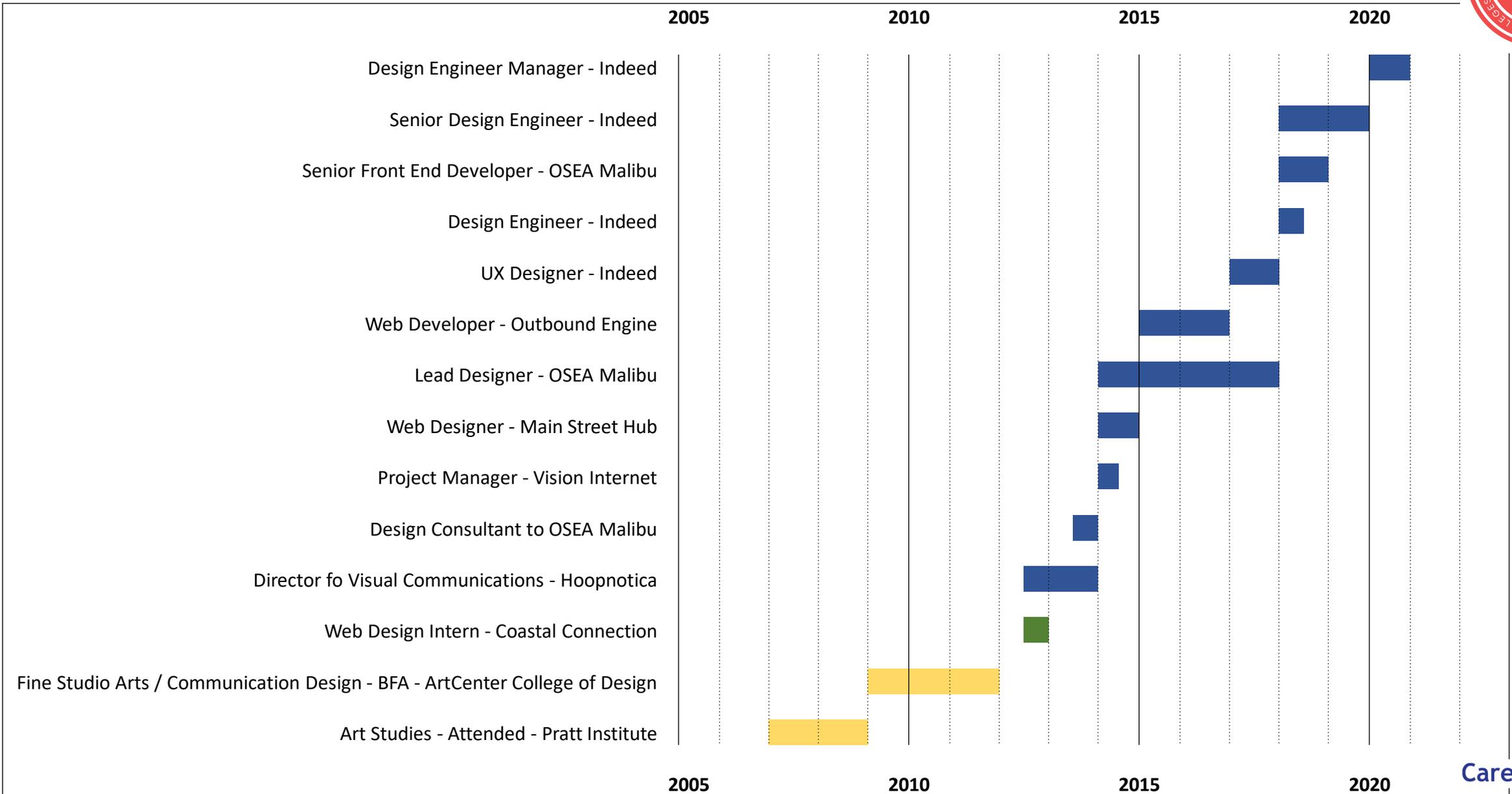
Graphic Design Major

Transitioned to UX / Interaction Design roles



Graphic Design Major

Progress from Visual Communication Design to UX Design



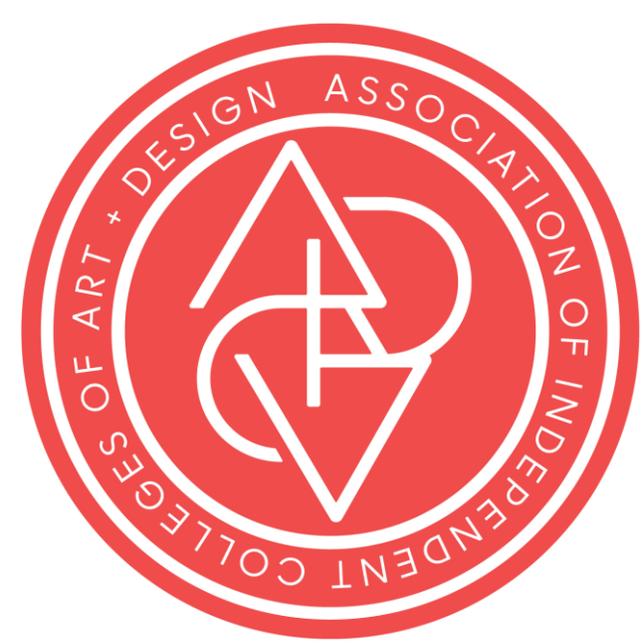
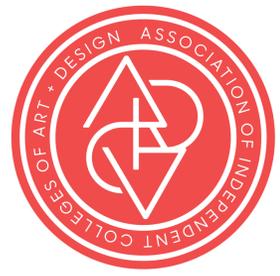


Illustration Majors



Overview for Illustration Majors

- Predominant **degree** earned – BFA
 - Very few pursued a graduate degree
- **Internships**
 - 41% of Illustration majors in the sample completed at least one internship (pre- or post-graduation)
 - Internships were primarily in design related industries: e.g., publishing and media communications; advertising; fashion and apparel
- The **career trajectories** of Illustration majors vary.
 - Illustration alumni in this study averaged about 5.5 job “events” per person over a 10 year time period. These “events” could be permanent employment or projects undertaken as an independent contractor, freelancer, consultant. They might represent a pivot in occupation, company, or industry.
 - One-quarter of first jobs were as graphic designers; another 10% were illustrators. Many positions early in the career trajectory are short-term gig work.
 - Illustration majors tended to transition into **more stable** (and lucrative) occupations in industrial and technology related industries as they advanced in their career trajectories
- **Top job titles:**
 - Designer / Graphic Designer
 - Senior Designer
 - Art Director
 - Creative Director



Illustration Majors transition into more lucrative occupations

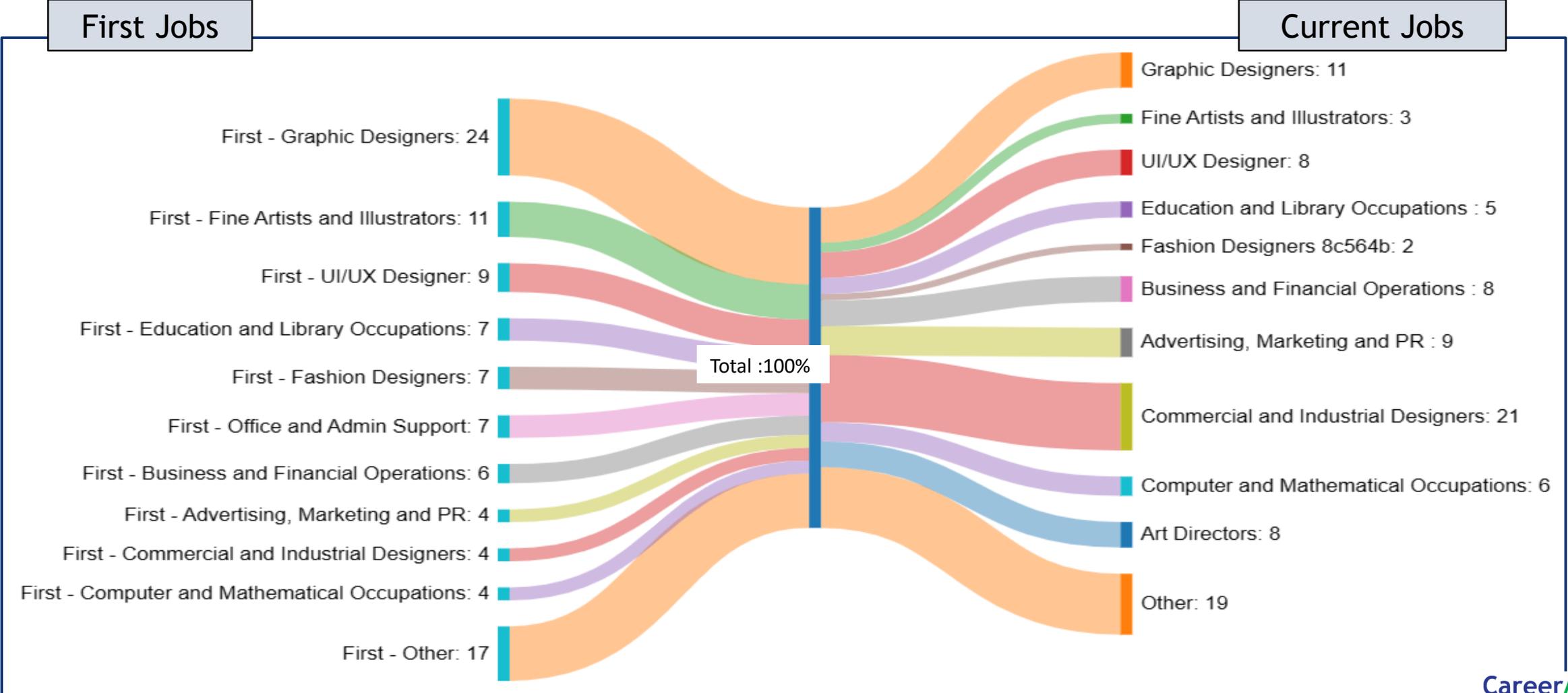




Illustration majors transition into more lucrative occupations

First Job v Current Job

Occupation	% First	Ave Salary*	% Current	Ave Salary*
Graphic Designers	24%	\$39,270	11%	\$74,700
Fine Artists and Illustrators	11%	\$37,310	3%	\$60,820
User Interface/ User Experience Designer (UI/UX)	9%	\$44,580	8%	\$98,030
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	7%	\$33,010	5%	\$72,370
Fashion Designers	7%	\$50,630	2%	\$101,320
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	7%	\$30,180	0%	\$48,490
Business and Financial Operations	6%	\$53,410	8%	\$100,220
Advertising, Marketing, Public Relations Managers	4%	\$48,400	9%	\$172,210
Commercial and Industrial Designers	4%	\$57,070	21%	\$98,680
Computer Related Occupations (e.g., software engineer)	4%	\$62,590	6%	\$128,030
Art Directors	1%	\$77,490	8%	\$135,350

*Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021 Salary Data for SOC codes. 25% of range for first jobs, 75% of range for current jobs



Illustration majors transition into more product-related industries

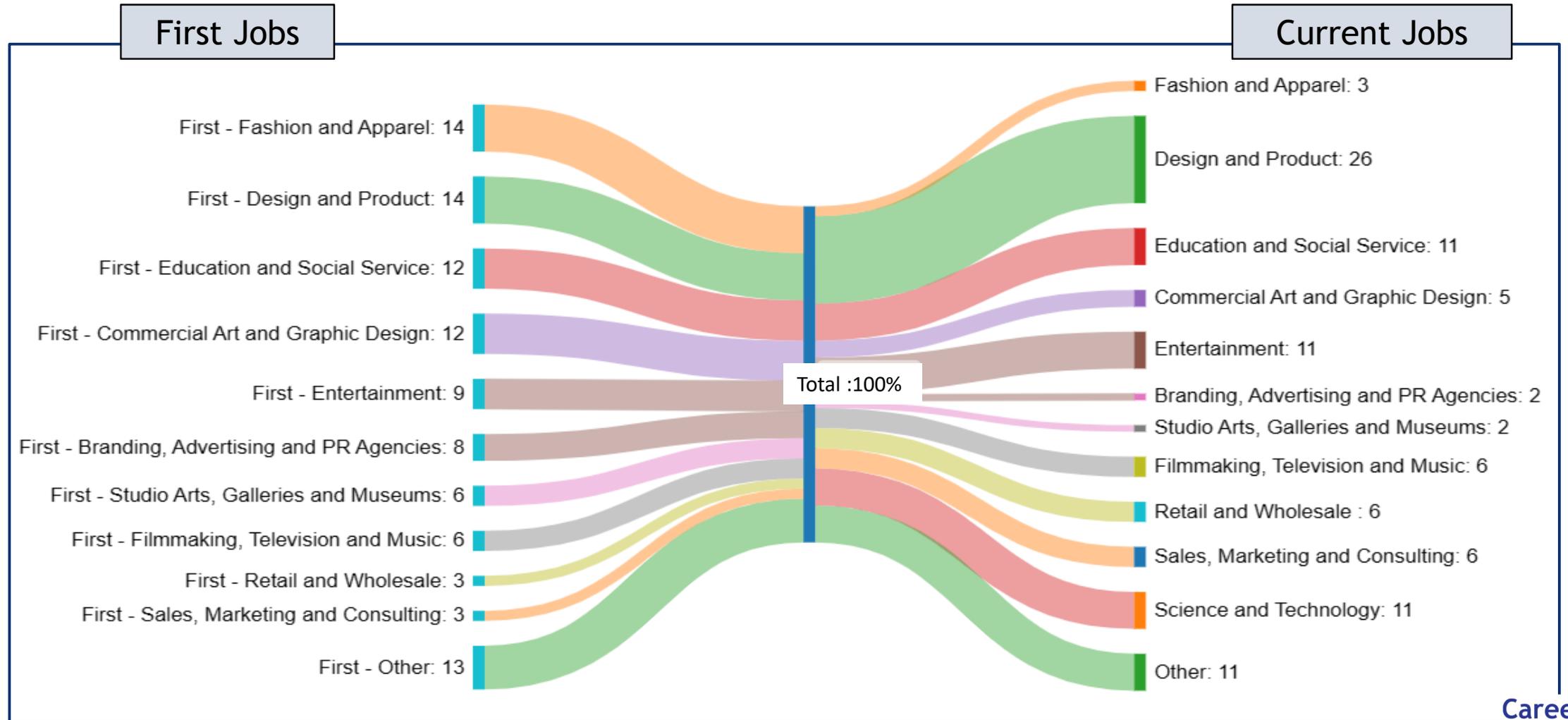




Illustration Majors Maps

Real examples of career trajectories of AICAD school alumni who earned a degree in Illustration.

Note: Identifying information has been redacted within the “maps” to preserve anonymity



