

# **Education Beyond High School**

**Block Island School**

# EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

## **“Will I be able to go to college?”**

The opportunity to continue your education beyond high school is available to every Block Island School graduate. It is our goal to help you make that happen.

**Use the many resources available through the Block Island School, the school community, the internet and school staff. Your counselor will guide you through the process and help you make realistic choices. College search software (see appendix), visits to college fairs and to local schools can help you identify what is important to you in a post secondary institution. Talks with current students, recent graduates, parents, and adults in careers that interest you can make a difference, too.**

College is an exciting step toward an independent and satisfying life. While you will receive advice and information from many sources, your final choice should be one you are comfortable with and that is appropriate for your needs and interests. Most students with an open mind and a good attitude will thrive in a variety of schools. By keeping this in mind, much of the stress students feel about selecting an institution would vanish.

Students sometimes see roadblocks that appear to stand between them and higher education, such as their academic record in high school or their family's financial situation. If you want to continue your education, there are ways to overcome these obstacles. Your counselor can help.

There are so many paths to a great future. Remember that every school offers many valuable opportunities. Choose the one that's right for you.

THE BEST THING ABOUT  
THE FUTURE.....

Is that it comes one day at a time!

# CAREER PATHS FROM HIGH SCHOOL

*What are my options after high school? What choices will prepare me for what I want to do? What if I'm undecided about my future plans?* Be assured that many students feel confused and uncertain about what lies ahead after high school. The one thing we do know for certain is that everyone will need some type of further education or training to prepare for jobs of the future. Because of the rapid technological changes taking place, many future jobs only exist in the imagination right now. Even twenty years ago a career like web page designer did not exist. You will need to be able to adapt to change and embark on a course of life-long learning for many careers. Here are some paths to follow after high school:

- **To Work** – an option for those who have already developed special skills in vocational or business areas. If not, low paying jobs with limited opportunities may be the result.
- **Internship or Service Learning** – programs to explore career options or to participate in community service, often before deciding on postsecondary education.
- **On the Job Training or Apprenticeship** – a chance to develop career skills under the guidance of a master craftsman.
- **Military Service** – life-long career opportunities or shorter benefits in transferable skills and dollars toward college.
- **Prep School** – for college bound students who need an additional year after high school to strengthen their academic skills and often athletic skills.
- **Career or Technical School** – certificate programs, often a year or less, that prepare you for skilled work.
- **2 Year College or Technical School** – Associate degree and preparation for skilled work or transfer to a 4 year college. (Admissions tests not required.)
- **4 Year College** – Preparation for professional work or graduate school.

Many students will follow one or more of these paths on their career journey. The more you learn about each of them, the easier it will be to choose the right one to start.

# SELF-ASSESSMENT

Choosing a career is difficult. On one hand, you have hundreds of careers from which to choose. On the other hand, there is YOU, a unique individual with specific interests, talents, abilities, and aptitudes. While finding a career that is a good match for you is a challenge, you'll develop a better understanding of who you are and of the choices that you have as you consider options.

Before you can choose a career, you must first take a look at yourself. You need to think about what activities you enjoy and identify your strengths and weaknesses. Self-assessment is therefore the first step in choosing a career. The good news is that you won't have to take this step alone. Parents, teachers, and friends know you well and can offer suggestions and advice. Your guidance counselor will meet with you individually and in groups to help with these decisions.

Here are some **self-assessment activities** to guide you:

1. Write down at least two courses that you like and do well in.
2. Name two or more hobbies or activities that you enjoy.
3. Name something that you do better than most of your friends.
4. List one or more activities you become so involved in that you lose track of time.
5. Put a check by statements that reflect how you feel, cross out those that are not true for you, and skip those you feel neutral about.

- ☐ I would like to work outdoors.
- ☐ I want to travel.
- ☐ I would like to help people who are sick or hurt.
- ☐ I like being in charge.
- ☐ I want a job where I can work with my hands.
- ☐ I would like a job where I work by myself much of the time.
- ☐ I like to work with numbers or data.
- ☐ I would like a job where I am working in or around nature.
- ☐ I want to work at a desk.
- ☐ I like to build or fix things.
- ☐ I would like a job where I'm in front of people talking or performing.
- ☐ I want to work indoors.
- ☐ I would like working in a competitive environment.
- ☐ I like to work with computers.
- ☐ I want a job that's considered important.
- ☐ I want a job where I can make a lot of money.
- ☐ I want a job that involves walking or other physical activities.
- ☐ I would like a job where I can create something.
- ☐ I want a job where I am around other people most of the time.
- ☐ I like a job with a variety of tasks.
- ☐ I am willing to work different shifts or schedules.

