

James River High School  
3700 James River Road  
Midlothian, VA 23113

Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal: John B. Titus

**LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL -Junior Edition, 2009-10**

Congratulations! You are nearing an important milestone in your life-- high school graduation. But remember, despite all of your hard work, sacrifice, and achievement, a high school education *is a beginning, not an end*. In addition to completing your high school studies, you also need to begin thinking seriously about "Life After High School."

One of the most important questions you will need to ask yourself is, "How can I best use the knowledge and skills I've acquired in high school to prepare myself for a career?" No matter how you answer this question, you will no doubt be making a decision to learn, or enhance, a *marketable skill*. A marketable skill allows you to distinguish yourself from non-skilled workers, and to earn a higher wage in the economy.

This booklet helps to explain your options, resources, and procedures in discovering your best route to learning a marketable skill. Whether your path to a better future is through college, community college, trade school, or an apprenticeship, the decision is a family one and the School Counseling Department is here to help!

**POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

**Type of schools**

Four-year College/University  
Junior College  
Community College  
Trade School/Apprenticeship  
Business/Technical School  
Nursing School

**Considerations**

Programs of study  
Admission Requirements  
Cost  
Location  
Size  
Placement of Graduates

**SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND IMPORTANT EVENTS**

COLLEGE INFORMATION NIGHT – Panel of college representatives from a variety of VA schools discuss the admissions process; Wednesday, September 30, 7 p.m. in the **Monacan High School theatre**.

COLLEGE REFERENCE BOOKS - available in the College and Career Center (CCC), school and county libraries, and bookstores

"OPPORTUNITIES: 2009-10 Virginia Guide to Education After High School," booklet produced by the State Council of Higher Education distributed to each junior

*My College QuickStart* Planning Kit

(<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/quickstart.html>) - **My College QuickStart** is an easy-to-use, online, personalized college and

career planning kit available **free of charge to all students who have taken the PSAT/NMSQT**. This useful tool incorporates student responses that were provided when they took the test, and it presents their data back to them in four main parts: My Online Score Report, My SAT Study Plan, My College Matches, and My Major & Career Matches.

VIRGINIA EDUCATION WIZARD website ([www.vawizard.org](http://www.vawizard.org)) - this new online resource from Virginia's Community Colleges is officially open to help students and their families to make smart choices about the future. The Wizard brings together real-time and relevant information to guide students and their families in finding educational opportunities and careers that match their interests, skills, and experience.

COLLEGE CATALOGUES - available in the CCC and on individual school websites

COLLEGE VISITS, SCHOOL COUNSELOR, FRIENDS, FAMILY, TEACHERS

COLLEGE NIGHT FAIR- Sunday, November 8, 4:30-6 p.m. at Midlothian High School AND/OR Monday, November 9, 7-8:30 p.m. at John Tyler Community College, Chester Campus

TESTING PREPARATION CLASSES—classes sponsored by test prep companies, such as Horizons Education, designed to assist students in test-taking strategies, content preparation, and study skills on assessments such as the SAT, ACT, and TOEFL; see your school counselor or the CCC for further information

VIRGINIA Career Resource Network Website ([www.vacrn.net](http://www.vacrn.net)) - computer and career information and search programs; also available in the CCC

VIRGINIA CAREER EDUCATION FOUNDATION website

(<http://www.knowhowvirginia.org>) – a hub of career resources and a resource for career exploration

VIRGINIA VIEW HOTLINE (toll free number 1-800-542-5870)—occupational and educational information for Virginia residents

VISITS BY COLLEGE AND SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES

MILITARY RECRUITERS - see list on the CCC door and in the newsletter; *be sure to let Mrs. Diegelmann in the School Counseling Office know by October 1<sup>st</sup> if you do not want to be included on the JRHS recruiter contact list.*

COLLEGE VIDEOS/DVDs - available in CCC and on individual school websites

## **I. Life After High School: College and University**

### **A. EARLY DECISION PLANS**

Many colleges have a plan whereby a highly qualified student may obtain a decision concerning his admission early in the senior year, usually by December 1 - 15. If you are certain of your top college and are willing to definitely attend there if accepted, you may be interested

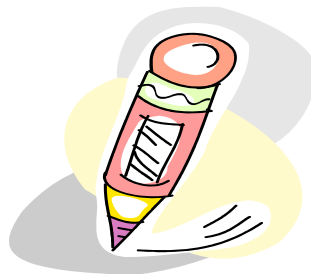
in such a plan. Refer to the catalog of the college of your choice to determine if it has an early decision plan; and, if so, how it works at that particular college.