Illustration Major

Designer positions while maintaining a freelance practice

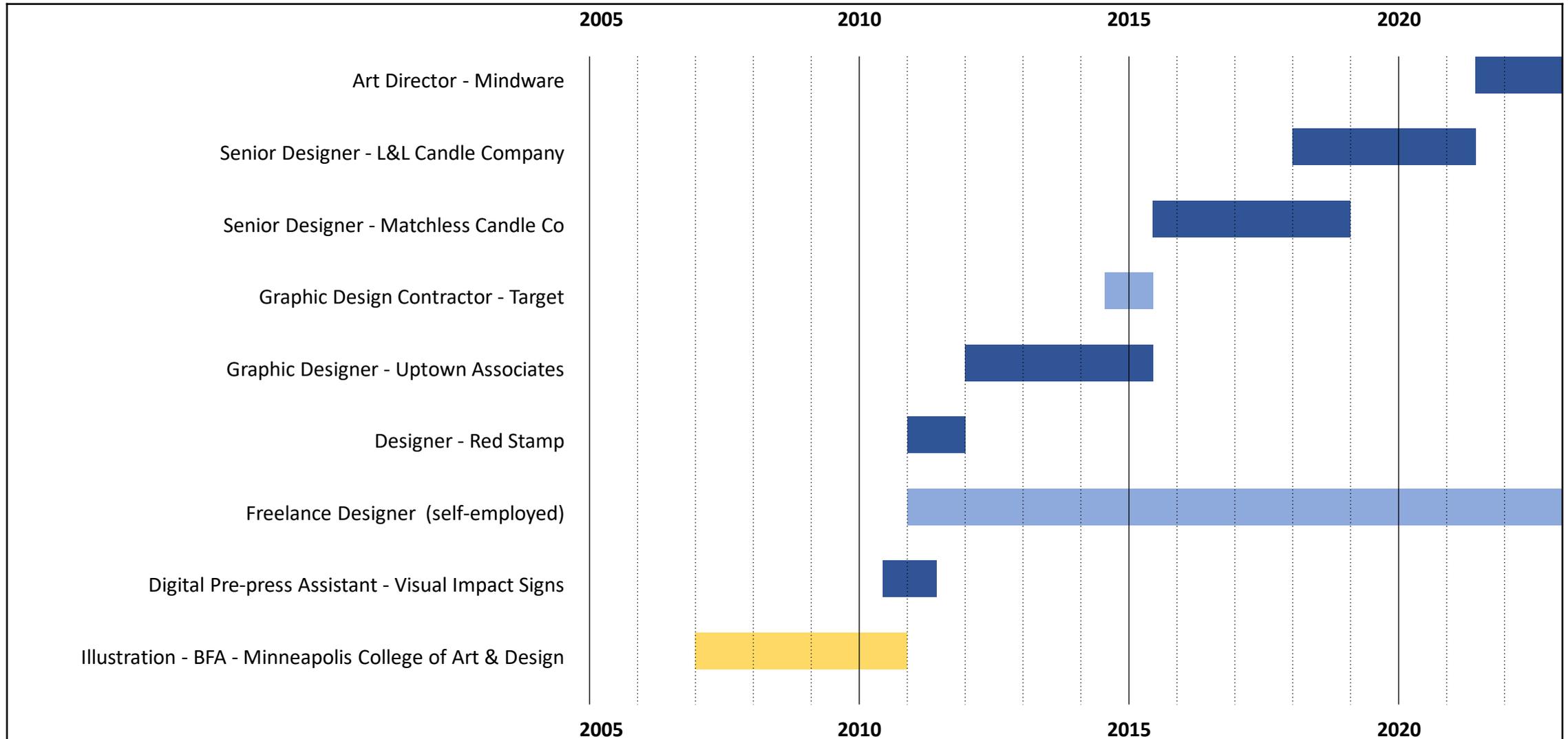


Illustration Major

Web design to software engineer

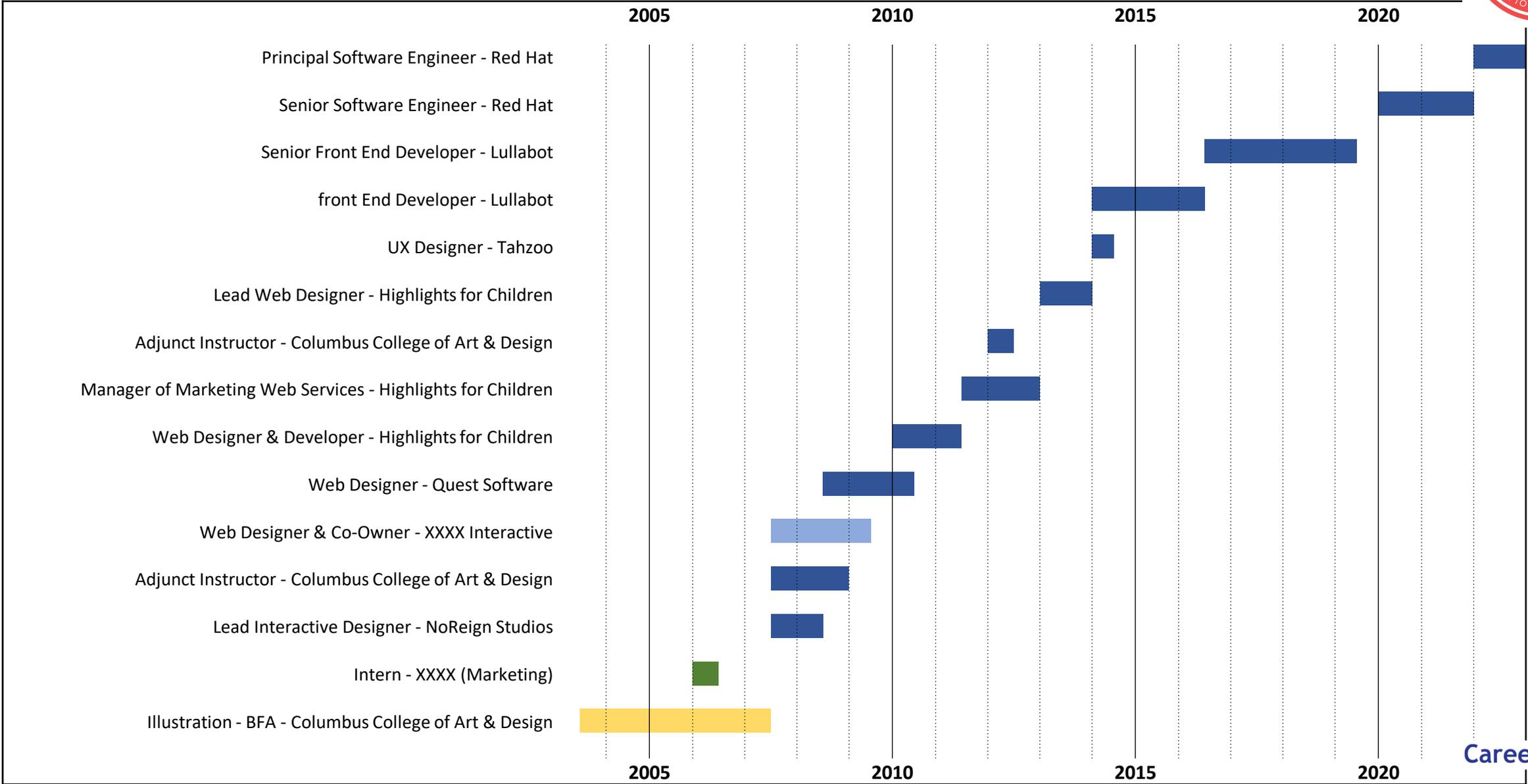


Illustration Major

Gig work in the media arts industry

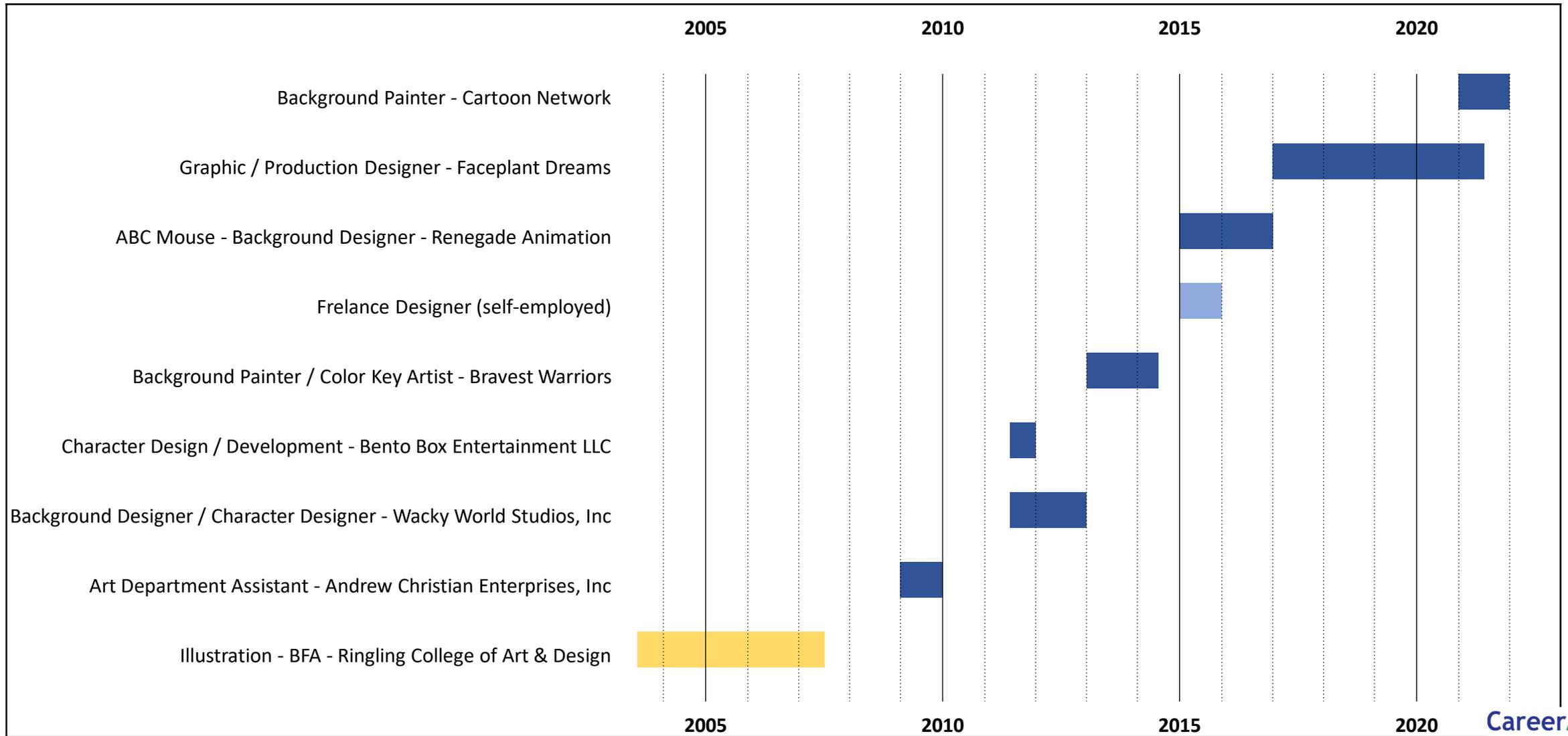




Illustration Major

Followed a Graphic Design career path

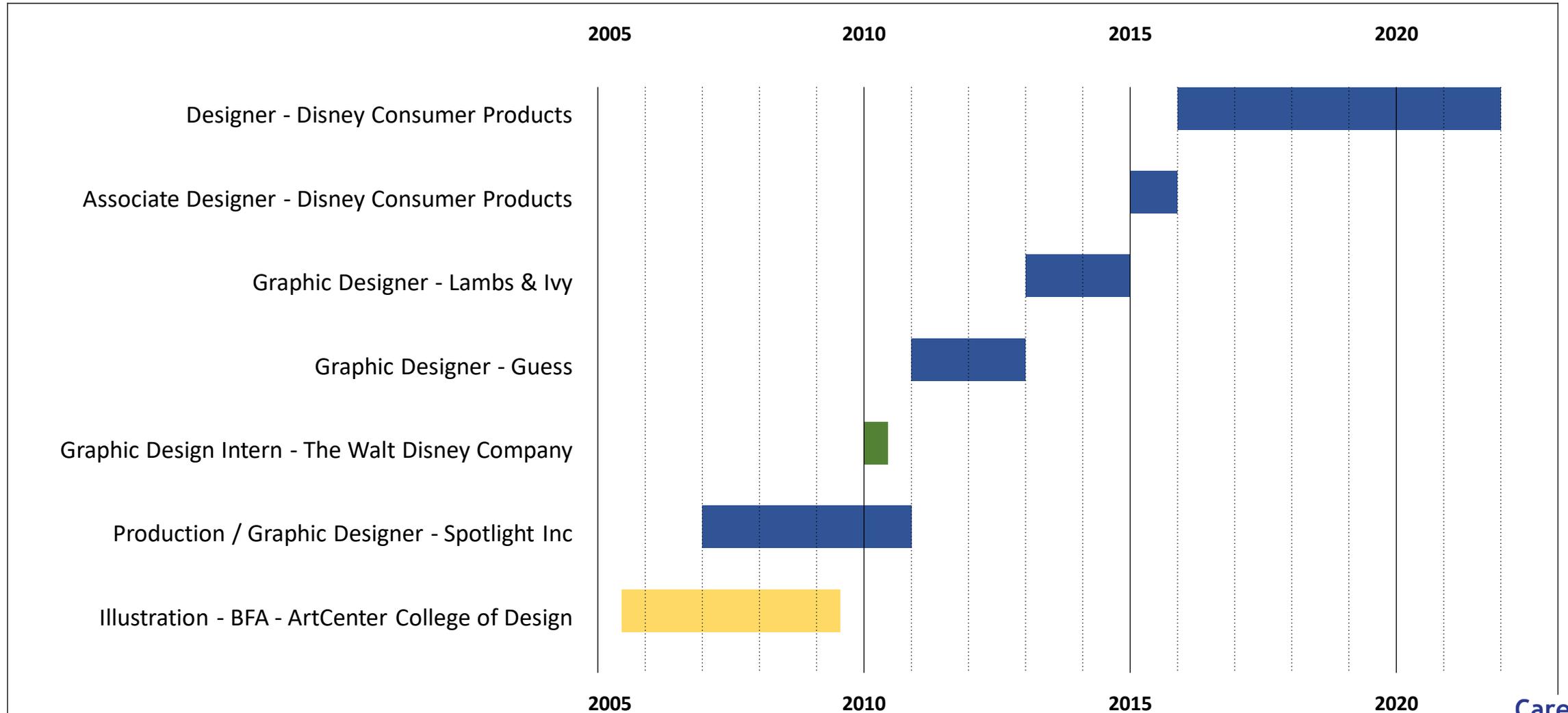
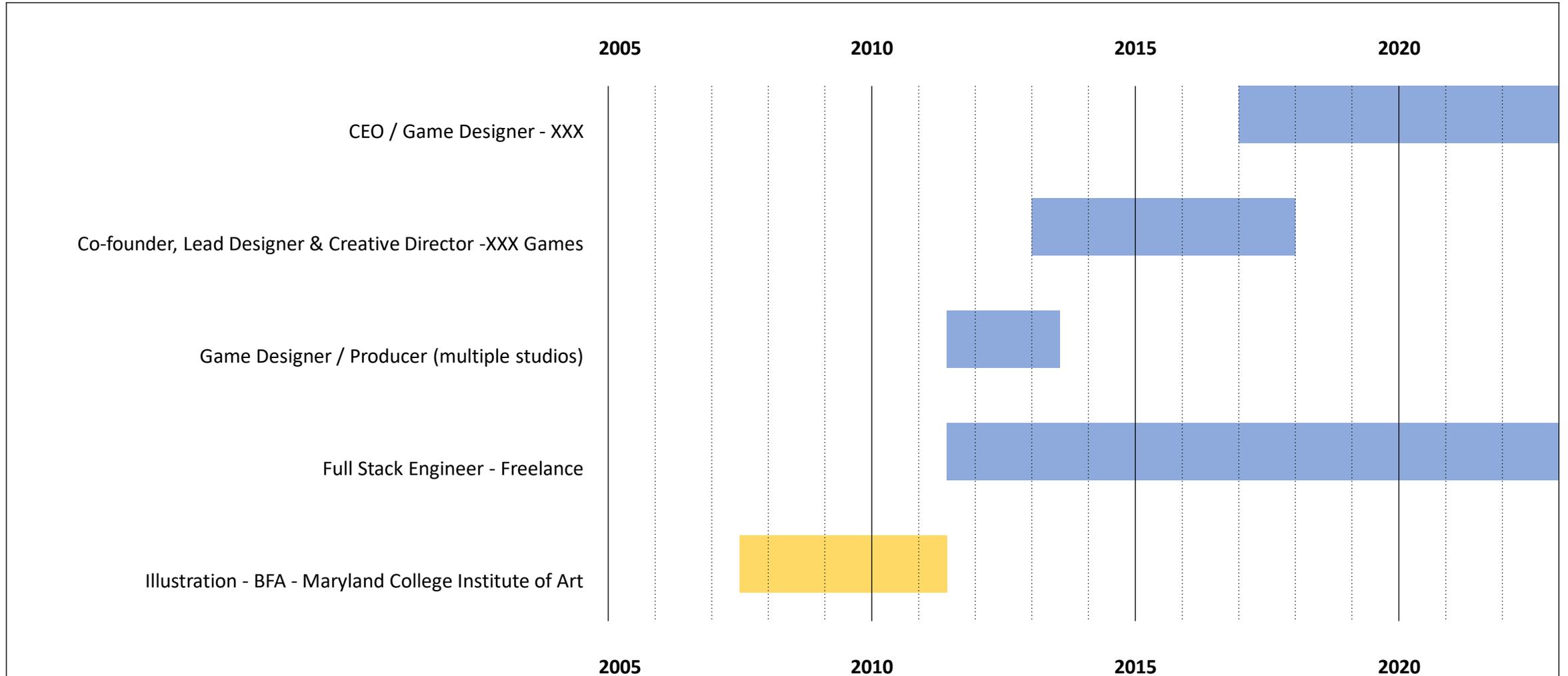




Illustration Major

Moved directly into independent software engineering and video game development



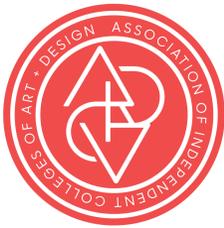


Illustration Major

Career focus on design research and strategy

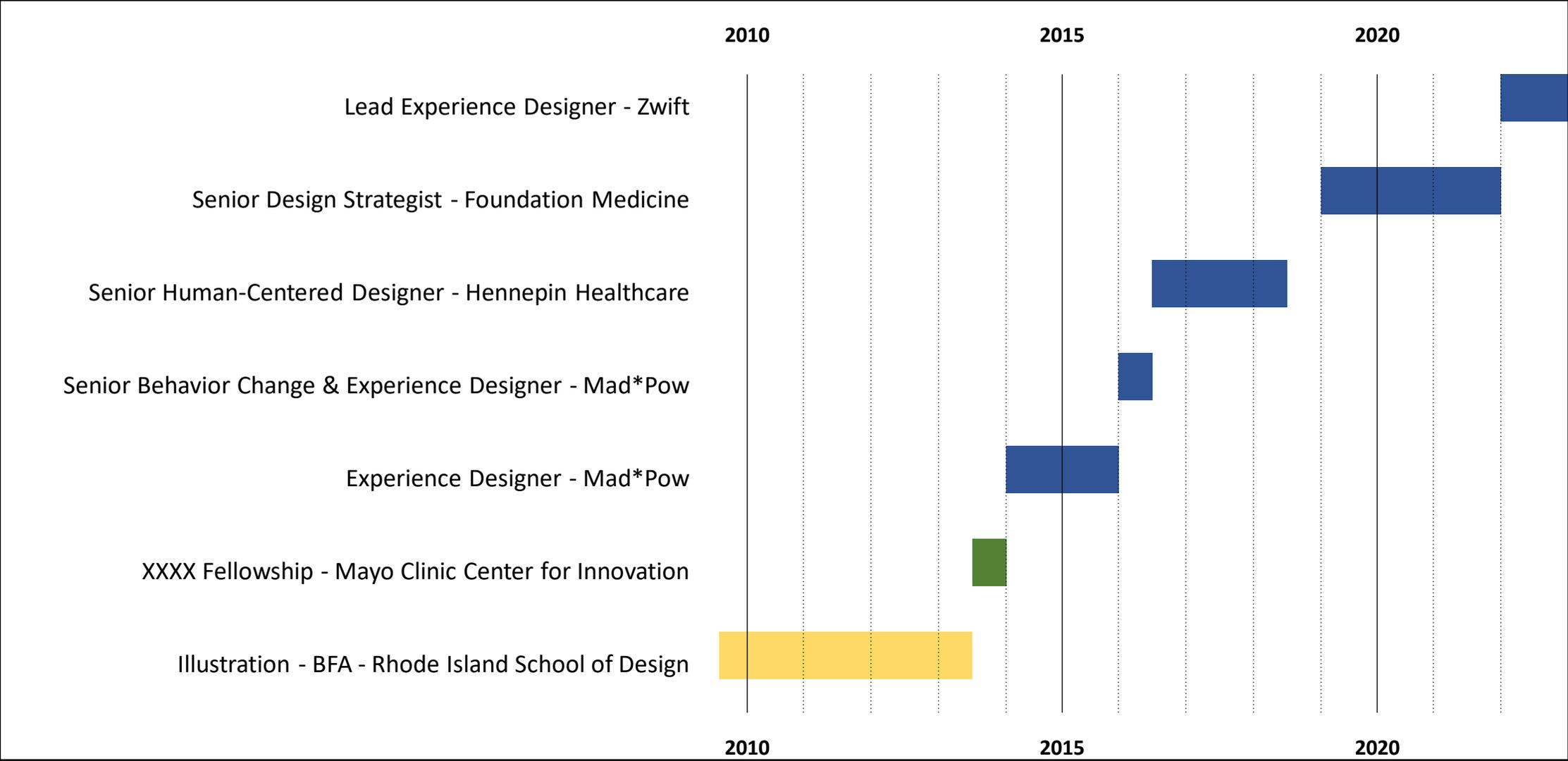
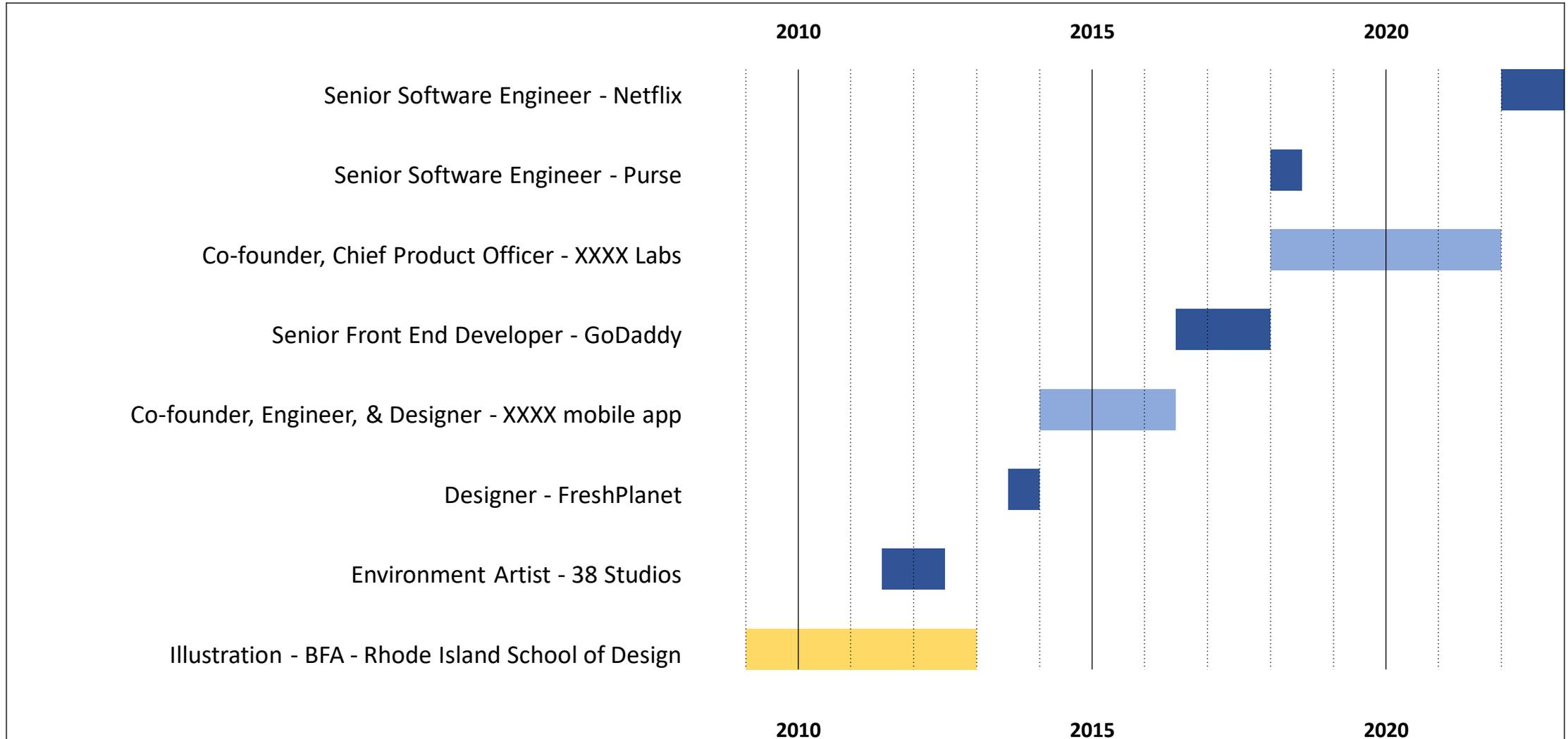
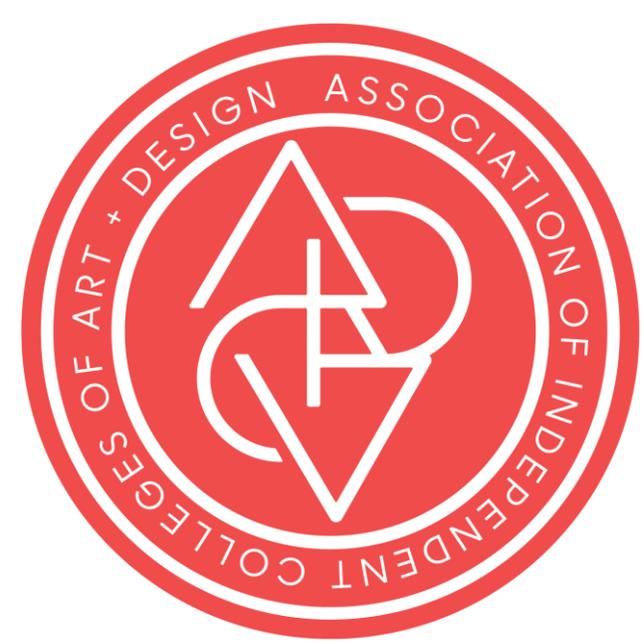