6. Do you want a career that requires six months or less of education after high school, or are you interested in going to school for an additional one, two, or four years?
7. Pretend you can see into the future. What do you see yourself doing ten years from now?
8. What are you enthusiastic about doing?
9. When and where are you the happiest?
10. Is there anything you have always dreamed about doing?
11. Write down three words that describe you. Then ask a parent or relative for three words that he/she thinks describe you. Ask someone else who knows you well to do the same.
12. What careers have you considered for yourself in the past? What careers have others suggested that you consider?

After you have completed your self-assessment activities, look over your responses. What interests, abilities, and talents do you have that should be taken into consideration when you search for a career? Do your responses indicate that you prefer 1) hands-on activities in which you work with things 2) activities in which you work with people, or 3) desk-type activities in which you work with information? Do your answers have a common theme? Do you see any patterns?

Look over your responses to see if you should consider a career in one of the following areas: business (management, secretarial, sales, etc.), 2) health care, 3) high tech/computers, 4) the arts (art, music, theater, etc.), 5) education, 6) service (child care, law enforcement, etc.), 7) skilled trades (plumbing, carpentry, etc.), or 8) hospitality and recreation (chef, travel agent, sports instructor, etc.).

If you have been able to identify a career area that you want to consider, you are ready to move on to the next step, **Investigating Your Career Options**. If you are still confused, take the information you have gathered about yourself to your guidance counselor and ask for advice. Your counselor can show you how to access internet based career assessment tools, such as the College Board's Career Search Program and WaytoGoRI – which can help you clarify your options. Remember that the average person will have three or four different careers and ten different employers during his lifetime.



# INVESTIGATING YOUR CAREER OPTIONS

Here are some tips for investigating your career options:

- **Read about various careers.** The library, guidance office, and internet have lots of information about various careers. [www.waytogori.org](http://www.waytogori.org) has a career search program that is fun and easy to use.
- **Talk to people** who are knowledgeable about the careers in which you are interested. Counselors, teachers, and family friends can all point you in the right direction.
- **Interview** someone who is involved in the career and ask questions about a typical day, opportunities, preparation, average starting pay, and what he or she likes or dislikes about it.
- **Experience a career field** firsthand. Take a course or get involved in a related extracurricular activity. For example, some B.I.S. students participate in the Volunteer Fire Department, the tourist industry or the Historical Society. Work at a related part-time job. "Shadow" someone in your career field for a day to see what it's like.
- **Explore "hot" career** - those that promise many opportunities in the years ahead. Experts are predicting that health care, technology, education, and business support and operation functions have above average wages. Professions that will see the most gains in employment include: registered nurses, career accountant and auditors, computer software application engineers, executive secretaries and administrative assistants, truck drivers, sales reps and elementary teachers. (Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook.)



"My career options are limited. The U.S. Presidency is too dangerous. Being a T.V. anchorman is too repetitive. I guess that just leaves beach bum."

# EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

**Almost every career requires education or training beyond a general high school education.**

What many students don't realize is that only about twenty percent of the jobs of the future will require a four-year degree or more. Students should consider all educational options and make the choices that are right for them.

- **Colleges and Universities (4 Year)**

Over two thousand accredited four-year colleges and universities in the United States offer a vast range of educational programs to meet the needs of most students. Ranging from highly selective institutions which admit only ten per cent of applicants to open enrollment schools where anyone with a high school diploma or G.E.D. can enroll, four year colleges and universities prepare students for entry into professional careers.

- **Junior (Private 2 Year) Colleges**

Junior colleges serve many of the same functions as community colleges, but also provide on-campus residence halls and the type of campus life associated with four-year colleges. Their student bodies are more often of the traditional 18-22 age group. In the past fifteen years many junior colleges have expanded to offer both two and four year programs. Two popular colleges of this type are Dean College in MA and Mitchell College in CT, both of which now offer two and four year programs. Most private 2 year colleges offer housing.

- **Community Colleges**

Community colleges provide affordable, career-oriented programs, which enable students to begin their careers after only one or two years of college. Students can also go to a community college for one or two years and then transfer to a four-year college. Often community colleges offer smaller, more personalized classes and flexible schedules, allowing students to combine school and work or other responsibilities. Student bodies are diverse, often including those who have just graduated from high school as well as older students who are there to update their skills or prepare for a new career. Some community colleges offer programs for academically talented students. Because community colleges have open enrollment and don't require college entrance exams like the SAT, some students who may not be academically prepared for a four year college can start at a community college and take remedial or college prep classes. For many students, community colleges enable them to make a successful transition from high school to college. Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) and Bristol Community College (BCC) are frequent choices RI students. CCRI does not provide housing, but does assist students in locating accommodations.