## B. **TESTING**

1. *PSAT*--The Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test is a practice instrument for the New SAT. Taking the test allows a student to experience a simulated SAT and analyze the results to recognize strengths and improve on areas of weakness. The test will be administered on **Wednesday, October 14**, and there is **NO fee** charged to take the PSAT.
  - In addition to helping students to prepare for the SAT, the PSAT can also qualify high scorers for scholarship opportunities through the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.
  - **NOTE**—*YES! All college-bound Juniors should take the PSAT in October even if they took the test last school year, because it is . . .*
    - Not only good practice for the SAT at a great price,
    - But, only JUNIORS can qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT) for scholarship money by taking the PSAT!!
  
2. *SAT: Reasoning Test*—Most four-year colleges require applicants to take the SAT: Reasoning Test (college boards), which is created by the College Entrance Examination Board. Some colleges also require one or more SAT: *Subject Tests* in specified areas. Refer to the admissions section of the college's catalog to determine which tests are required.
  - a. Registration material for the College Board tests may be obtained in the School Counseling Office or the CCC.
  - b. Students may also register for testing on-line at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).
  - c. James River's high school code number (CEEB code) is **471428**.
  - d. The SAT and Subject Tests will be given on each test date except as indicated. *You cannot take both on the same date, however.* Check to be sure which dates specific Subject Test(s) are offered as all tests are not given each time.



- e. The following high schools are testing sites in Chesterfield County (please check the SAT website or registration bulletin for testing dates of each site): Monacan, Manchester, L.C. Bird, and Thomas Dale
  - f. Plan on taking at least one SAT in the spring of your junior year and at least one again in the fall of your senior year
3. Community college placement tests can be scheduled through the individual school:
    - John Tyler Community College Admissions and Records: 706-5234
    - J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College Admissions and Records: 371-3411.
  4. *ACT/TOEFL*: Most colleges accept—and some require—students to take some other admissions test, such as the American College Test (ACT) or the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for students whose primary language is NOT English. Again, refer to the admissions section of the college's catalog to determine which tests are required.
    - ACT—assesses four subject areas on the test: English, math, social studies, and science reasoning. The scores differ from those of the SAT and are rated on different standards, which your counselor can explain. Additional information on the ACT may be obtained in the School Counseling Office, CCC, or on the web at [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).
    - TOEFL—computerized assessment measuring student proficiency in English language and oral skills. Additional information on TOEFL can be obtained in the CCC, by calling 1-800-GOTOEFL, or at [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org).



### **2009-2010 SAT PROGRAM SCHEDULE\***

<b>Test Date</b>	<b>Test(s) Offered</b>	<b>Regular Registration Deadline</b>	<b>Late Registration Deadline</b>
Oct. 10	SAT/Subject Tests**	Sept. 9	Sept.23
Nov. 7	SAT/Subject Tests***	Oct. 1	Oct. 15
Dec. 5	SAT/Subject Tests	Oct. 30	Nov. 12
Jan.23	SAT/Subject Tests**	Dec. 15	Dec. 30
March 13	SAT only	Feb. 4	Feb. 18
May 1	SAT/Subject Tests	March 25	Apr. 8
Jun. 5	SAT/Subject Tests	April 29	May 13

\*Please check the registration materials or the collegeboard.com website for an up-to-date list of test fees

