

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

Counselor: _____
Principal: John B. Titus

LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL--Senior 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, the military, or an apprenticeship, the decision is a family one and the School Counselors are here to help!

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

<u>Type of schools</u>	<u>Considerations</u>
Four-year College/University	Programs of study
Junior College	Admission Requirements
Community College	Cost
Trade School/Apprenticeship	Location
Business/Technical School	Size
Nursing School	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 senior

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) - 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 and Sylvan, 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.vacrnet.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 1st** 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

GRASP Representative – The Greater Richmond Area Scholarship Program (GRASP) sponsors a trained financial aid representative to JRHS once a week to work with students and parents on issues related to funding post-secondary education.



I. Life After High School: College and University

A. THE APPLICATION

1. Apply early in your senior year before your course load and senior activities become too time-consuming.
 - a) Consider applying to *at least three* schools: the “RCS Model”
 - a “reach” school
 - a “competitive” school, and
 - a “safety” school
 - b) Admissions to four-year colleges and universities is based on four (4) major factors:
 - Strength of high school program of study
 - Grade Point Average (GPA) and Class Rank
 - Standardized Test Scores (e.g. SAT, ACT)
 - Extracurricular and Community Activities

*Seniors should use the resources above and work with their school counselor to help determine the schools that fit their personal “RCS Model.”

2. Check the College and Career Center (CCC) for applications or, better yet, access the school’s website to complete an application on-line.
 - You may also wish to write or e-mail the college for a copy of a catalog and/or other materials, such as information on financial aid. The exact address of a college may be found on-line or in the CCC.
3. Complete your section of the application as neatly as possible, either directly on the application or electronically via the school’s website.
 - Typing is preferred but printing neatly in black ink is also acceptable—*reminder: electronic applications are preferred by most colleges/universities!*
 - Remember that the appearance of your application says something about you, and we encourage you to “say” *something positive*.
 - If you write an essay on a separate sheet of paper, please include your full name and your social security number (or school identification number) at the top of the title page
4. The procedure that James River uses for processing applications is designed to get the appropriate information to the school(s) of your choice as quickly and efficiently as possible. *You need only follow a few simple steps:*

- a) Complete the JRHS College Application Packet—
- No applications can be processed without the Transcript Release Authorization completed. **Your application will be delayed if this form is not signed by a parent/guardian if you are under 18.**
 - An “*Official Transcript Request Form*” must also be completed before any transcript* can be sent. **This request needs to be turned in at least ten school days in advance of the deadline.** A \$3.00 fee is charged for each application to process and mail your transcript.
**Your transcript will include a copy of your high school courses and grades, current subjects, standardized test data, and the JRHS school profile*
 - You are encouraged to include a student activities resume’ as part of your application. Please see #5 below for details.
- b) **IF** a college REQUIRES that your application include all parts mailed together (i.e., application, fee, transcript, recommendations, etc.), then:
- Staple the application fee check to the first page of the application, unless otherwise instructed
 - **CHECK and DOUBLE CHECK** your application to be sure that it is complete before you turn it in to the School Counseling Office
- c) Request a teacher recommendation, if needed.
- Be sure to provide the teacher with a stamped, addressed envelope to the school(s) to which you wish the recommendation sent
- d) Be sure to give any counselor portion of your application to your counselor **at least two weeks** in advance of deadline dates.
- The School Counseling Office will mail the counselor’s part of the application and the transcript to the school directly **UNLESS** you have made arrangements to have all parts mailed together.
- e) Keep a record of the materials you send to the school(s).
4. **Activities Record**—One of the major factors all four-year colleges and universities review is your activities record, which is a formal listing of all extracurricular, community, and volunteer participation you have completed during high school.

- a) Format—you can present your Activities Record in a variety of ways, both on the application and as an attachment. The key to presenting an effective record is to be complete, accurate, and neat!
- b) Microsoft Word Resume Wizard—Consider using a familiar word processing software program, such as MS Word, to create your own record as an attachment to your applications. Follow these easy steps in Word to get started:
- Go to “File” on the Menu and click “New”
 - From the menu box, click “Resume Wizard”
 - On the “Resume Wizard” menu box, click “Next” and then select “Professional” style, followed by “Next”
 - Select the “Functional” type of resume and click “Next”
 - From this point, type in the information requested and follow the prompts to include what kind of headings you want to include to best organize your activities listings

As usual if you run into questions or difficulty, please see your school counselor for assistance.