Illustration Major

Career in Software Development





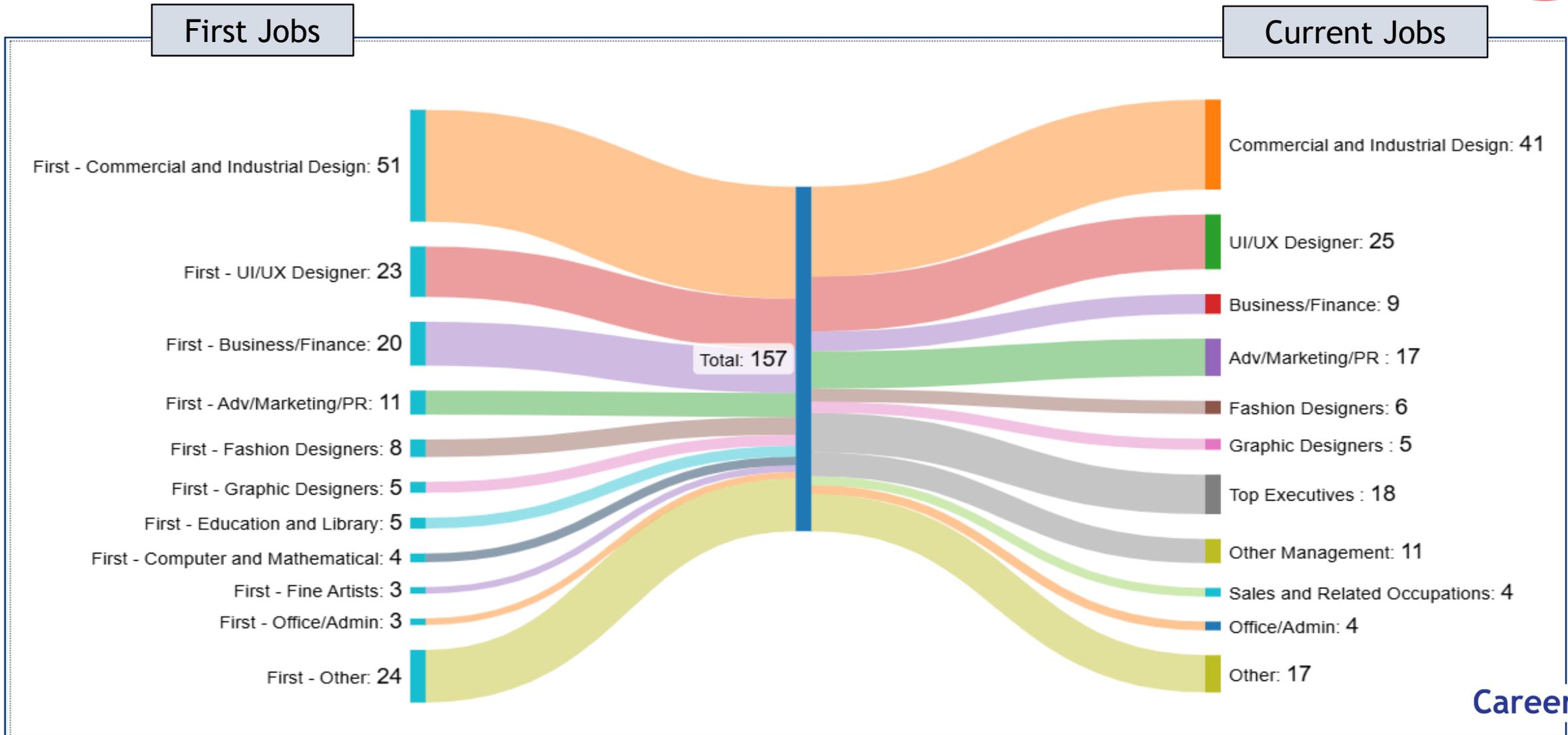
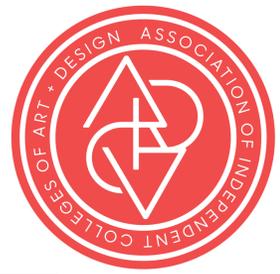
Industrial Design Majors

Overview for Industrial Design Majors

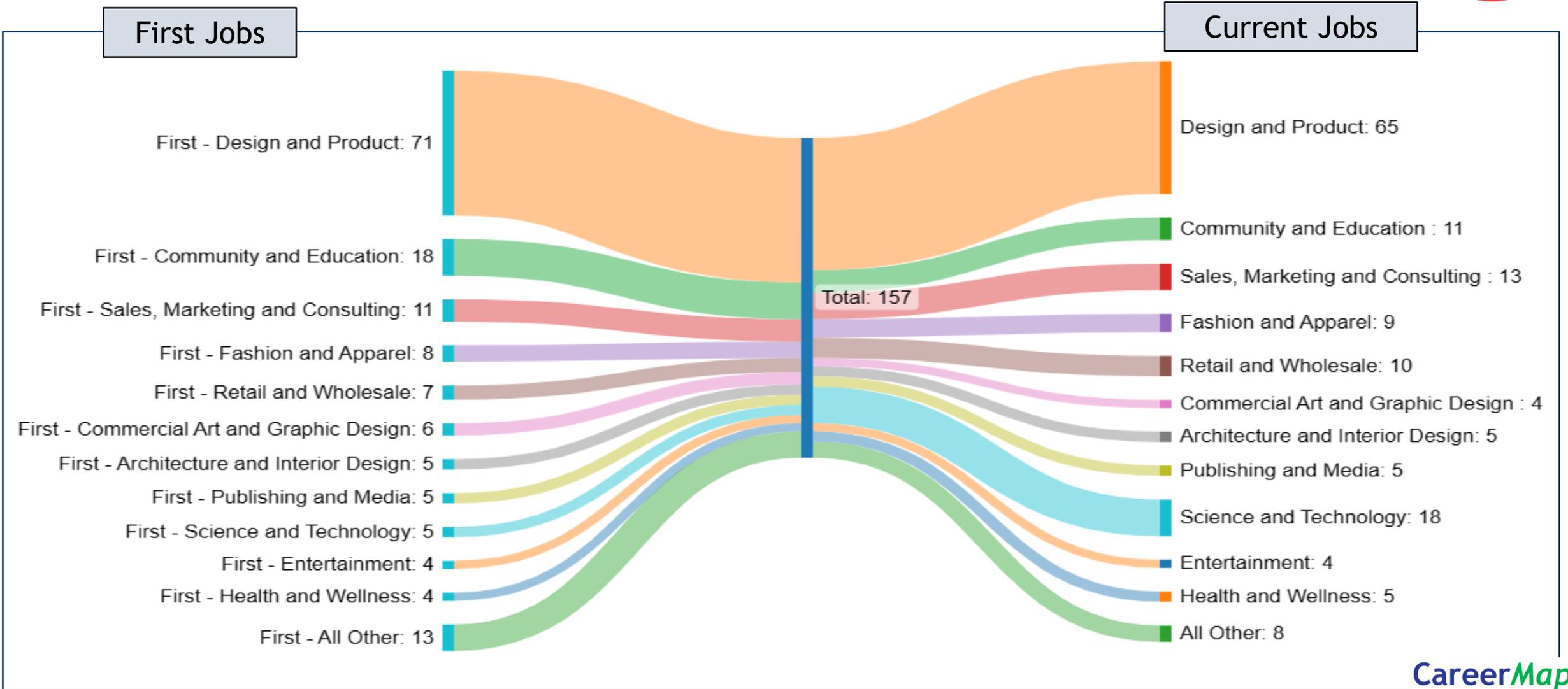
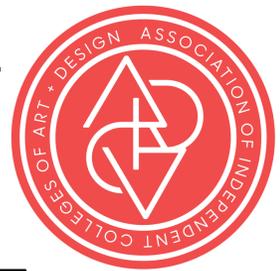


- Predominant **degree** earned – BFA
 - About 35% of Industrial Design majors earned a graduate degree
 - Of those who pursued a graduate degree, 40% earned a MS
 - Other degrees included: M.Des, MA, MBA, and MA
- 62% of industrial design majors in the sample completed at least one **internship** (pre- or post-graduation)
- An industrial design degree opens the door to work in a variety of **industries**, including science and technology.
- Most industrial design alumni work in design-related **occupations** throughout their careers.
- Industrial Design alumni demonstrated high levels of **success** in terms of pace and degree of professional advancement. 47% had reached a managerial or senior leadership role by their fifth job after graduation. (e.g., Senior Designer; Design Director, CEO)
- **Top job titles:**
 - Designer / Product Designer / Industrial Designer
 - UX/UI Designer
 - Design Director / Creative Director

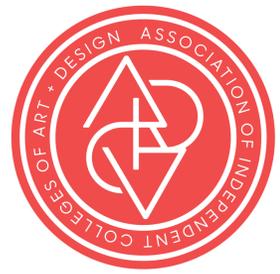
Occupations: Industrial Design Majors easily move into higher paying occupations and job levels or stay in creative roles



Industry: As their career progress, Industrial Design majors make their mark in numerous industries



Annual Salary Ranges for Designer Occupations



	10%	25%	50% Median	75%	90%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	29,010	37,270	51,190	79,200	122,420
Art Directors	57,220	77,490	100,890	135,350	194,130
Craft Artists	22,760	28,830	35,930	47,170	61,290
Fine Artists, Including Painters, Sculptors, and Illustrators	19,430	37,310	60,820	96,580	125,930
Special Effects Artists and Animators	46,000	61,300	78,790	102,660	131,370
Artists and Related Workers, All Other	21,750	38,310	61,580	95,910	115,020
Commercial and Industrial Designers	44,840	57,070	77,030	98,680	128,210
Fashion Designers	37,480	50,630	77,450	101,320	130,870
Floral Designers	22,830	27,830	29,880	36,770	44,820
Graphic Designers	31,310	39,270	50,710	74,700	98,260
Interior Designers	30,930	46,420	60,340	77,700	99,070
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	26,560	29,240	32,060	37,930	47,290
Set and Exhibit Designers	30,810	39,180	54,860	78,910	100,550
Designers, All Other	30,230	44,580	62,310	98,030	129,990



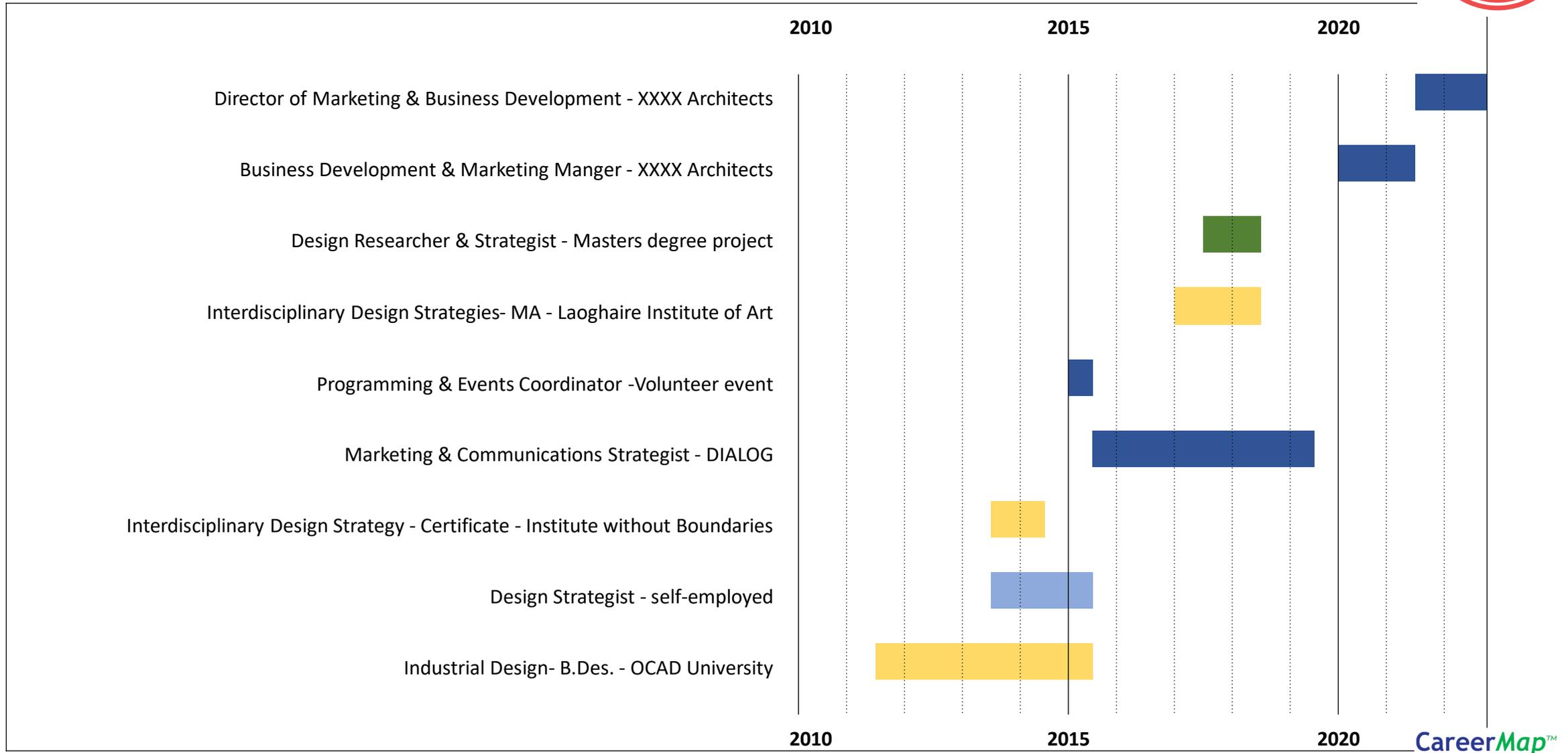
Industrial and Product Design Majors Maps

Real examples of career trajectories of AICAD school alumni who earned a degree in Industrial / Product Design.

