

## ***So You Don't Want to Go to College:*** **A Guide to Local Area Vocational Training Programs**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this guide is to provide a one-stop resource and overview of local vocational training programs for Rochester area educators, students, and parents who may wish to explore educational alternatives to traditional college degree programs. The certificate programs included in this guide are vocationally-specific programs designed to provide students with entry-level skills, in a short period of time, and jump-start their careers. Most programs can be completed in one year or less (exceptions are noted) and provide job placement assistance. Job placement statistics, including percentage of graduates who get jobs and their average rate of pay, are often available from program providers, if you ask for them.

### **Certificate Programs**

Certificate programs are offered by local BOCES' (Board of Cooperative Educational Services'), community colleges, proprietary business/technical schools, and for-profit training organizations approved for government funding. Upon successful completion of these programs, students receive a Certificate of Completion and may qualify for state certification to perform a particular job. College credit for these programs may be awarded, depending on the course and training provider. Students do not receive college credit for community college certificate programs, which can be applied to related degree programs offered by that same institution.

The certificate programs included in this guide are organized according to six major career clusters—Arts and Humanities, Business and Information Systems, Engineering and Technology, Health Services, Human and Public Services, and Natural and Agricultural Science. The interests, abilities, and aptitudes of individuals pursuing careers in each cluster are often times similar so students may wish to explore related careers within each cluster.

### **Financial Assistance**

Most training providers can provide the student with information about possible government funding and/or financial assistance. Generally, traditional grants, like Pell (federal) and TAP (state), are not available to students participating in non-credit training programs (i.e., non-college programs) but make sure you check with the training provider. However, there are other sources of funding available to students participating in non-credit vocational training. Funding may be available through local government agencies like VESID (Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities) and Rochester Works. If you are a person with a disability or are unable to find a job or are receiving a form of public assistance (food stamps, Medicaid, and/or cash assistance), you may qualify for funding through one of these agencies. Training providers can give you more information on how you qualify for funding or direct you to these funding sources for further information. Many of the programs included here may be free to you, if you qualify for government funding.

## **Admissions**

Admission to vocational training programs is not guaranteed, even though a candidate may meet all the admission requirements. For example, some (not all) of the vocational training programs run by BOCES may give first priority to students currently in high school; adult students (those individuals 18 years or older who have already completed a GED or High School diploma) are given admission only if there are seats left after current high school students enroll. Also, many programs must meet minimum enrollment requirements to run: otherwise, their start dates are delayed or, in some cases, programs may be cancelled.

Most programs require or prefer students have a GED or high school diploma. However, there are many exceptions, depending upon a student's particular situation and the training organization, so make sure you check with the training providers. Most programs require that adults take a basic skills test to determine math and reading abilities. Many program providers offer GED preparation classes, in addition to vocational training programs, which the student may attend, while at the same time, participating in vocational training.

Students should contact each program provider for information on the programs in which they have an interest. Although several organizations may offer training programs for the same type of job or career, each program may be very different. For example, each BOCES school operates independent of one another. So, the course content of the machining program offered by one BOCES location may be very different from the course content of the machining program taught at another BOCES location. Each program offered by various training providers should be researched thoroughly by the student to determine which one best fits their career goals, learning style, financial requirements, and scheduling needs.

### ***Disclaimer***

The information presented here is meant only as a guide of local programs. Programs may be available which are not included and information may not be current. Programs are constantly changing in response to changes in the labor market and the job market. Always check directly with training providers for up-to-date program offerings, requirements, schedules, and costs.