\*\*The Question and Answer Service (QAS) is offered

\*\*\*Includes Language Tests with Listening

### **2009-2010 ACT TEST SCHEDULE\***

<b>Test Dates**</b>	<b>Registration Deadline</b>	<b>Late Registration Deadline</b>
Sept. 12	Aug. 7	Aug. 21
Oct. 24	Sept.18	Oct. 2
Dec. 12	Nov. 6	Nov. 20
Feb. 6	Jan. 5	Jan. 15
Apr. 10	Mar. 5	Mar. 19
Jun. 12	May 7	May 21

\*Please check the registration materials or the www.actstudent.org website for a current list of test fees

\*\*Please Note: Thomas Dale High School and Douglas Freeman HS (Henrico County) are ACT testing sites—check the ACT website or Bulletin for exact dates testing is available at individual sites.

### **C. FINANCIAL AID**

1. *Funding*—financial aid comes from the federal government, state government, private sources and the school themselves.
2. *Access*—In order to receive federal and state financial aid, students must apply for it.
3. *Forms*—A completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is necessary to apply for Federal and State aid.
  - a. These forms **must** be mailed after January 1 of your SENIOR year
  - b. FAFSA forms will be available in the School Counseling Department in December of each year

- c. The FAFSA form (no fee) should be mailed directly to the address on the application.
  - d. A relatively new program is the Financial Aid Profile (PROFILE) service. This service is provided by the College Scholarship Service and will be used by colleges, universities, and certain scholarship programs to award their own private funds. (Only a few Virginia College require this service) The registration packet for the Financial Profile is available in the School Counseling Office. Read each school's policy on financial aid carefully to find out which form(s) to submit and when to apply for assistance. **Be aware of important deadlines, and be sure to keep a copy of every financial aid form you mail.**
4. *Types of Aid*—Federal and State financial aid can be in the form of: grants, work-study programs, and loans.
  5. *Scholarships* may be available from other sources:
    - a. Read the bulletin called "The James River Ripple" which is published monthly by the School Counseling Office periodically and posted on the school website, in the School Counseling Office, the CCC, and in English 11 and 12 classrooms.  
**NOTE: Most scholarship opportunities are aimed at current seniors; a few scholarships are open to juniors and will be publicized when they become available.**
    - b. Check the scholarship bulletin board in the School Counseling Office for updates:
      - Applications and/or additional information about advertised scholarships are available from Mrs. Lawrence in the School Counseling Office. Please see your school counselor or Mrs. Lawrence if you have questions or need assistance.
    - c. Contact the financial aid office of every school to which you apply about scholarship opportunities
    - d. Make an appointment in the CCC for information on computerized scholarship searches.
    - e. Check with service organizations, churches, parents, employers, on what scholarship opportunities each may sponsor for members or their children
    - f. Make an appointment in the CCC with the JRHS GRASP (Greater Richmond Area Scholarship Program) representative for more information and assistance.
  6. *Notification*--Colleges usually notify students concerning financial aid awards late in the spring of their Senior year.

## **D. STUDENT ATHLETES**

Students who wish to participate as freshmen in Division I or II intercollegiate athletics must have their initial eligibility status determined by the NCAA Eligibility Center (see more information on this topic in the reference section of this booklet).

### **\* Important Points—**

1. The requirements for initial eligibility at Division I differ from those required at Division II
  2. Students normally should register for the Eligibility Center after the completion of their junior year and only after an informed judgment has been made as to the prospect's potential in athletics at the Division I and/or Division II level
  3. Students must register for the Initial-Eligibility Center on-line at: <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common>
  4. To be certified as eligible to participate as a freshman at a NCAA member school, a student-athlete must: \*
- Graduate from high school
  - Earn a grade point average of at least 2.0 in a core curriculum of at least 14 academic subjects earned in grades 9-12
- NOTE:** Starting August 1, 2008, 16 core courses will be required for Division 1 only. This rule applies to any student first entering any Div. 1 college or university on or after August 1, 2008.
- Earn a minimum score on either the SAT or the ACT, based on a sliding scale using the student's core GPA
- \*Students should see their school counselor or visit the NCAA Eligibility Center website for more specific details on qualification requirements

## **E. THE COLLEGE VISIT**

Reminder—there is NO substitute to personally visiting a college!