Note: Identifying information has been redacted within the “maps” to preserve anonymity

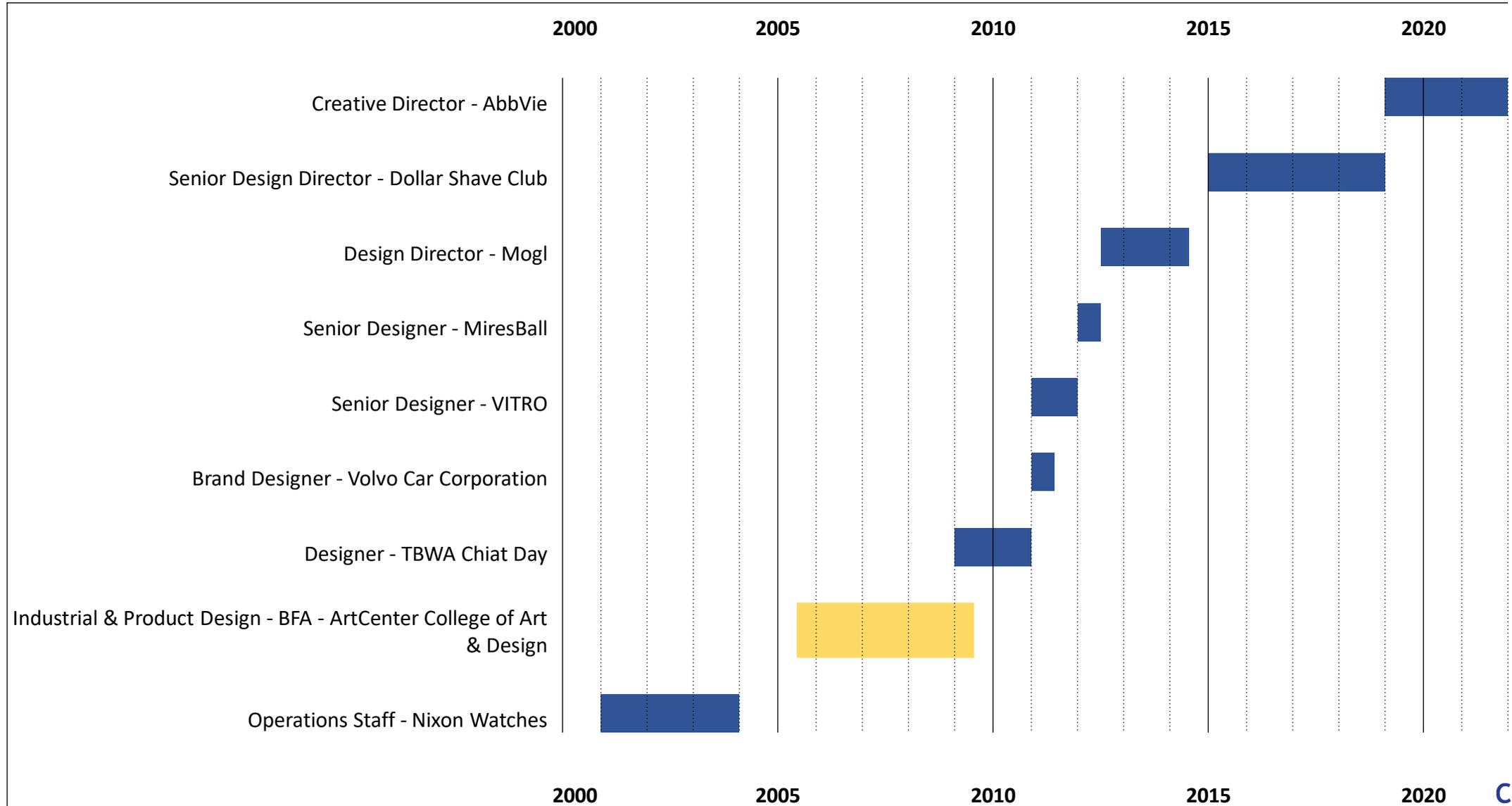
Industrial Design Major

Focus on design strategy and marketing



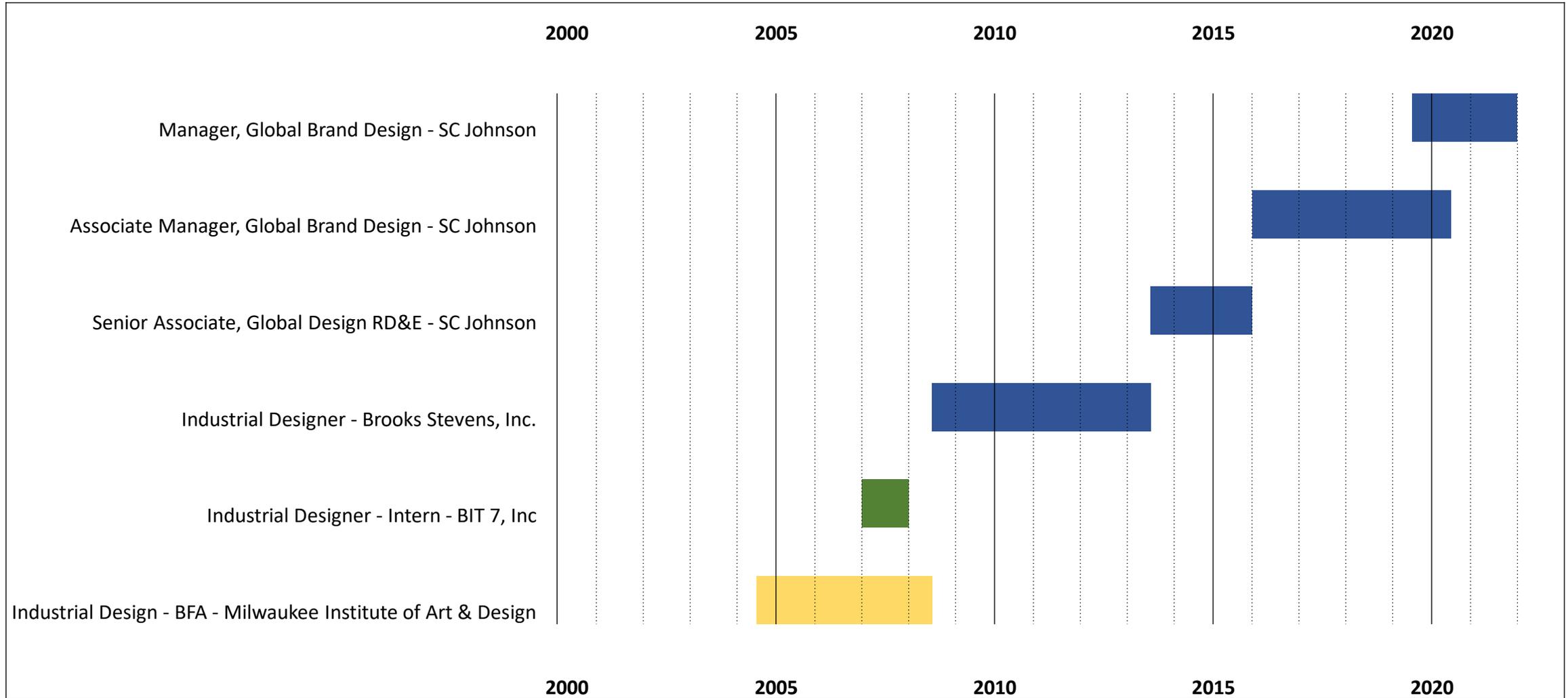
Industrial Design Major

Relatively rapid rise to management roles



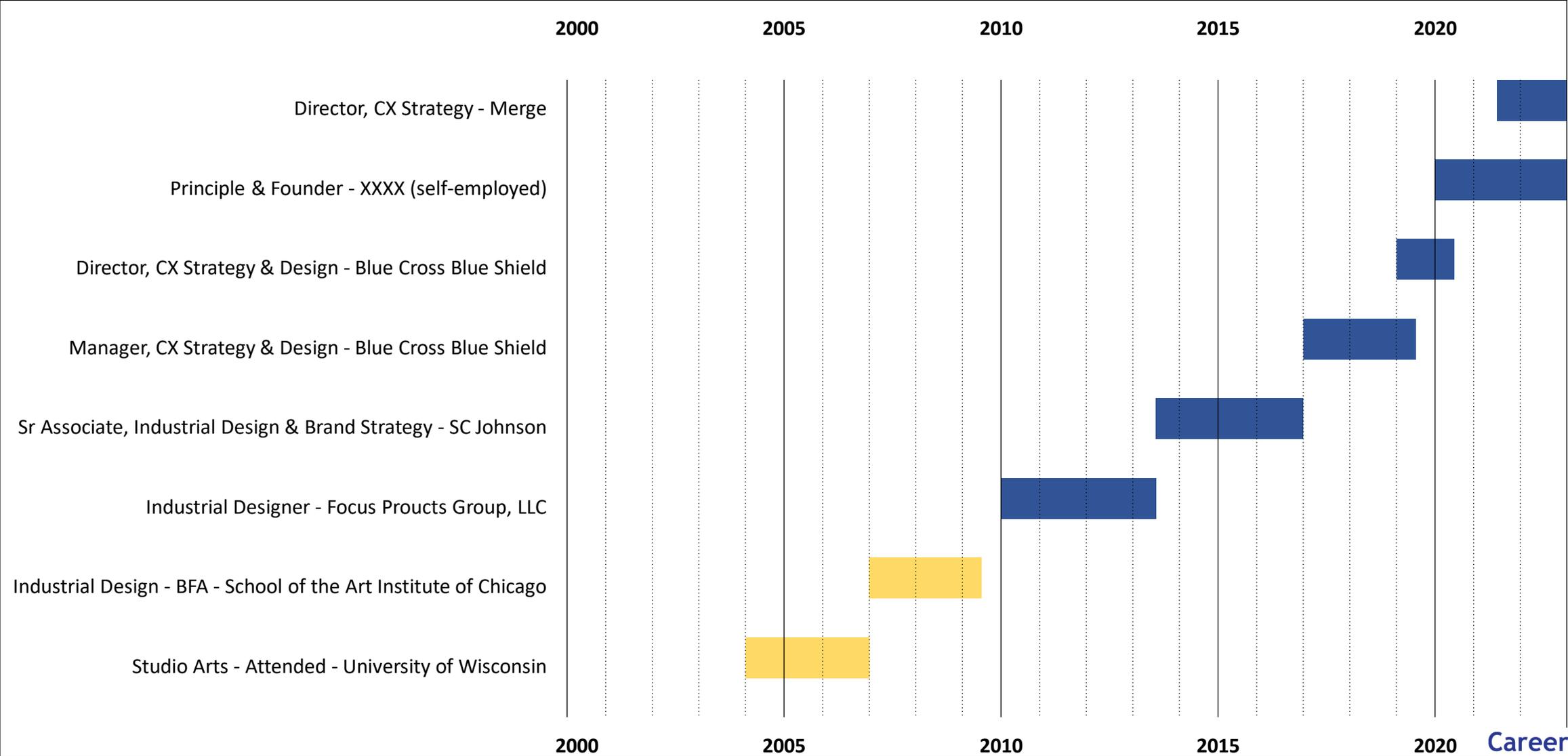
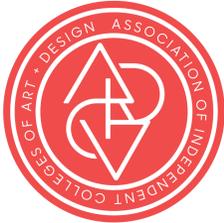
Industrial Design Major

