NTU CAREER FAIR

SME, govt jobs wooed

University hopes to provide more options for its graduating students

ONG DAI LIN
dailin@mediacorp.com.sg

AS MORE multinationals here put the freeze on hiring, the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) has been wooing government agencies for the past few months to take part in its career fair for this year’s graduating cohort.

Of the 107 organisations taking part in the university’s two-day annual career fair that started yesterday, 28 per cent are from the public sector — double the number last year.

Among them are the Casino Regulatory Authority, People’s Association and Central Provident Fund Board.

Mr Loh Pui Wah, director of NTU’s Career and Attachment Office (CAO) said this year there were only three participants from the semi-conductor sector at the fair, compared to 13 in 2008. This is a reflection of the slump in the industry.

The CAO will also be intensifying efforts to reach out to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to provide more career options for its graduating classes. SMEs in the gaming industry, for example, can expect calls from the university, so can small manufacturing firms.

Asked how many SMEs the CAO will target, Mr Loh said: “As many as we can talk to on a daily basis. We are not going to put a number to it, but we can fallback on many of these companies which are our internship partners.”

It will also organise more company talks for students and enhance its present resume depository, making it easier for employers to access resumes of its graduating students. Some 5,000 are expected to graduate from NTU this year.

Mr Teo Ser Luck, the Senior Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS), said at the fair launch that the big four accounting firms here have already snapped up 550 accountancy students out of the graduating cohort of about 700.

He added that MCYS is also hiring manpower to handle programmes like the new Marriage and Parenthood package, and to administer help schemes like ComCare, which offers increased support to Singaporeans.

Currently, there are at least 30 immediate vacancies in MCYS for fresh graduates, said Mr Teo. In addition, 200 more staff would be needed for the 2010 Youth Olympic Games, although most of the jobs are not targeted at fresh graduates.

Final-year civil engineering student Leow Bok Wee, 24, was at the career fair to suss out opportunities.

“I actually have an interview with the Land Transport Authority this Friday... but l’m also looking for jobs with the Urban Redevelopment Authority or SMRT,” he said.