1. When to visit?
  - Try to plan visits to coincide with school holidays, but NOT college holidays—students will get much more of the “flavor” of the campus and, perhaps, be able to attend some classes if the college is in session.
  - If a student must miss school to make a college visit, please seek administrative approval so make-up work can be issued.
2. How to Arrange a Visit?
  - Make your appointment 2-4 weeks in advance by writing the Director of Admissions; use his/her name if possible.
  - Read the college catalog before the visit

- Write down on an index card any questions that you would like answered
- Dress and grooming—generally speaking, try to avoid “extremes” of clothing and appearance; in short, dress comfortably and appropriately for the occasion.

#### **F. COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES VISITS**

Throughout the year colleges will send representatives to speak to interested juniors and seniors. A calendar of the visits will be kept on the College and Career Center door. Listen for periodic announcements over the intercom for schools visiting JRHS during the school year.



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COLLEGE APPLICATIONS**

### **1. HOW DO I GET COLLEGE APPLICATIONS AND CATALOGS?**

The best approach is to visit the school’s website and/or e-mail the college requesting an application, catalog, and financial aid information (if you are interested in applying for financial aid). By communicating with the college, you will be included on their mailing/e-mail list and be informed of local visits by admissions officers as well as other special events planned for prospective applicants.

Many applications, catalogs, and financial aid information are also available in the James River College and Career Center (CCC).

### **2. WHAT ELSE IS AVAILABLE IN THE COLLEGE/CAREER CENTER (CCC)?**

The College and Career Center (CCC) offers a wealth of information on colleges, careers, and financial aid. If you haven't already used its valuable resources, take the time to visit it and acquaint yourself with the many resources that are available to you. It is located in the School Counseling Office and is open from 7:15am to 2:30pm each weekday, and in the evening during select special events.



3. **HOW DO I KNOW WHETHER OR NOT I HAVE A REALISTIC CHANCE OF GETTING INTO THE COLLEGES I'VE SELECTED?**

First, check the resources in the CCC, such as the College Handbook or the school's website, to determine average admissions requirements. A number of websites, such as COLLEGEdata ([www.collegedata.com](http://www.collegedata.com)), can assist students with college selectivity information.

Second, check with your school counselor to see if he/she feels that the colleges you have selected are realistic choices for you.

Third, talk to admissions' officers from the colleges to determine their admissions standards and policies, which can change from one year to the next.

4. **SHOULD I INCLUDE RECOMMENDATIONS WITH MY APPLICATIONS?**

Some colleges require recommendations from your school counselor and/or teachers. If the college requires recommendations, it usually prefers recommendations from your counselor and/or an academic teacher from your junior or senior year. Submitting more recommendations than required is typically viewed by admissions officers as a sign of insecurity or an attempt to cover a weakness; therefore, we recommend adhering to the college's suggested recommendation policy.

If you are applying to a school that requires recommendations, you should ask your counselor and/or teacher at least three weeks in advance if he or she would be willing to write a recommendation for you. Please keep in mind that counselors and teachers are often asked by many students to write recommendations, that writing recommendations is a time-consuming task, and that when a counselor/teacher agrees to write a recommendation for you, it is done out of genuine concern and desire to advocate on your behalf. It is a courtesy to thank those who have written recommendations for you and to keep them informed of your college acceptances.

If you are applying to a college that **does not require** recommendations, it is possible that their admissions staff does not even read or consider recommendations in evaluating candidates. Before asking someone to write a recommendation when the college does not require one, please check with the admissions officer from the college to find out whether they consider recommendations when evaluating your application.