Advanced within one large company



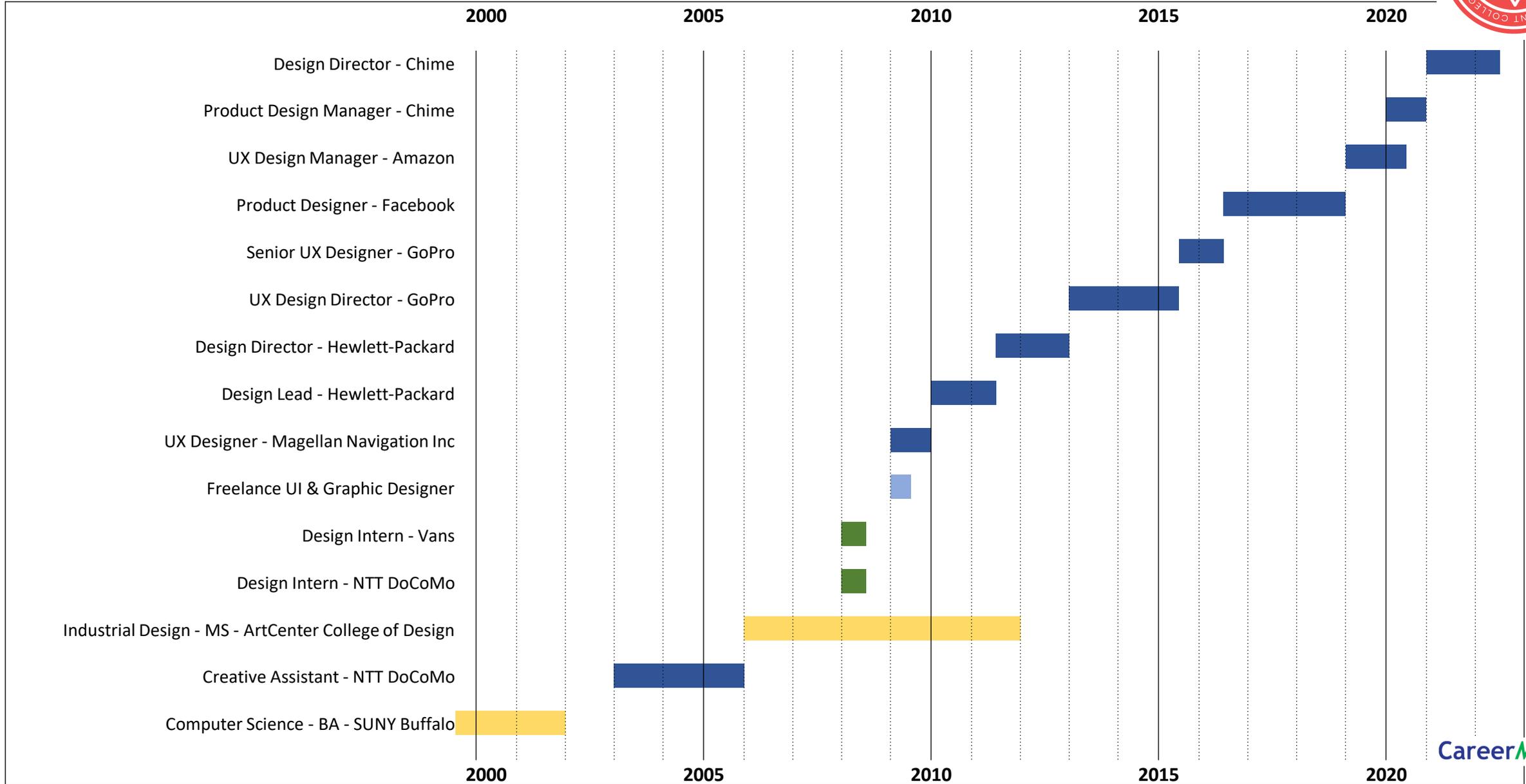
Industrial Design Major

Diverse industry experience; forged a career in customer experience strategy



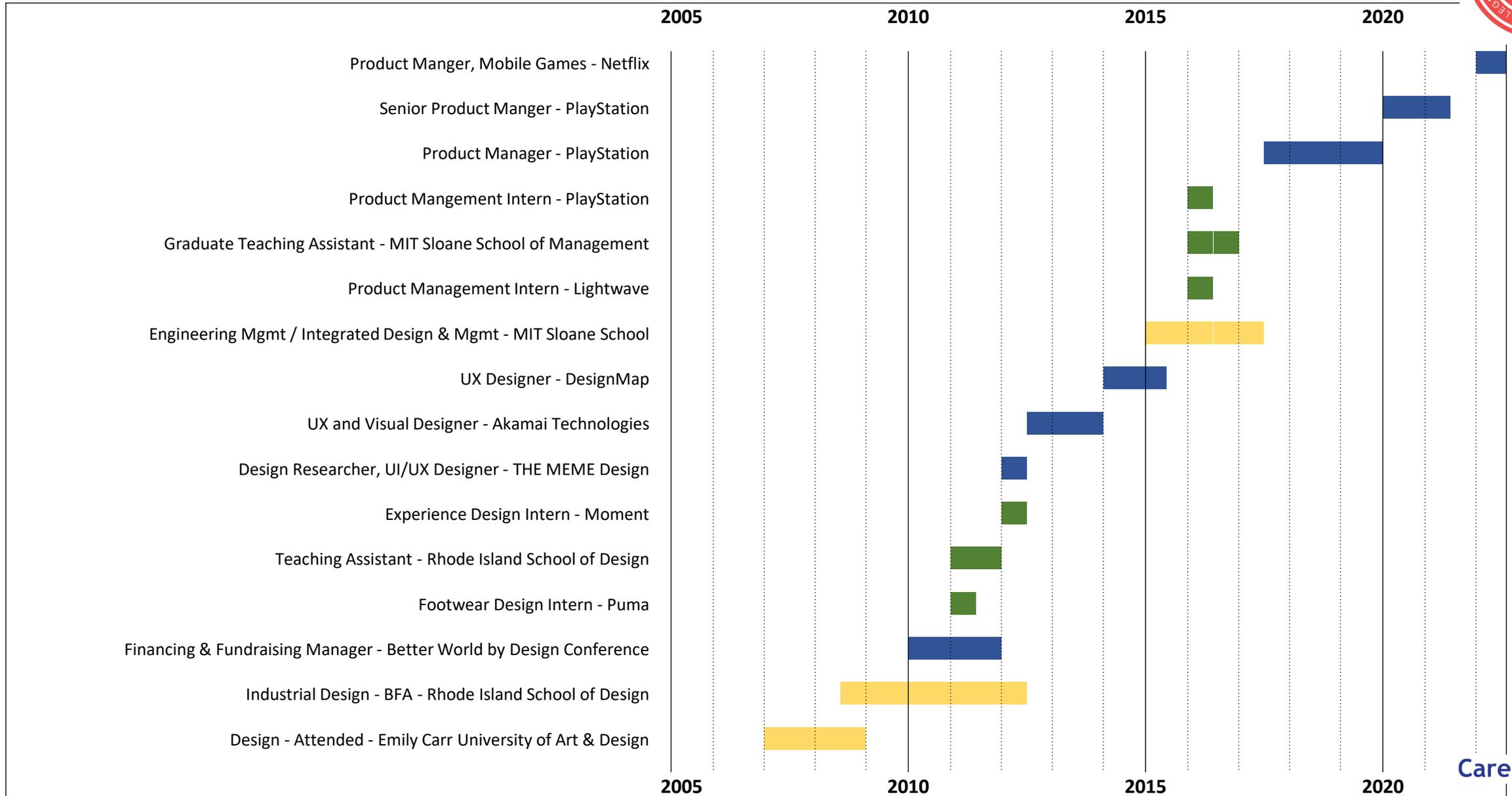
Industrial Design Major

Advanced through major tech industry brands



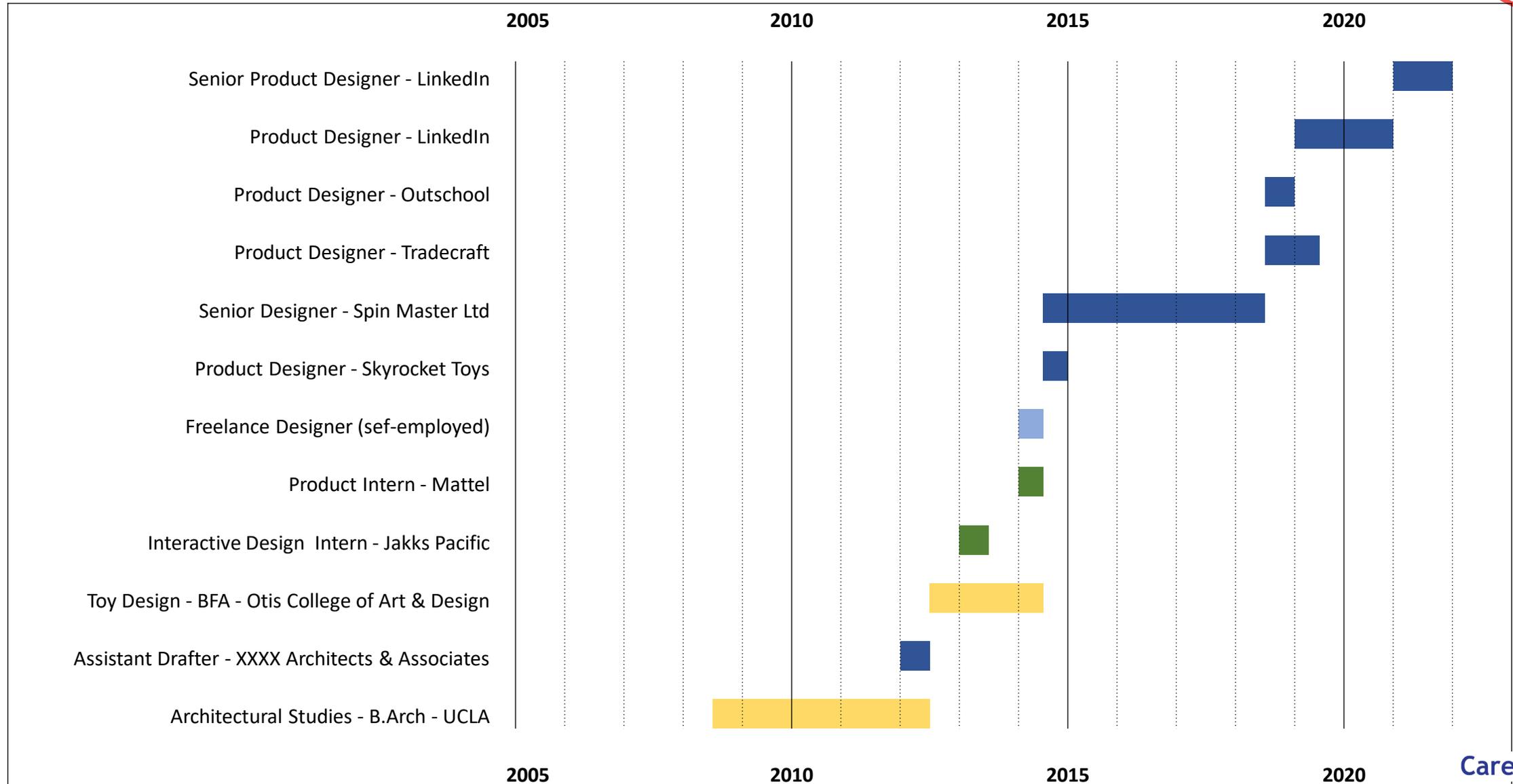
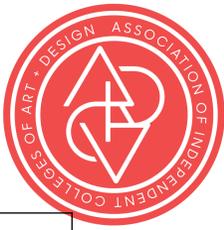
Industrial Design Major

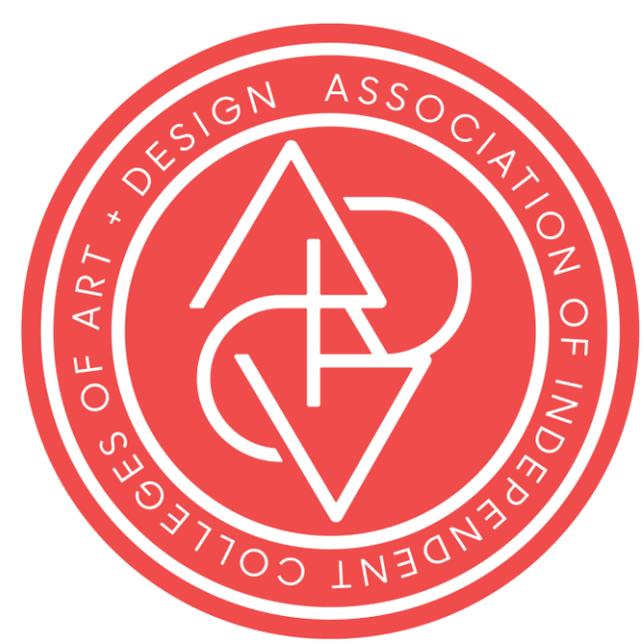
Broad industry experience leading to product management roles



Toy Design Major

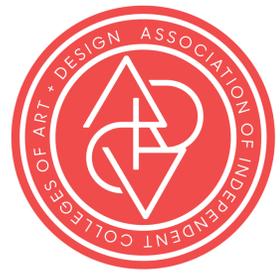
Focus on tech, interactive games, and online educational products





Media Arts / Digital Arts Majors

Overview for Media Arts / Digital Arts Majors



- Predominant **degree** earned – BFA
 - Specific majors included: Animation, Digital Media, Entertainment Arts, Game Design
 - About 28% of Media Arts majors earned a graduate degree
- Fewer **Internships** are available to digital arts / media arts majors
 - 45% of media arts majors in the sample completed at least one internship (pre- or post-graduation)
- Digital / Media arts majors tend to persist in creative design roles throughout their **career trajectories**.
 - Digital / Media Arts alumni in this study averaged about 6.5 job “events” per person over a 10 year time period. These “events” could be permanent employment or projects undertaken as an independent contractor, freelancer, consultant.
 - Of the majors in this analysis, these alumni had the highest percentage of jobs (gigs) that lasted less than one year, reflecting the often short-term project-based nature of this work.
 - As they progressed, many moved away from media-related industries, in favor of more stable (long-term) opportunities in industries like science & technology, user experience design, and product design
- Digital / Media Arts alumni work in a variety of **industries**, for example:
 - Product development and design
 - Education
 - Advertising and PR
 - Film, Television, and Music
 - Entertainment / Video games
 - Science / Technology
- **Top job titles:**
 - Product Designer
 - Animator
 - CFX / Visual effects artist
 - UX Designer / Researcher

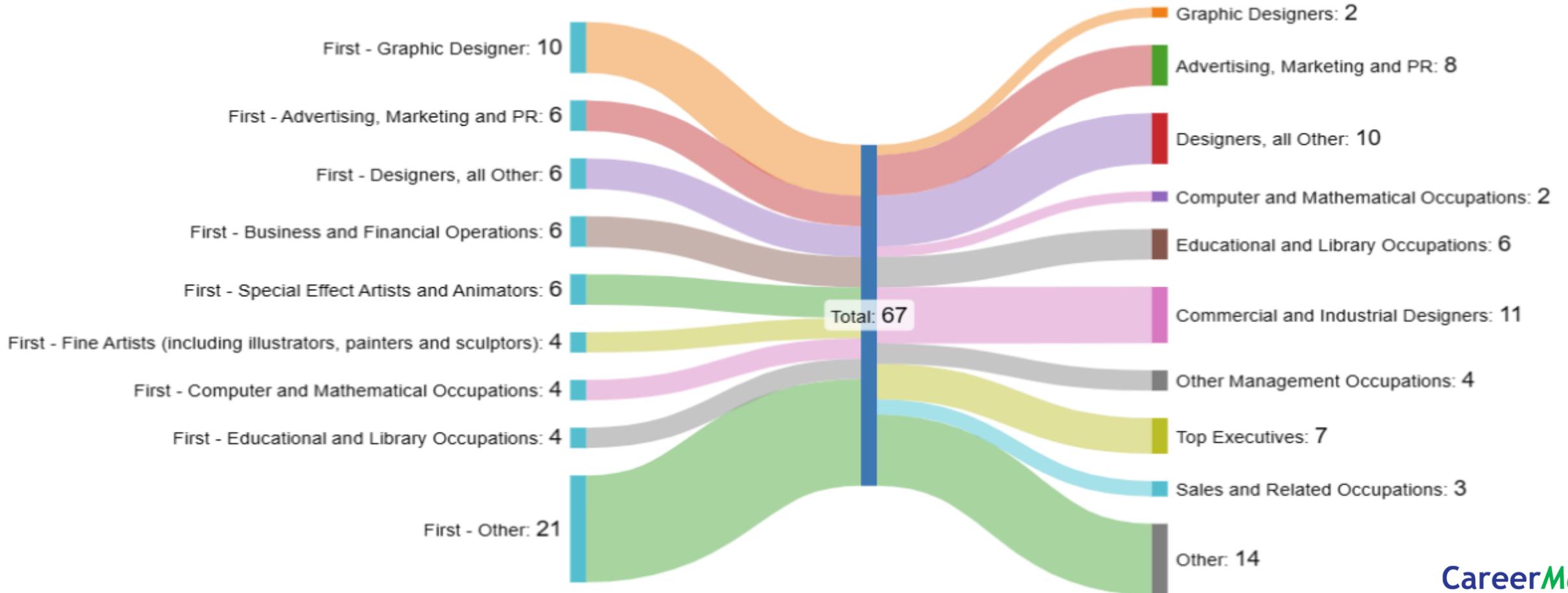
Digital /Media Arts Alumni Occupations



After starting their careers in predictable occupations, Media Arts majors often move to other creative design roles

First Jobs

Current Jobs



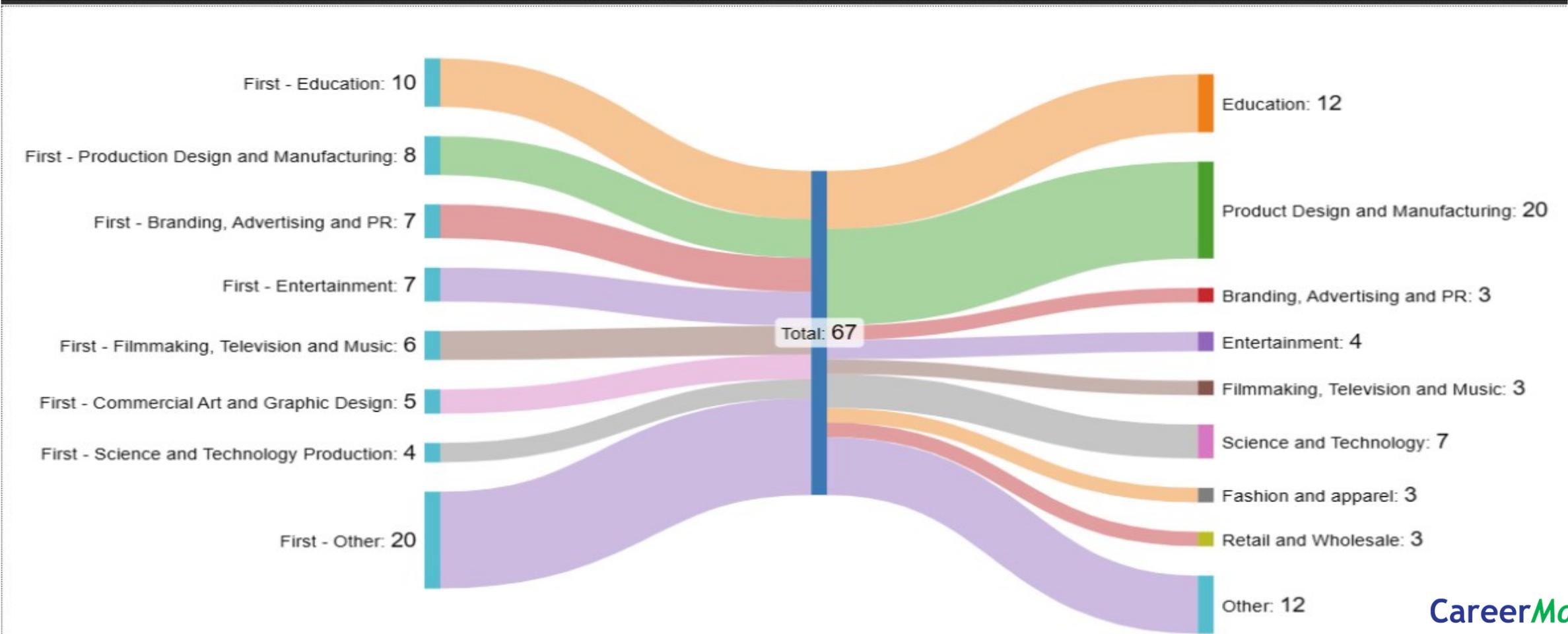
Digital /Media Arts Alumni Industries



Media Arts majors may find more lucrative and stable opportunities in product development industries

First Jobs

Current Jobs



Annual Salary Ranges for Art & Design Occupations



	10%	25%	50% Median	75%	90%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	29,010	37,270	51,190	79,200	122,420
Art Directors	57,220	77,490	100,890	135,350	194,130
Craft Artists	22,760	28,830	35,930	47,170	61,290
Fine Artists, Including Painters, Sculptors, and Illustrators	19,430	37,310	60,820	96,580	125,930
Special Effects Artists and Animators	46,000	61,300	78,790	102,660	131,370
Artists and Related Workers, All Other	21,750	38,310	61,580	95,910	115,020
Commercial and Industrial Designers	44,840	57,070	77,030	98,680	128,210
Fashion Designers	37,480	50,630	77,450	101,320	130,870
Floral Designers	22,830	27,830	29,880	36,770	44,820
Graphic Designers	31,310	39,270	50,710	74,700	98,260
Interior Designers	30,930	46,420	60,340	77,700	99,070
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	26,560	29,240	32,060	37,930	47,290
Set and Exhibit Designers	30,810	39,180	54,860	78,910	100,550
Designers, All Other	30,230	44,580	62,310	98,030	129,990



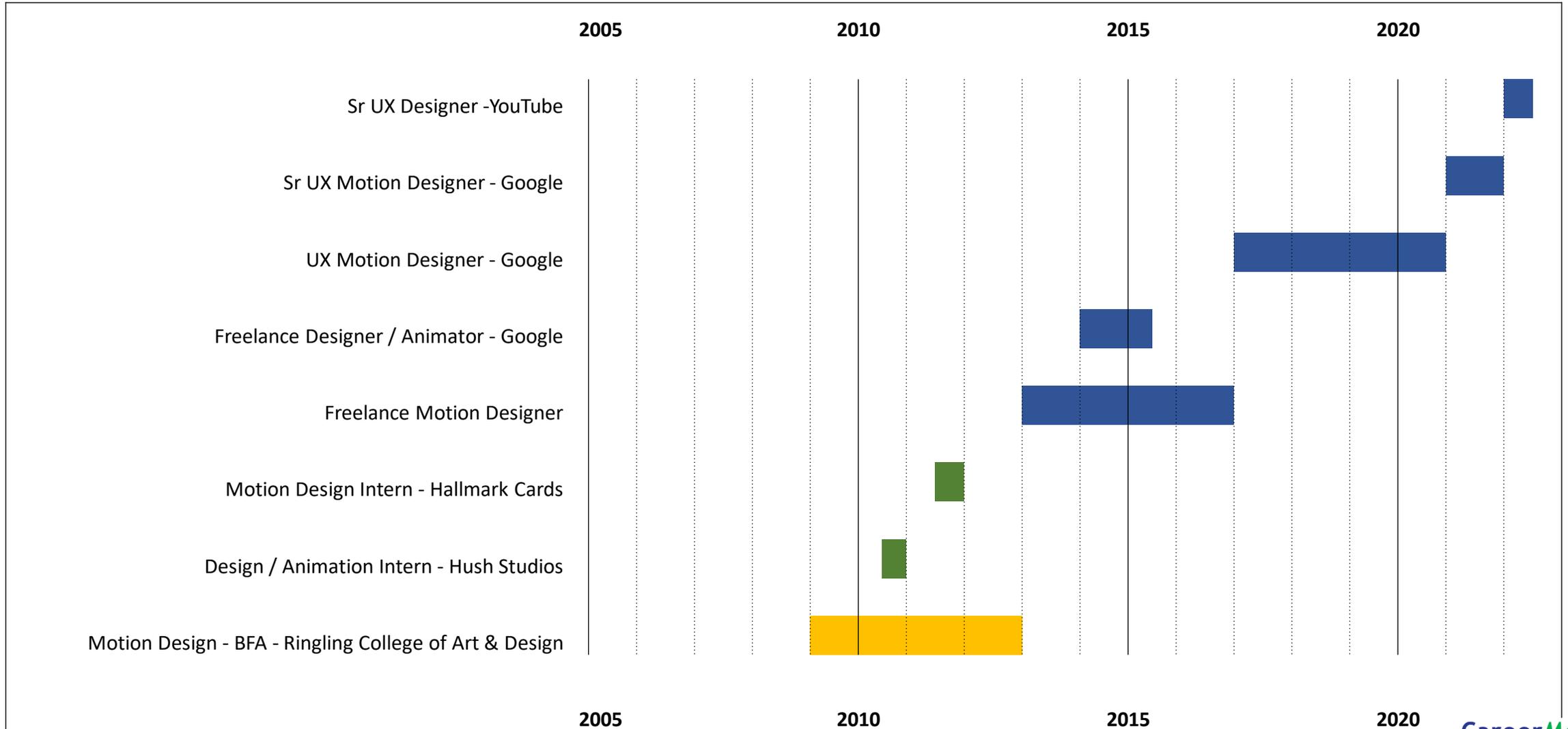
Media Arts / Digital Arts Majors Maps

Real examples of career trajectories of AICAD school alumni who earned a degree in media / digital arts.