- **Career/technical education**

Students in career and technical education programs spend much of their time “learning by doing.” Many career programs also include a work component in order to give students an opportunity to use the skills they’ve developed. Upon completion of some career or technical programs, students receive a diploma or certificate. In others, it may be possible to earn an associate’s or bachelor’s degree, depending on the student’s goals. Students focus on a specialized area and are ready to enter the job market in a relatively short amount of time. Examples of some career/technical institutions in Rhode Island are MTTI (automotive and other careers); New England Institute of Technology (computers, health care, construction trades, and others); IYRS (International Yacht Restoration School) in Newport and Johnson and Wales. The Guidance office can provide information about accredited career and technical schools across the country.

- **Prep School**

Prep schools can meet a wide variety of individual needs for students – academic, social/emotional, and/or athletic. They are often used to increase a student’s chances to get admitted to first choice schools and to be successful once they are admitted. Boarding prep schools provide a structured setting where students can learn academic skills necessary for success in college. They can enhance a student’s athletic profile as well. For a directory of prep schools go to: **Prep.Schools.BusinessCord.com**

- **The Military**

The United States military trains young men and women to protect the interests of our country. It also offers qualified high school graduates a good salary and free job training. It provides discipline and structure, as well as opportunities for career advancement, travel, and educational benefits. The military is the nation’s single largest employer and offers training in over 2,000 job specialties, 75% of which have civilian counterparts. The four main branches are the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. Military opportunities also exist in the Coast Guard, the National Guard, and the Reserves. Students who want to go to college before they enter the military should consider attending a college that has an **ROTC** program (which offers attractive scholarship benefits) or a **service academy**.

To enlist, you must be a high school graduate, earn a minimum score on the **ASVAB** (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery), have good character, and pass a physical exam. The ASVAB is offered through local recruiting offices, on a no-obligation basis. Also, the **Army, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard** have their own **academies**. After receiving a free four-year college education, academy graduates enter the military as officers. Students interested in applying to one of the academies must have high SAT scores and an excellent GPA in a college prep program and should begin the application process in spring of their junior year. Nomination from a RI congressman or senator is also required.



- **On-the-Job Training or Apprenticeships**

**Apprenticeships** are agreements in which employers pay individuals while they learn their trade or profession and usually last 1-6 years. Apprentices work under the supervision of a journeyman and receive on-the-job training and classroom instruction in the practical and theoretical aspects of over 800 highly skilled occupations. Apprenticeship programs are sponsored by individual employers, labor unions, and associations, and over half are in the construction trades. The Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training registers apprenticeship programs and oversees Rhode Island's State Apprenticeship Council (SAC). For more information or to apply for an apprenticeship, contact the Division of Professional Regulation and its Supervisor of Apprenticeship Training Programs at (401)462-8536 or contact the local netWORKri office. Some examples of apprenticeable occupations include: aircraft technicians, electricians, automotive technicians, paramedics, plumbers, veterinary assistants, camera operators, cable installers-repairers, and furniture designers.

**On-the-Job training** is provided by a specific employer and can last anywhere from a few hours to several months. These short-term training programs are designed to teach employees only what they need to know to perform their jobs.

**Job Corps** is a federally funded job-training program that provides many opportunities at sites around the country. Students receive training, food and housing, health and education benefits. Students who have dropped out of high school can also earn a GED (General Equivalency Diploma). The Exeter Jobs Corps Academy (401-268-6000) offers: six vocations; driver's license; employability and independent living skills; internships; employment services, college and military placement.

**Internships or Service Learning**

Sometimes students need to take time away from formal education programs while deciding on their future. There are more opportunities than ever for students who wish to explore other options. Some examples are:

**Americorps**- a national service program in which individuals work for 1 or 2 years helping communities with their education, public safety, or environmental needs. **City Year** may be one of their best-known programs (401-553-2500).

**AFS (American Field Service)** – education and service programs for students who want to travel abroad.

**The Center for Interim Programs, LLC** – Independent “Gap Year” counseling program with offices in Princeton NJ and Northampton MA, this fee-charging organization offers worldwide internship and work experiences for one year.