**5. MY GRADES IN HIGH SCHOOL ARE NOT AS GOOD AS I'D LIKE THEM TO BE, BUT I KNOW I'M GOING TO DO WELL MY SENIOR YEAR. SHOULD I WAIT UNTIL SECOND SEMESTER TO SEND IN MY APPLICATION SO THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE CAN SEE MY SENIOR GRADES?**

Admissions officers advise that you send your applications early - generally speaking the earlier, the better. Many colleges do not make decisions until they have received your mid-year senior grades, but, by waiting until then to send your application, you risk missing application deadlines.

In the case of rolling admissions (in which the college renders a decision on a student's application once the application is complete), colleges will close the application process once they have accepted enough students to fill their class. By waiting, you may jeopardize your chance for applying and/or gaining admission.

**6. HOW DO I KNOW WHAT TEST I HAVE TO TAKE AND WHEN I HAVE TO TAKE THEM?**

You should have visited the website of each school to which you are applying (see question#1). In it you will find lots of invaluable information, including whether the college requires standardized tests and when they must be taken. Most east coast colleges have traditionally preferred the SAT, which students should take in the spring of their junior year and the fall of their senior year. Some colleges, especially the more competitive colleges, may also require SAT: Subject Tests in two or three subject areas.

Colleges in the midwest and west often prefer the American College Testing (ACT) program instead of or in addition to the SATs. *Please note that every college and university now accepts both the SAT and ACT assessments.* Registration information for both SAT and ACT is available in the School Counseling Office and the CCC, or can be found online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).

**7. I DON'T WANT MY SAT OR SAT: Subject Test SCORES SENT TO MY COLLEGE UNTIL I KNOW HOW I DID. IS THAT POSSIBLE?**

Yes! This is a new feature with the SAT. Please see your school counselor for more information or visit the College Board website at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) for details.

8. **WHAT IF I'VE CHANGED SOME OF MY COLLEGE CHOICES SINCE I REGISTERED FOR SAT or ACT. CAN I HAVE MY SCORES SENT TO MY NEW CHOICES?**

Up until the test date, you can complete the correction form attached to your admission ticket and change any or all of the colleges to which you want your scores sent. As long as you mail in the correction form—or make the appropriate changes on-line if you registered electronically—before the test date or give it to your test administrator on the test date, there will be no charge for the change. After the test date, however, you must complete and mail the Additional Score Report Request (which was sent with your admission ticket) along with fee for every college to which you want your scores sent.

9. **IS IT IMPORTANT FOR ME TO VISIT THE COLLEGES TO WHICH I AM APPLYING?**

Absolutely! (See the section on College Visits earlier in this booklet). Many students envision a college in a certain way, but when they experience the college first-hand, they often find that their preconceived ideas may not match the actual feeling they get about the college when they see it for themselves. Nothing can substitute for the campus visit. Your friends, teachers, counselor, and parents may all have good advice for you, but nothing that anyone can tell you will take the place of the feeling you get about the campus when you experience it yourself. **Consider this:** the college you choose will likely be your home for four years. Would you buy a home sight unseen?

10. **HOW DO I FIND OUT ABOUT FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS?**

Visit the CCC and acquaint yourself with the extensive information available to you upon request, including the website listing available in the appendix which follows this section. Also, read the scholarship bulletin, *The Scholarship Ripple*, which is posted in many of your classrooms and the JRHS website ([www.jrhs.net](http://www.jrhs.net)). Mrs. Lawrence, the counselor in charge of scholarships, communicates scholarship opportunities to you through these lists. (Lists are also posted on the Scholarship Bulletin Board in the School Counseling Office, and in the CCC).

11. **WHAT IF I HAVE A QUESTION THAT IS NOT INCLUDED HERE?**

See your school counselor. We will do our best to help you through the increasingly complex process of selecting and applying to college

## II. Life After High School: Community Colleges

A. **What:** Community colleges are two-year, non-residential post-secondary schools located throughout Virginia. These colleges provide affordable, career-oriented programs of study that enable students to begin their careers after only one or two years of schooling. In addition, students wishing to earn a college diploma can concentrate on completing their first two years of academic study and transfer to a four-year college.