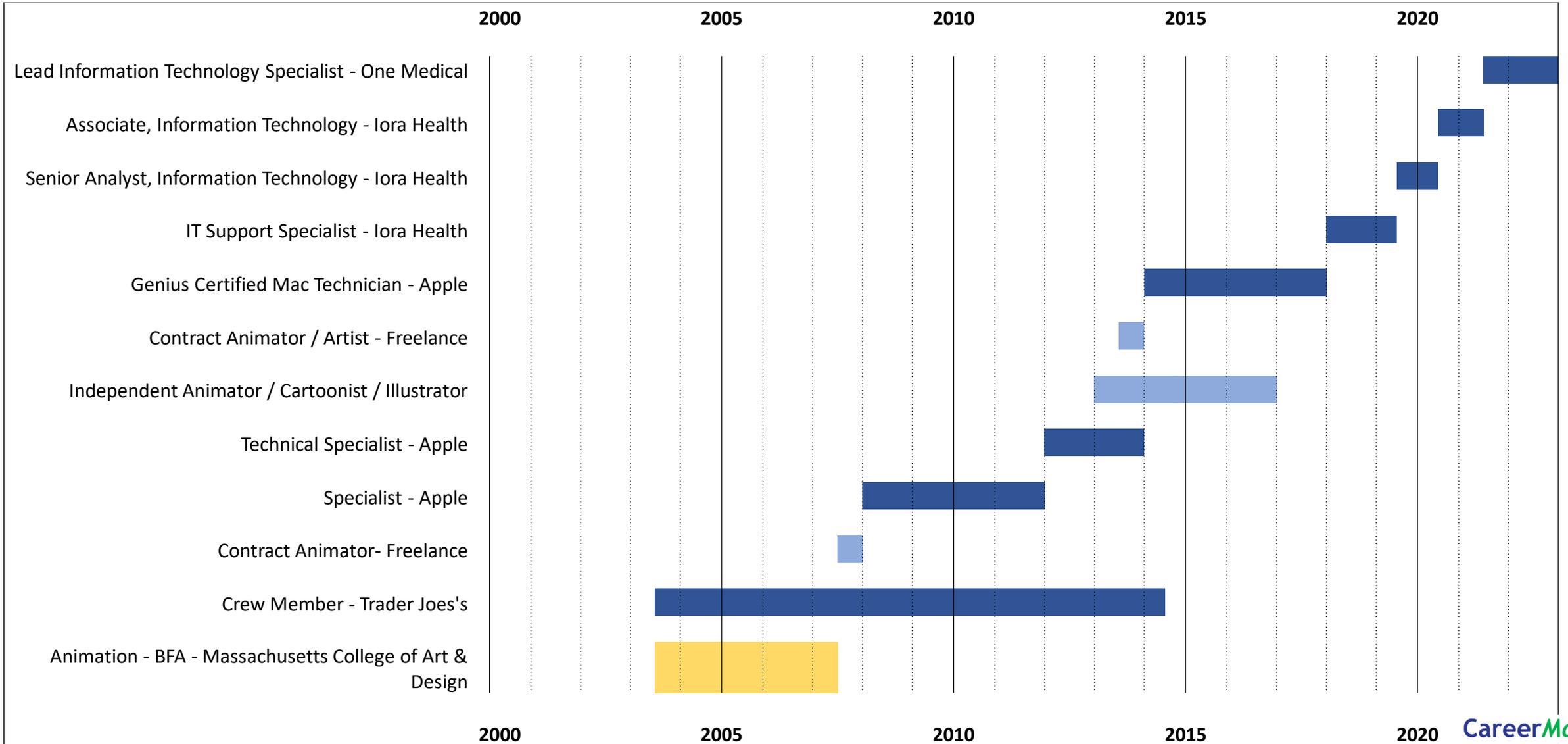
Note: Identifying information has been redacted within the “maps” to preserve anonymity

Motion Design / Animation Major

Motion / UX Designer for industry leaders

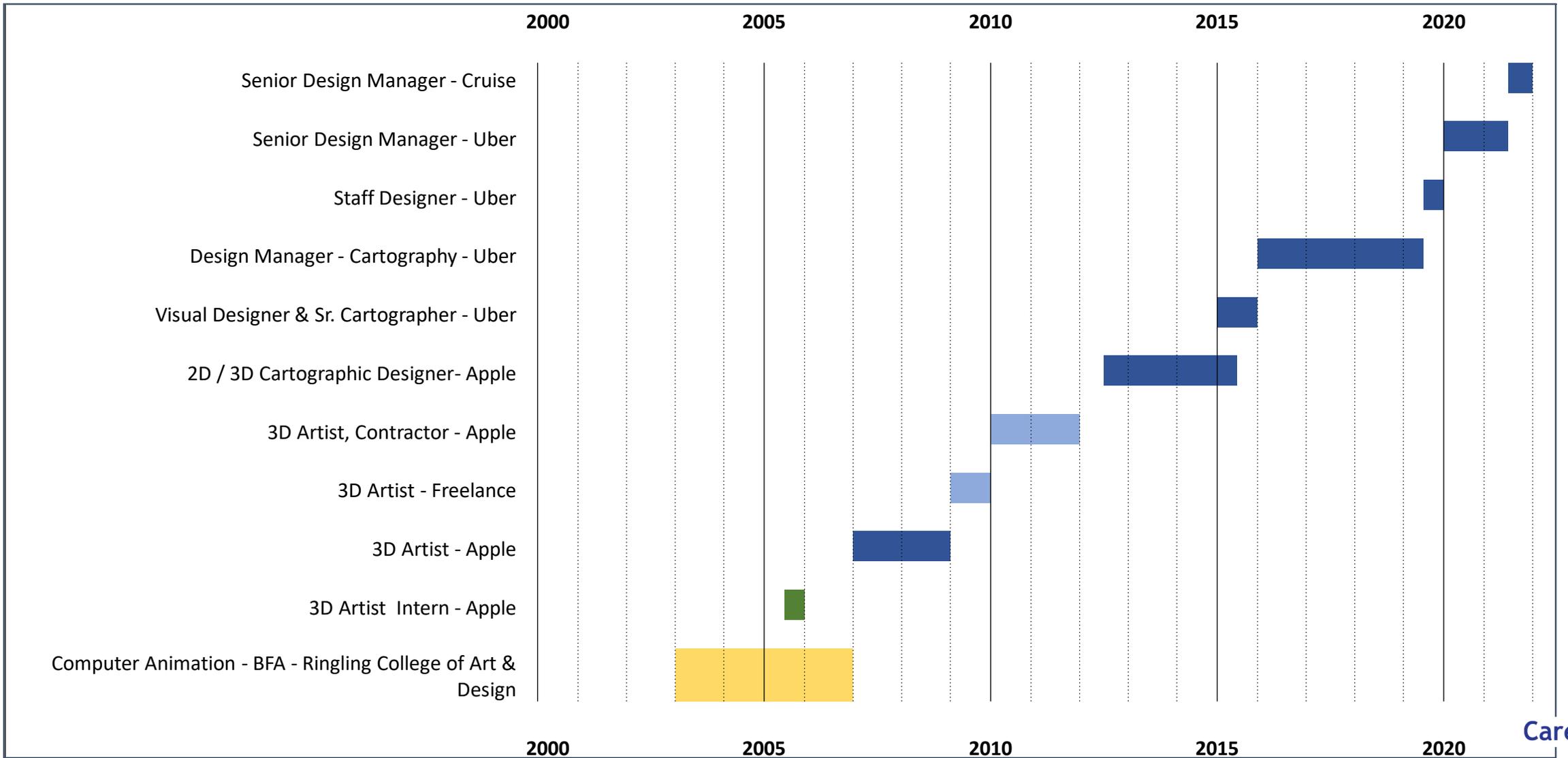


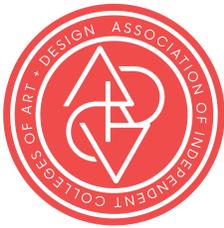
Animation Major Migrated into IT



Computer Animation Major

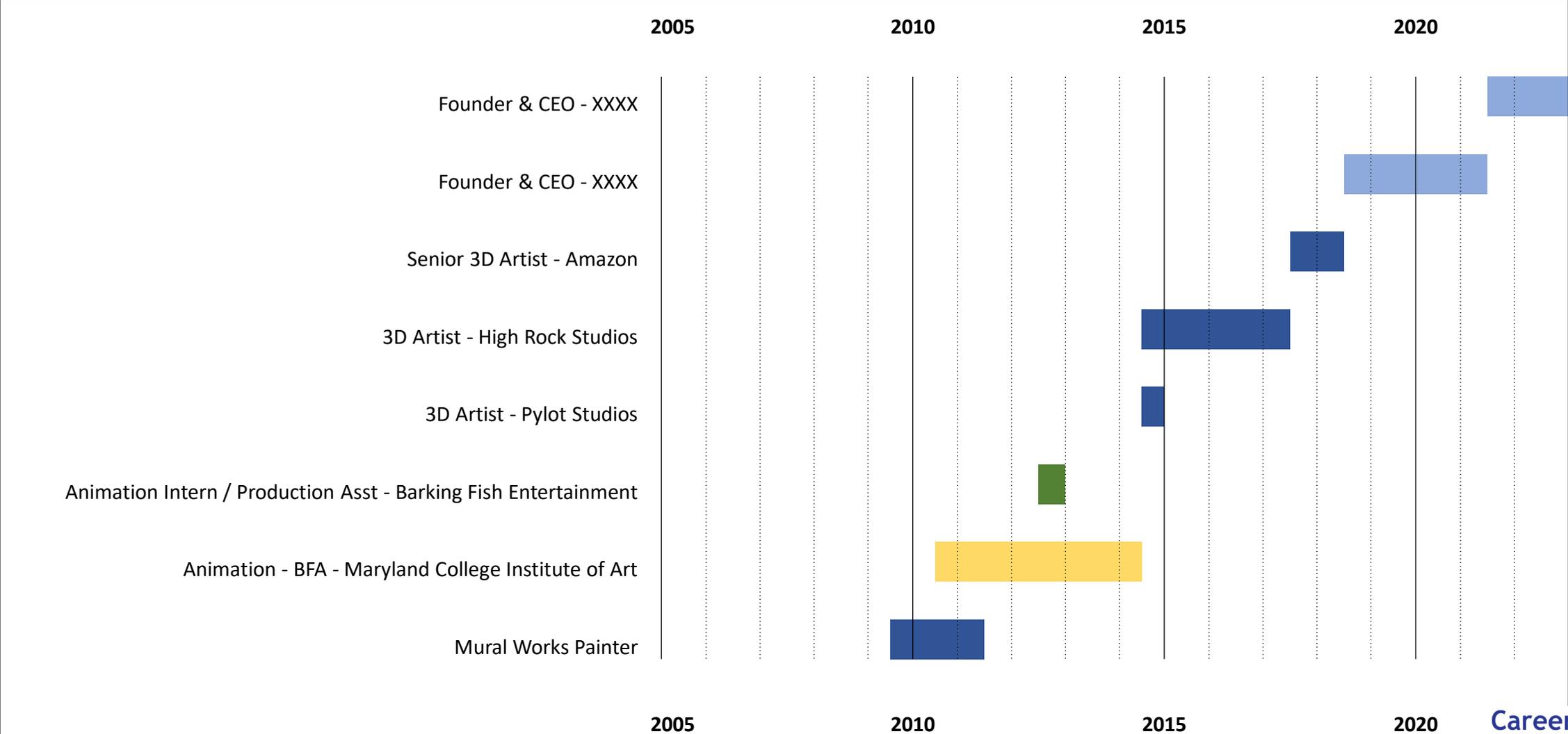
Cartography specialist





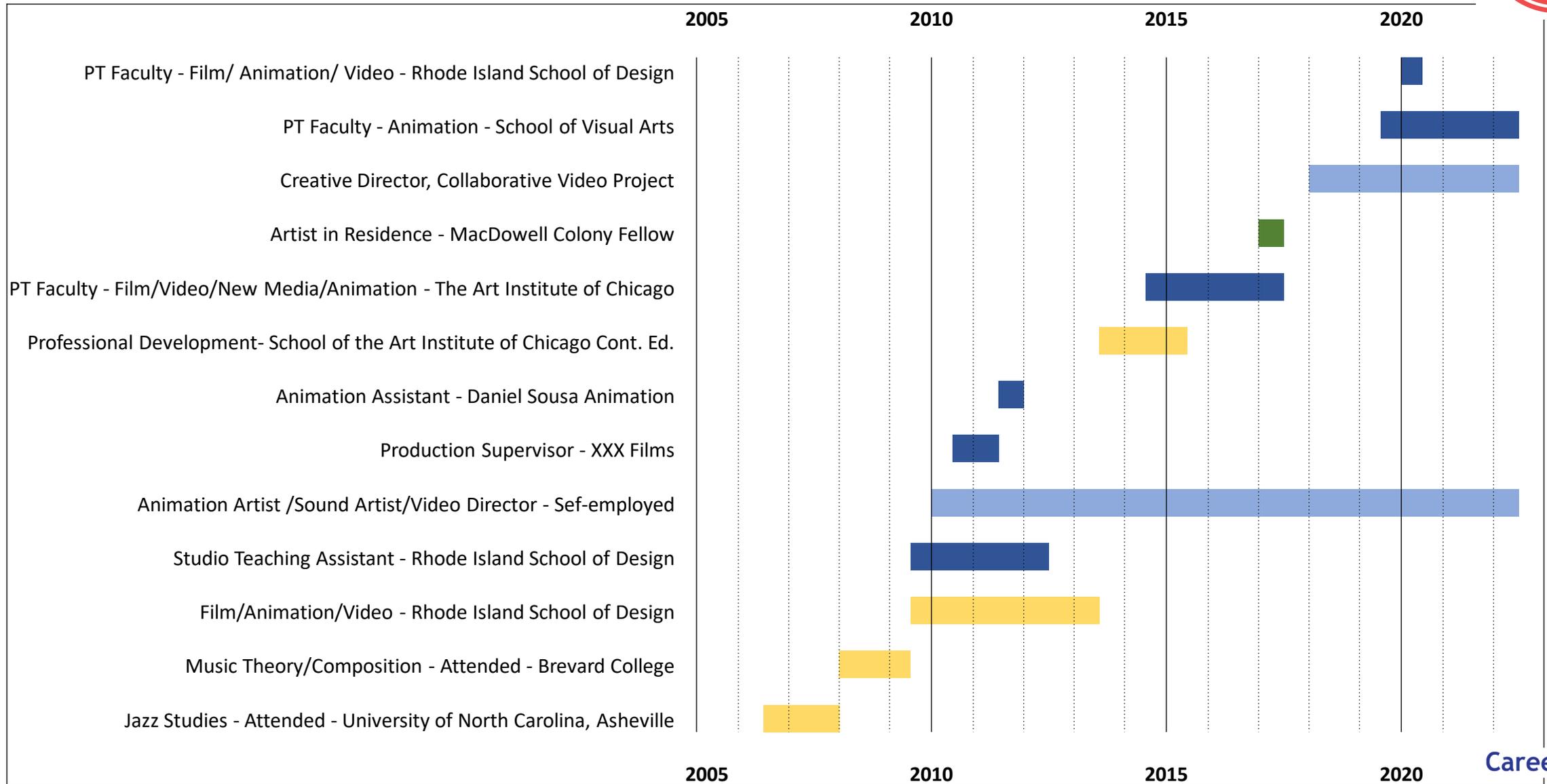
Animation Major

After working as a 3D artist, founded two non-profits



Film/Animation/Video Major

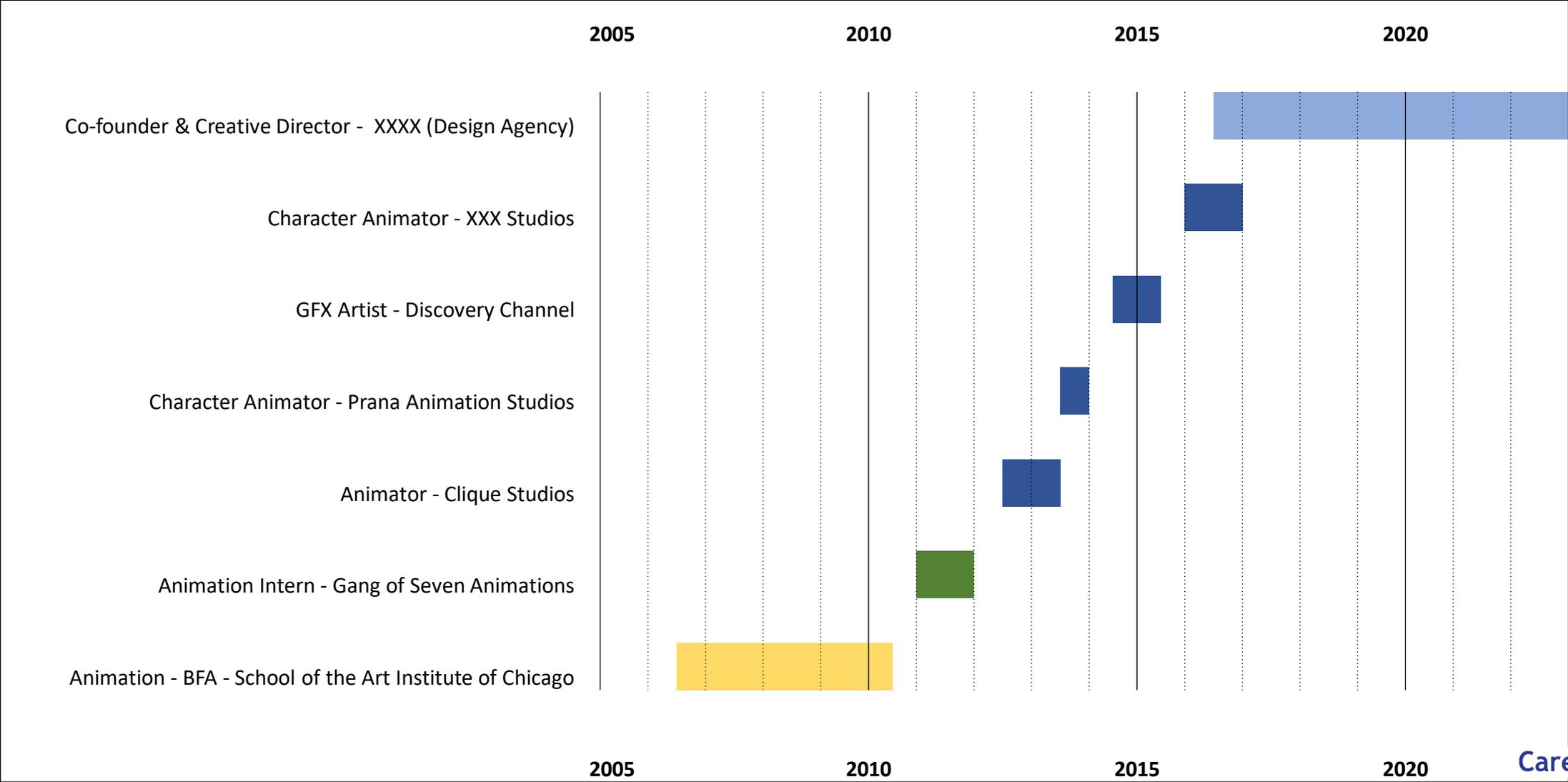
Freelances and works on independent creative projects while part-time teaching