. . . **A final word on applications:**

Be sure to start now getting information if you have not already done so. Applications which are due around the first of January should be in to the School Counseling Office by the first of December to allow time for holiday mail delivery, etc. **YOU MUST ALLOW AT LEAST TWO WEEKS FOR THE SCHOOL COUNSELING OFFICE TO COMPLETE ITS PART OF YOUR APPLICATION - ESPECIALLY DURING THE BUSIEST TIME (OCTOBER-JANUARY).**

B. EARLY DECISION/ACTION PLANS

Many colleges have a plan whereby a highly qualified student may obtain a decision concerning his/her admission early in the senior year, usually by December or January.

- Early Decision Plan—A select number of schools allow students to apply early with the understanding that an acceptance offer is *binding*
- Early Action Plan—Several schools allow students to apply early to learn of a *non-binding* decision by January
- Refer to the catalog of the college of your choice to determine if it has an early decision or action plan; and, if so, how the process works at that particular school
- Pay close attention to application deadlines and be sure to request records, recommendations, etc. in a timely manner



C. TESTING

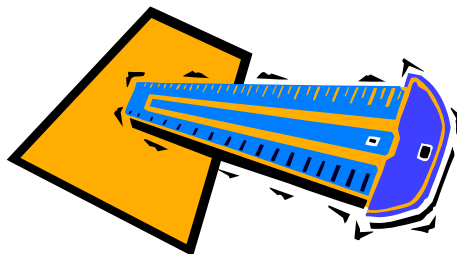
1. Admissions Tests: Most four year colleges require applicants to take the SAT and/or the American College Test (ACT). Some colleges also require one or more *SAT: Subject Tests* in specified areas. Refer to the admissions section of the college's catalog to determine which tests are required.

- a. *Registration for Tests*: Paper registration forms can be obtained in the School Counseling Office or the CCC, but the preferred method of registration is on-line at www.collegeboard.com.
- b. *CEEB Code*: The JRHS code number is **471428**.
- c. *The SAT: Reasoning Test and SAT: 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 SAT: Subject Tests are offered, as all tests are not given each time.
- d. *ACT and TOEFL*: Certain colleges require/recommend 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.

- Additional information on the ACT may be obtained in the School Counseling Office, CCC, or on the web at www.act.org
- Information on TOEFL can be obtained in the CCC, by calling 1-800-GOTOEFL, or on the web at www.toefl.org

2. 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.



2009-2010 SAT PROGRAM SCHEDULE*

Test Date	Test(s) Offered	Regular Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
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*

Test Dates**	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
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 individual sites.

D. FINANCIAL AID

1. *Funding*—post-secondary financial aid comes from the federal government, state government, private sources, and the schools themselves.
2. *Access*--In order to receive federal and state financial aid, students must apply for it each year.
3. *Forms*--A completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is necessary to apply for Federal and State aid.
 - a. FAFSA forms will be available in the School Counseling Department in December.
 - b. The forms **must** be mailed or filed electronically **after** January 1.
 - c. IF mailing the FAFSA form (no fee), be sure to send it

directly to the address on the application.

4. *The Profile Form*--A relatively new program is the Financial Aid Profile (PROFILE) service. This service is provided by the College Scholarship Service (CSS) 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 Aid Profile is available in the CCC.

****IMPORTANT**--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.**

5. *Types of Aid*—Federal and State financial aid can be in the form of grants, work-study programs, and loans.
6. *Scholarships* may be available from other sources:
 - a. Read the bulletin called "*The James River Ripple*" which is published by the School Counseling Office periodically and posted on the school website; in the School Counseling Office; the CCC; and in English 12, English 11, US/VA Government, and US/VA History classrooms.
 - b. Check the scholarship bulletin board in the School Counseling Office for updates
 - c. Applications and/or additional information about advertised scholarships are available from **Mrs. Lawrence in the School Counseling Office.**
 - d. Contact the financial aid office of every school to which you apply for a list of scholarships
 - e. Make an appointment in the CCC for information on computerized scholarship searches.
 - f. Check with service organizations, churches, parents, close relatives, employers, etc. on what scholarship opportunities each may sponsor for members or their children
 - g. Make an appointment in the CCC with the JRHS GRASP (Greater Richmond Area Scholarship Program) representative, for more information and assistance.
7. *Notification*—Colleges usually notify students concerning financial aid awards late in the spring.



E. 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).

**Points to Remember—*

1. The requirements for initial eligibility at Division I differ from those required at Division II
2. Students normally should register at 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 at the Division I or II level
3. You 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—based on a sliding scale associated with a student's GPA—on either a SAT or an ACT

*Please see your school counselor or visit the Eligibility Center's website for more specific details on requirements to qualify

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.



QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED 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), 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 recommendation 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 on-line at www.collegeboard.com and www.actstudent.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 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! 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. 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 colleges.



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
 - J. Sargeant Reynolds (371-3411) in Henrico County, 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 finds 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 institutions' 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.

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.

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"

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