\*\***(News):** Nearly half- 45 percent- of high school graduates who continue their education now start their college careers at two-year institutions.

B. **Educational Goals:**

1. One year of study - certificate or diploma in career preparation, such as drafting, early childhood education, real estate, and welding.
2. Two years of study - associate degree in an identified major, such as accounting, fashion design, nursing, or social work.
3. College Transfer program of study - an Associate in Arts (AA) or Associate in Science (AS) degree designed to assist students in transferring to a four- year college to complete a bachelors degree.

These programs are specifically designed for transfer at the junior level.

C. **Admission:**

1. High School Diplomas or GED
2. Placement Tests (the SAT or ACT are not required). Call the community college of your choice to set up an appointment to take the placement tests in math and English. The two Richmond area community colleges are:

- John Tyler (706-5434) in Chesterfield County, [www.jtcc.edu](http://www.jtcc.edu)
- J. Sargeant Reynolds (371-3411) in Henrico County, [www.jsr.cc.va.us](http://www.jsr.cc.va.us).

## III. Life After High School: Career and Technical Schools

A. **What:** Career and technical schools offer students short- term training in a wide variety of career areas. These schools are usually private, and vary greatly in both the programs they offer and the length of program completion. The programs are designed to prepare students for specific careers. Students spend most of their time in job-related settings where they can receive hands-on training from experienced instructors.

B. **Common Programs of Study:** A sample of offerings include a variety of business and computer related career programs, air conditioning/refrigeration, auto body technician, carpentry, legal secretary, medical assistant, surveying, truck driving, and

photography.

C. **Admission:**

1. High School Diploma or GED.
2. Placement tests or age verification may be required.

D. **Buyer Beware:** These are some excellent career and technical schools, and then there are some shady and disreputable institutions, as well. Thus it is very important that students thoroughly investigate and visit any schools they are considering. Below is a list of suggested guidelines for students and parents to follow when evaluating a career or technical school:

- **Licensing and Accreditation** - If a school is accredited, then it meets the minimum standards of the accrediting agency. Check to see if, and by whom, the school is accredited. The chief accrediting agency for career and technical schools is the ACCSCT (Accrediting Commission of Career School and College of Technology). Beware of any school that is not accredited.
- **Facilities**— Take a tour and investigate whether the equipment is modern, adequate, and safe. Also, determine whether the facility is well-maintained and up-to-date.
- **Placement** - Ask, "Does the school offer career placement services for students? What percentage of graduates find jobs in which they received training? Which employers hire graduates? What are the average salaries for graduates finding employment?"
- **Cost** - Secure in writing the total cost of tuition, supplies, and fees, as well as any refund policy. Also inquire about the school's financial aid opportunities, and the student default rate on loans.
- **Quality of Instruction** - Visit a classroom while the school is in session or while fieldwork is being conducted. Find out about the qualifications and credentials of the faculty. Observe the condition, relevance, and quality of textbooks and other resources.
- **Reputation and Stability** - Investigate how long the school has been in operation, and how many students complete the program. Talk to recent graduates and current students about their experiences with the education they have received. Finally, call the Better Business Bureau and/or the Chamber of Commerce to check out an institution's references.

E. **Contact Information:** Additional information on career and technical education programs can be accessed at the U.S. Office of Vocational and Adult Education website:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/cte/index.html>.

#### IV. **Life After High School: The Military**

- A. **What:** The United States Army, Navy/Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, and the reserves train men and women to protect the security interests of the country. As the nation's largest employer, the military offers training and employment opportunities in over 2000 jobs specialties, 75% of which have civilian matches.
- B. **Admission:** In order to enlist in the military students generally must:
1. Be a high school graduate
  2. Earn a minimum score on the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery)
  3. Be of good character
  4. Be healthy and physically fit
  5. Be drug free
- C. **Enlistment:**
1. Responsibilities
    - a. Commitment: 2 to 6 years of active duty
    - b. Basic Training: 6 - 10 weeks of intense physical and mental preparation in which enlistees receive classroom instruction, field training, exercise, self-discipline, and respect for authority.
    - c. Advanced Individual Training (AIT): 2-12 months of job training following basic training.
  2. Benefits:
    - a. Salary commensurate to years of experience
    - b. Free housing, and medical/dental care
    - c. College Fund contributions
- D. Contact Information: More information on military careers can be accessed at the U.S. Department of Defense website, [www.defenselink.mil](http://www.defenselink.mil).