Animation Major

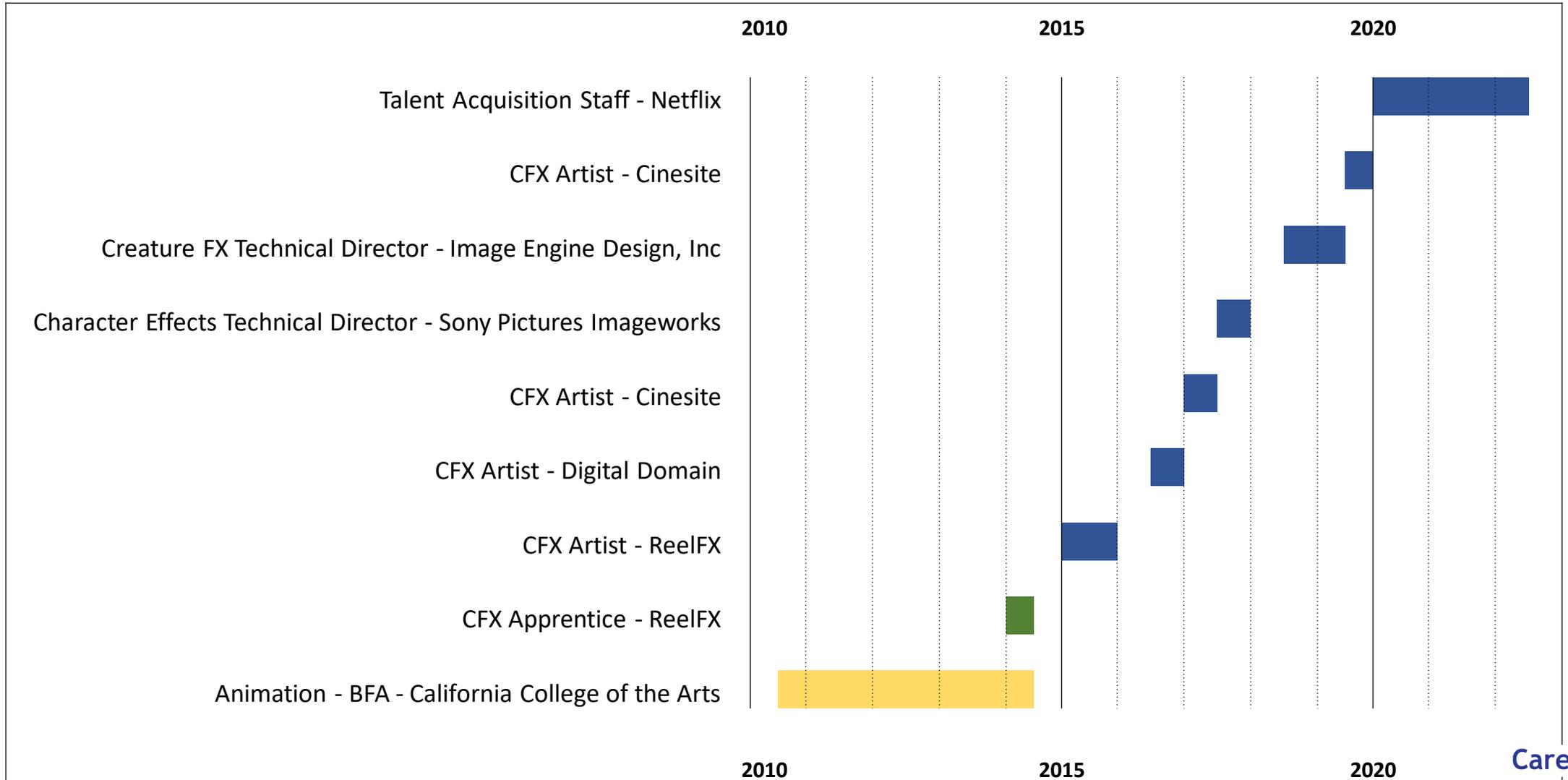
Gave up gig work to open own design agency





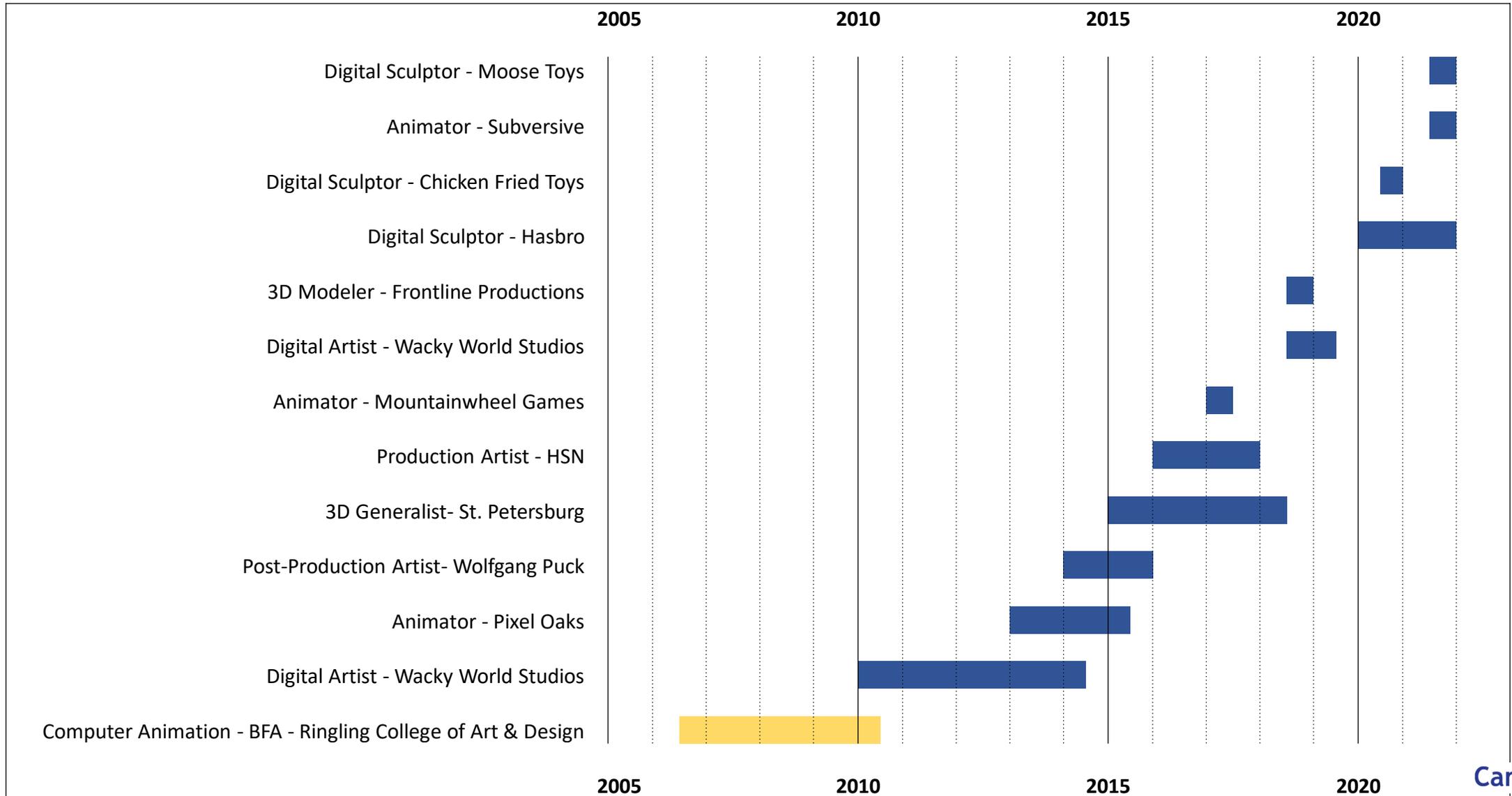
Animation Major

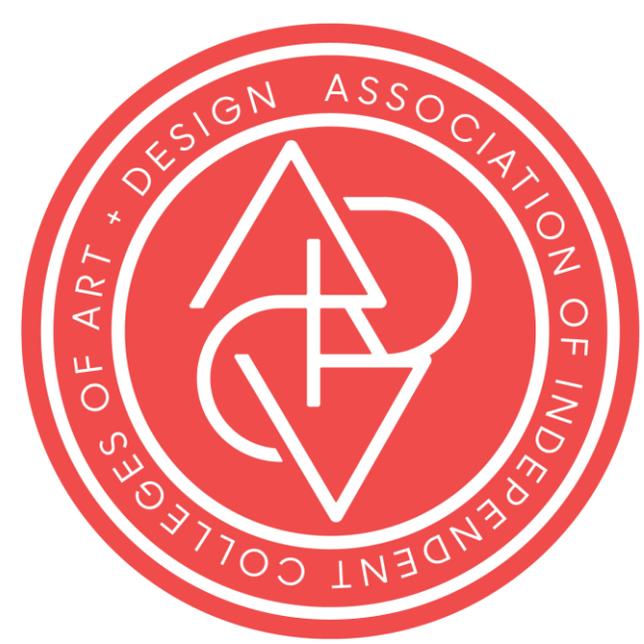
Gave up gig work for permanent position



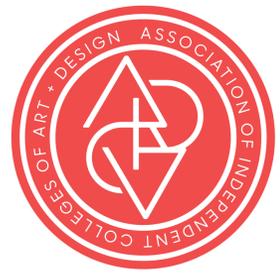
Animation Major

Steady gig work





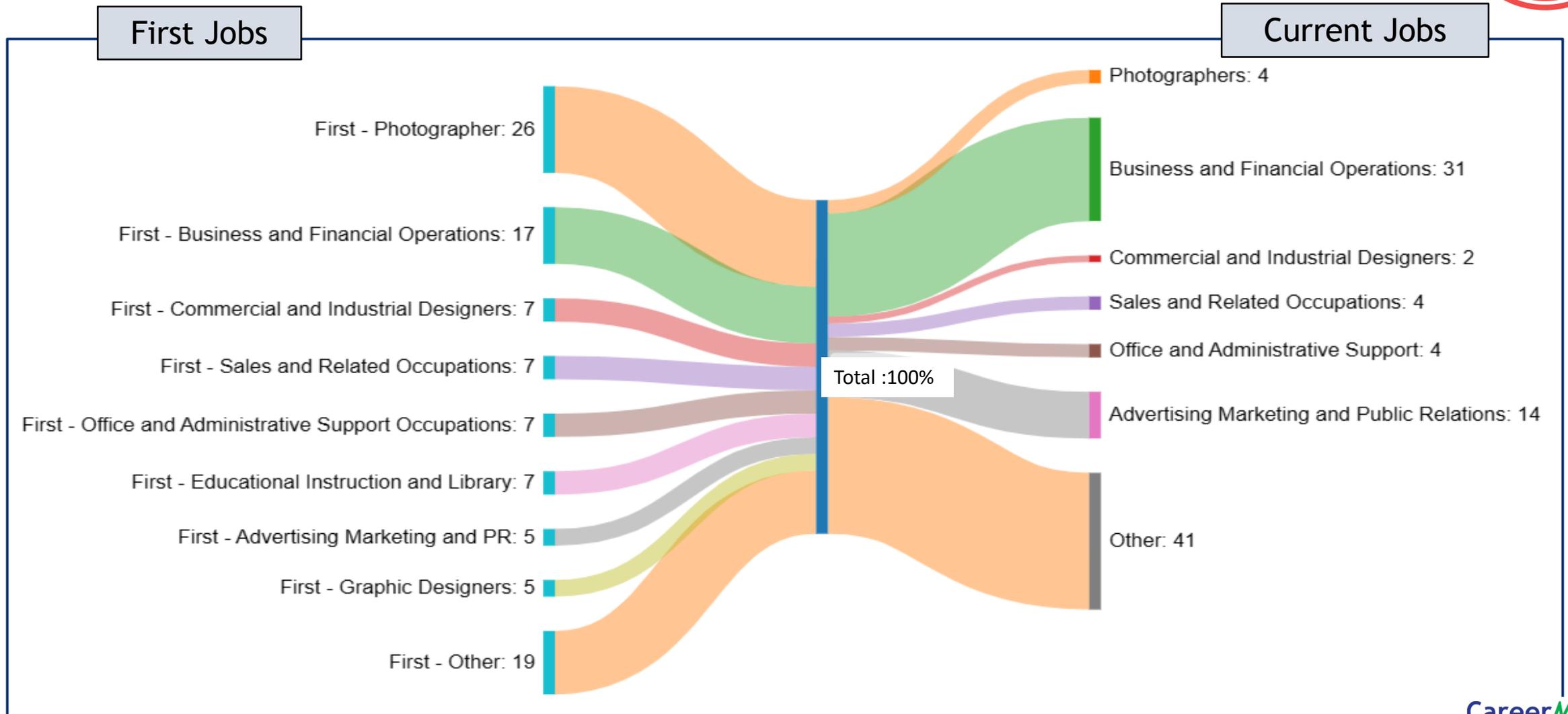
Photography Majors



Overview for Photography Majors

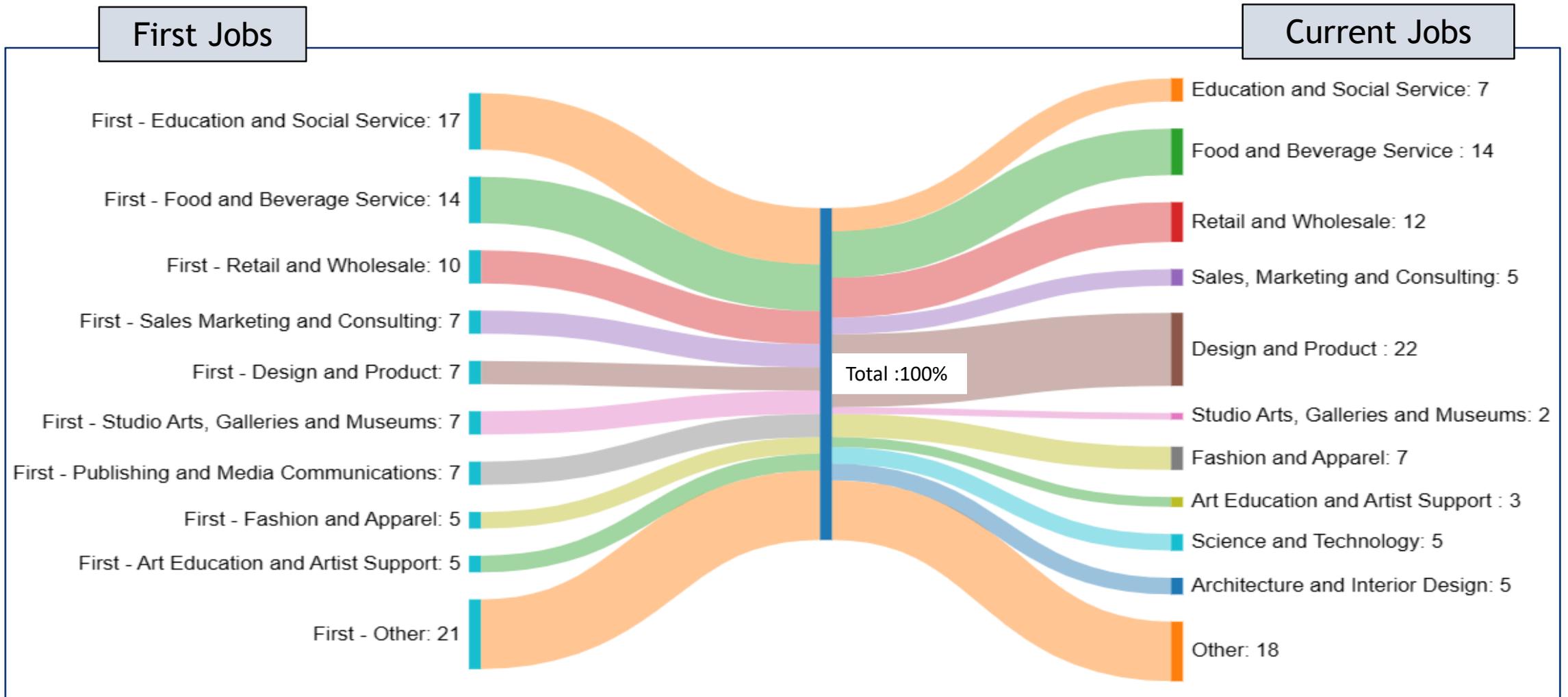
- Predominant **degree** earned – BFA
 - About one-quarter of the photography majors in this sample earned a graduate degree. Type of degree varied.
- Less than a third of photography majors did an **Internship**
 - Internships were in a range of industries – publishing and media communications, educational settings, galleries and museums.
- Photography majors experience a common level of career success, though not often related to photography
 - They appear to be the most likely to migrate into non-major related occupations
 - Only about one-quarter of photography majors' first jobs were as a photo professional; very few maintained that profession

Occupations: Photography majors migrate into a variety of roles many unrelated, or minimally related, to their major





Industry: Photography majors' industry choices appear to be opportunistic (no strategic pattern)





Photography Majors Maps

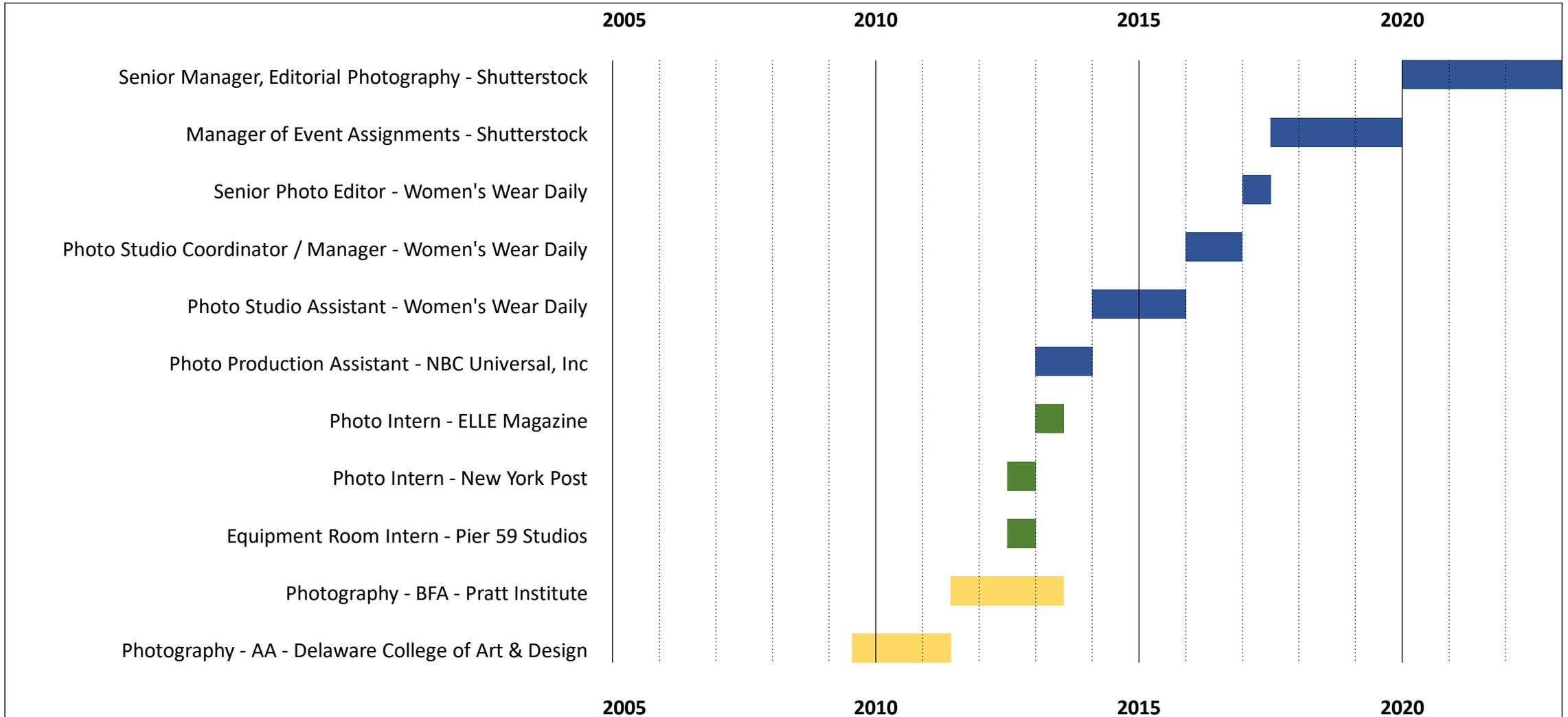
Real examples of career trajectories of AICAD school alumni who earned a degree in Photography.