#### V. **Life After High School: Apprenticeships**

- A. **What:** Usually a four-year on-the-job training program in a variety of fields and trades. Apprentices learn a skilled trade through a combination of classroom instruction and field experiences. Often, a written contract between the apprentice and trainer/employer is required for the specific stages of the training to take place.
- B. **Admission:** Be advised that apprenticeship programs are often difficult to secure. Programs have limited openings and the competition can be fierce. Typically, applicants must be:
1. 18 years old
  2. healthy and physically fit
  3. a high school graduate or have earned a GED

- C. **Common Programs of Study**: Apprenticeship programs are offered in over 800 different occupations, with most falling into the construction trades. Examples include - auto mechanic, carpenter, cook, firefighter, electrician, tool and die maker, plumber, and machinist.
- D. **Contact Information**: The CareerConnect website, (<http://www.careerconnect.state.va.us/training/appren1.htm>) sponsored by the state government of Virginia, has a wealth of information on apprenticeship programs both in and outside of the state.

VI. **Life After High School: Employment**

- A. **What**: Entering the job market directly after high school remains an option for some graduates, although individuals with little to no vocational training will likely find limited career opportunities, lower pay, and a decreased opportunity for advancement. However, business and industry are always eager to find employees who are hard-working, polite, punctual, well-groomed, willing to learn, and able to get along well with others.
- B. **Admission**: Individuals who seek full time employment after high school have the best chance at securing a job by following these simple but important job hunting tips -
1. **Network**: Tell friends and relatives that you are looking for a job, and put their knowledge and skills to work for you.
  2. **Resume**: Write a professional looking resume and attach a copy to each application you complete. You can also mail a copy of your resume and a cover letter to prospective employers requesting an application and/or interview.
  3. **Search**: Look in the local newspaper, visit the employment commission, or employ an agency to seek further employment opportunities.
  4. **Think Career**: Try to find a job in an area that might interest you as a career. For example, if you want a career in the fashion industry, then seek an entry-level position at a clothing or department store. This on-the-job training is valuable to testing your interests, and learning what education and experience is necessary for advancement.
  5. **Follow-up**: Periodically check up on the business and companies to which you have applied. Assure them that you are still interested in a position and encourage them to keep you in mind if an opening should occur.

6. **Interview:** Be prepared when you go for an interview: know something about the company, dress neatly, be punctual, look and act in a professional manner, and be confident. Also, be prepared to answer questions about your previous employer, your future plans, and your reasons for wanting this job. Finally, be prepared to ask a few questions of your own: work hours, salary, advancement opportunities, employee morale, etc.

7. **Make It Happen:** Be a good employee once you are hired. Always be on time, work hard, and learn all you can.

B. **Contact Information:** More information on employment opportunities out of high school can be accessed at the Virginia Employment Commission website, [www.vec.virginia.gov](http://www.vec.virginia.gov).

### **Life After High School: In conclusion...**

Students, regardless of your choice for "Life After High School," one fact remains: **your education does not end when you graduate**. Choose the path of your continuing education carefully and thoughtfully. The goal of your learning is simple, but important to find your place in the economy by developing a marketable skill. Whether you plan to go to college or technical school, nursing or business school, the School Counseling Department is dedicated to making your dreams a reality. Let us know how we can be of assistance.

### **References for "Life After High School"**

O'Brien, Linda. Options for the High School Graduate. Woodburn Press, 1998.

Quattrociocchi, Susan M. Help! A Family Guide to High School and Beyond. Photo disc, Inc. 1998

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. Opportunities 2007-08. SCHEV, 2007.