Note: Identifying information has been redacted within the “maps” to preserve anonymity



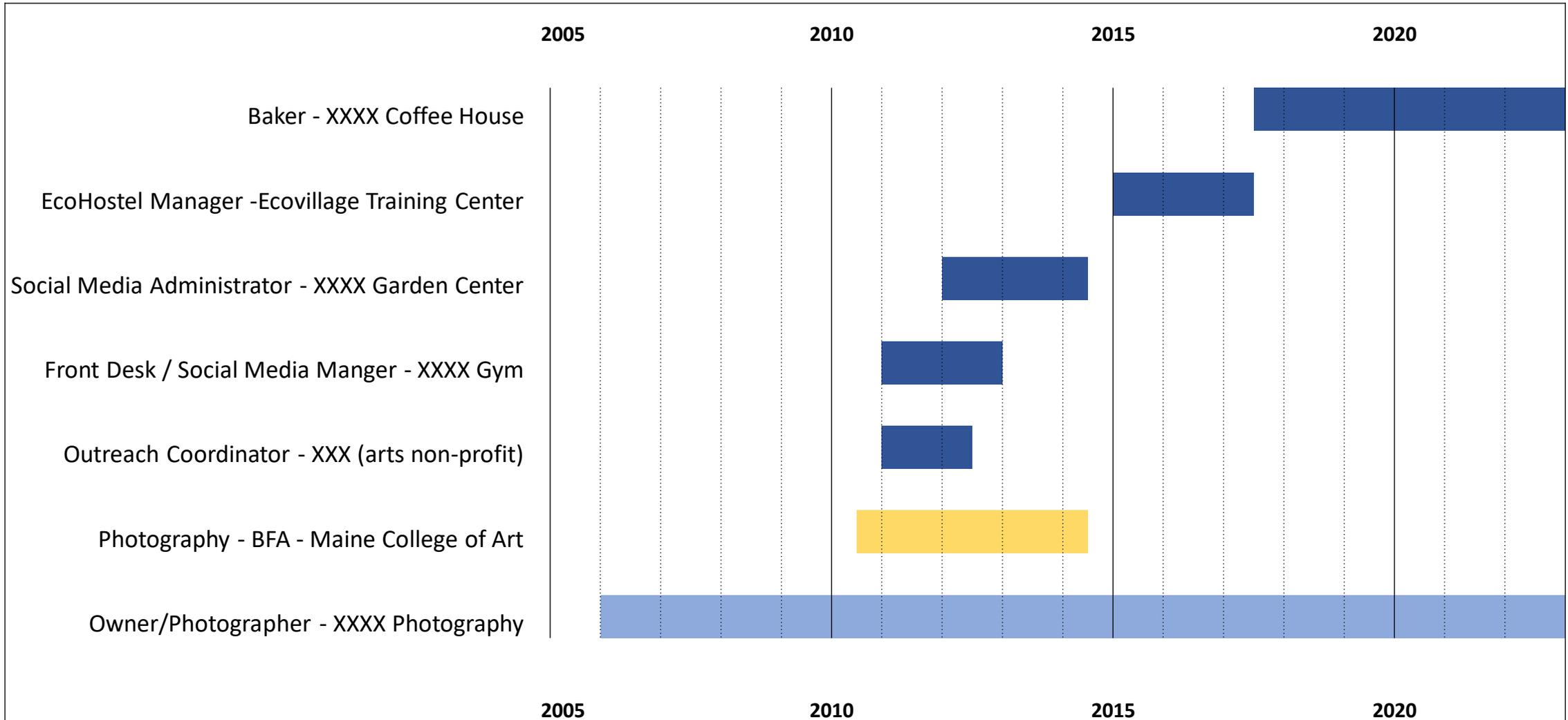
Photography Major

Career in photography-related roles



Photography Major

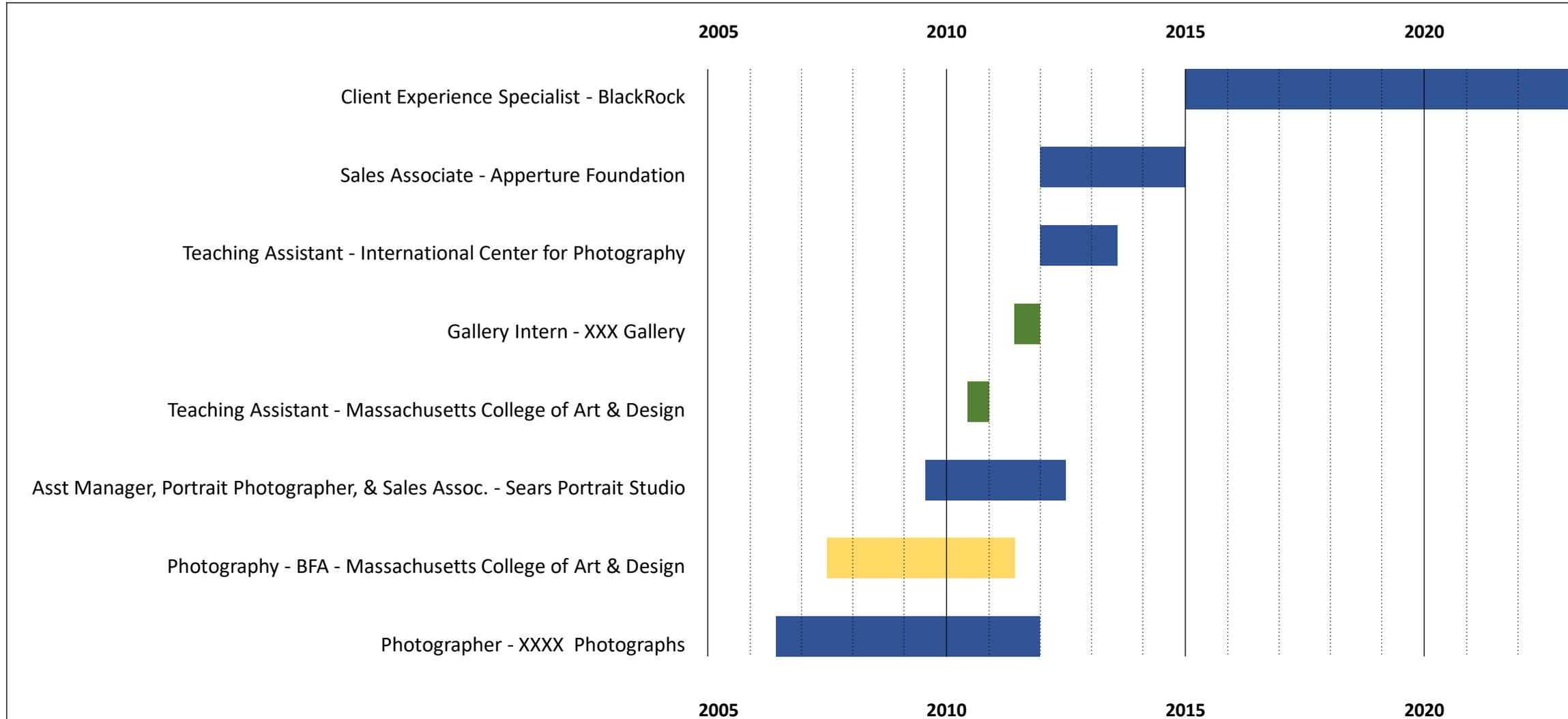
Supporting independent professional photography studio with second jobs





Photography Major

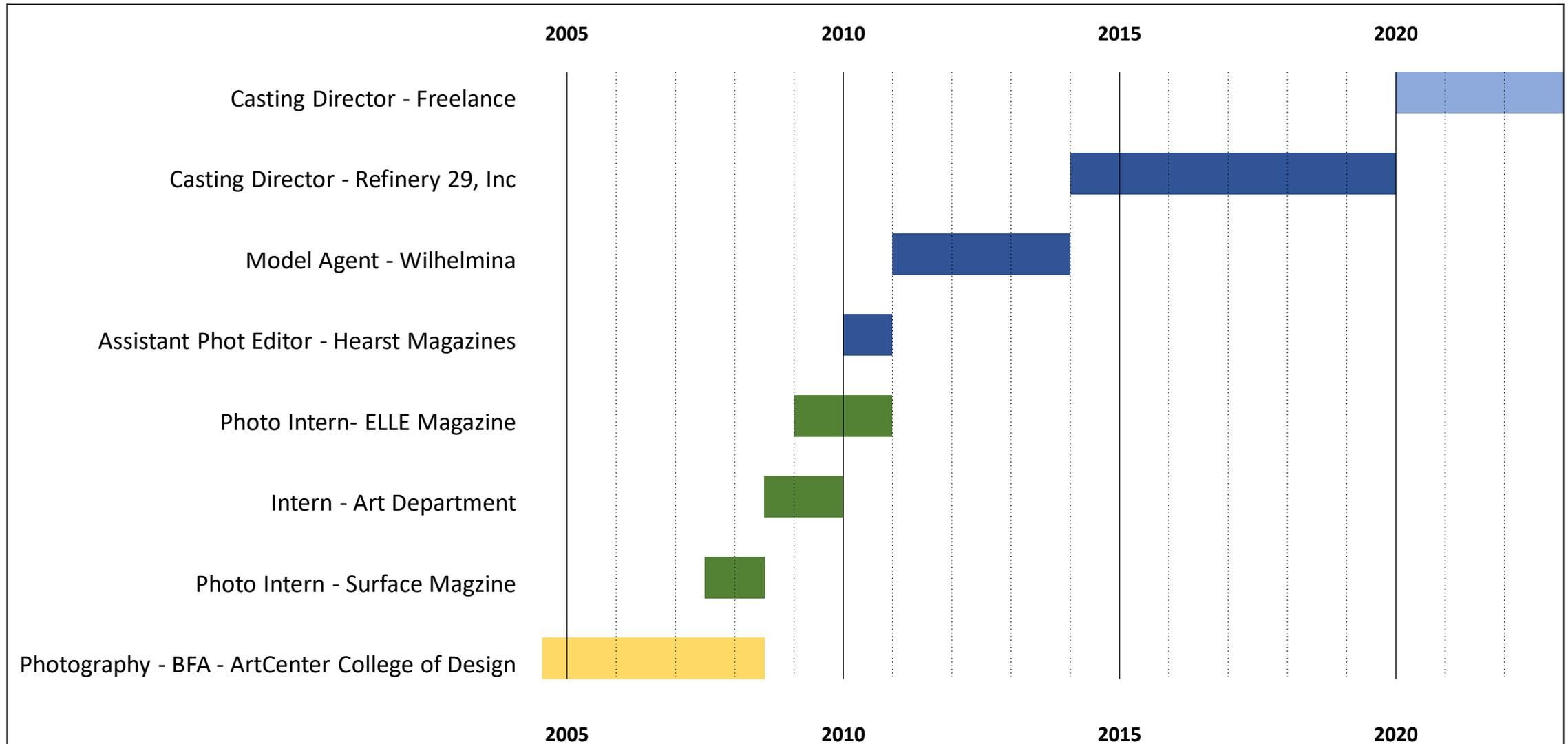
Attempted a career in photography and then pivoted





Photography Major

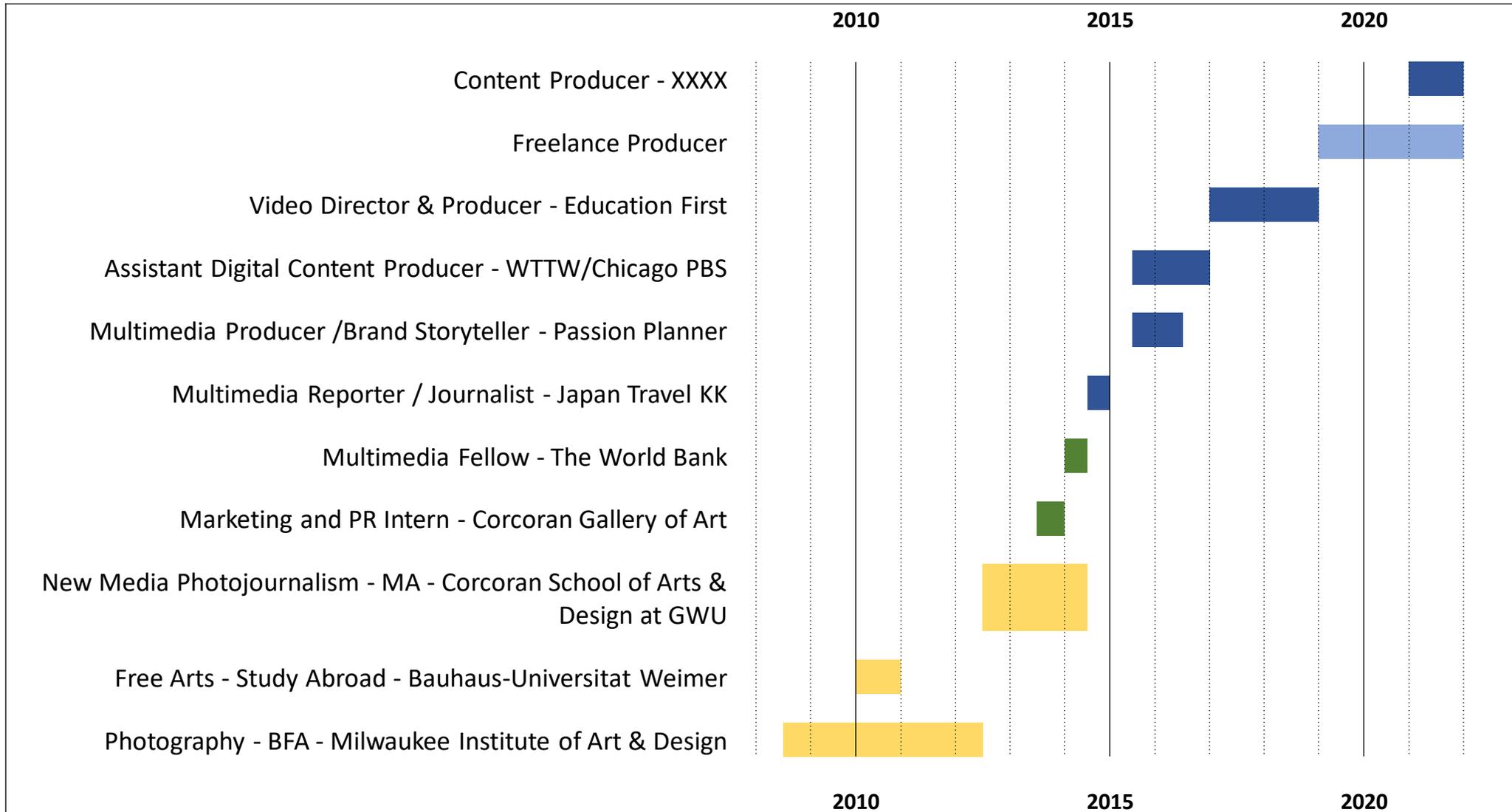
Started in fashion photography, remained in field in a different role





Photography Major

Pursued career in multimedia production



Appendix A: Annual Salary Ranges for Art & Design Occupations (2022)



	10%	25%	50% Median	75%	90%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	29,010	37,270	51,190	79,200	122,420
Art Directors	57,220	77,490	100,890	135,350	194,130
Craft Artists	22,760	28,830	35,930	47,170	61,290
Fine Artists, Including Painters, Sculptors, and Illustrators	19,430	37,310	60,820	96,580	125,930
Special Effects Artists and Animators	46,000	61,300	78,790	102,660	131,370
Artists and Related Workers, All Other	21,750	38,310	61,580	95,910	115,020
Commercial and Industrial Designers	44,840	57,070	77,030	98,680	128,210
Fashion Designers	37,480	50,630	77,450	101,320	130,870
Floral Designers	22,830	27,830	29,880	36,770	44,820
Graphic Designers	31,310	39,270	50,710	74,700	98,260
Interior Designers	30,930	46,420	60,340	77,700	99,070
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	26,560	29,240	32,060	37,930	47,290
Set and Exhibit Designers	30,810	39,180	54,860	78,910	100,550
Designers, All Other	30,230	44,580	62,310	98,030	129,990

Appendix B: Methodology

Data collection and visualizations for this analysis were performed by CareerMap, a big data insights company that draws data from LinkedIn and other public data sources.

Description of Sample. CareerMap gathered data on 1,210 graduates from 16 AICAD schools, representing eight academic majors. Educational and job information for each graduate was captured from their LinkedIn profiles as of June 2022. To capture their professional trajectories alumni who graduated between 2007 and 2015 were selected. To be included in the sample a graduate must have earned an undergraduate or a graduate degree from an AICAD school. Sample size from each school was proportional to its overall enrollment. Alumni who were unemployed at the time of sample gathering were excluded.

Academic Majors. AICAD identified eight majors for which an in-depth analysis of career outcomes was conducted. These analyses provide for cross-comparisons and identification of distinctive attributes of the different majors. Some majors, such as Fashion Design and Illustration are stand-alone areas of study. Others, such as Fine Arts and Digital / Media Arts encompass several majors under a unifying umbrella. For example, Fine Arts / Craft encompasses majors such as painting, sculpture, and ceramics. Digital / Media Arts includes programs like animation, entertainment arts, and game design.

Description of Data Set. LinkedIn profiles provided data on education events, including school(s) attended, type of degree(s), academic major(s), and year(s) of graduation. Job event data from LinkedIn included name of company, job title, years of employment, geographic location, and self-reported information about the responsibilities associated with each job event. Identifying information was removed from the career maps to preserve anonymity.

Third-party data. Data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and O*Net was used to create normative standards for its career database. For example, all job titles (self-reported on LinkedIn) were matched to a Standard Occupation Code (SOC) to enable consistent and accurate groupings of job types.

Visualization. Mapping software was used to produce visual displays that convey a fuller story about career outcomes, professional trajectories, and career-building strategies.