

TraCen Cape May Education Update #372

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Question of the Week – Do I have a service obligation if I transfer New GI Bill benefits?

Q: I'm being involuntarily retired later this year but, because I transferred Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to dependents, I was supposed to serve on active duty until 01 December 2015. How am I supposed to fulfill that obligated service if I'm getting pushed out this year?

A: In general, if you're facing an involuntary retirement you won't have to serve out existing obligations. But you should check with the Coast Guard's GI Bill specialist, Mr. Reidus Stokes (reidus.stokes@uscg.mil) to be sure if this applies to your situation.

For those who are not being involuntarily retired, service obligations related to new GI Bill transfers are not waived. You can find information about the amount of time you're required to serve (from the date you transferred GI Bill benefits) at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/gibill-33b.asp#obligation>.

If you have a question you'd like answered as a Question of the Week, e-mail it to me at andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil.

Web Page in the Spotlight

There's a lot of stuff on the TraCen Cape May web site you might not check out if you didn't know it was there. So this week, I'm spotlighting **GI Bill FAQs** (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/mgibfaq.asp>).

Grammar & Usage Corner

This is a little bit off-topic, but I came across a web site I think provides valuable advice on writing more clearly: 25 Things You Should Know About Word Choice (<http://terribleminds.com/ramble/2012/03/06/25-things-you-should-know-about-word-choice/>). Its tips are particularly useful to those applying for advanced education or officer programs, but everyone who has to write performance evals or anything else can profit from them.

CAUTION: many of the author's examples are probably not for all audiences, but they definitely convey the points he's trying to make.

If there are any word usage, grammar, or similar issues you've encountered, please e-mail them to me at andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil.

SAT at TraCen Cape May

If you're trying to qualify for a Coast Guard program that requires you to have taken either the ACT or SAT and want to take one of these tests, please let me know ASAP. I usually administer these tests about once a quarter.

The SAT Reasoning Test (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/sat.asp>) will be administered at TraCen Cape May on **Thursday, 26 April starting at 0730**. There are three seats available for it. They will be reserved on a first come, first served.

ACT and the CollegeBoard, through DANTEs, authorize DANTEs Test Control Officers (ESOs who've been specifically designated) to administer these tests only for uniformed personnel. In general, military personnel are authorized to take one ACT **or** one SAT paid for by DANTEs. So if you want to take both, one would be free and you'd have to pay for the other. The ACT costs \$34; the SAT costs \$49.

ESOs may administer the ACT at any time of the year, but can administer the SAT only between 01 October and 30 June. You can see a comparison of the SAT and ACT at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/comparison.asp>.

Be aware that in almost all cases military personnel don't need to take either the ACT or SAT to take college courses.

You can read/download *Preparing for the ACT* (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/PreparingACT.pdf>) and *Taking the ACT* (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/TakingACT.pdf>) for more information about the test. Somewhat comparable information is available on the SAT web site (<http://sat.collegeboard.org/home>).

Do **not** register on-line for the SAT if you want to take it through your DANTEs TCO.

Another ACT/SAT Prep Resource

If you're preparing for to take the ACT or the SAT Reasoning test, check out March 2 Success (<https://www.march2success.com/>), a resource provided by the Army. It includes ACT and SAT practice tests and flash cards. And it's free.

Recent CGA Grads & the New GI Bill

When the new GI Bill was enacted in June 2008, Congress provided that for those who graduated from the DoD service academies the time spent fulfilling their post-graduation service requirement (currently the five years immediately following graduation) could not be counted as active duty time for purposes of establishing eligibility for benefits under the new GI Bill. They would become eligible for education benefits at the 100% level the day after the eighth anniversary of their graduation.

For reasons we can only speculate about, this provision did not apply to Coast Guard Academy graduates. That meant that immediately after graduation they would begin accruing active duty service time which would count for purposes of establishing eligible for benefits under the new GI Bill. They would become eligible for education benefits at the 100% level the day after the third anniversary of their graduation.

One of the provisions of the so-called “Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Improvements Act of 2010” (signed by the president on 04 January 2011) made the provision described above for DoD service academy graduates applicable to Coast Guard Academy graduates as well.

However, the provision applies only to cadets who enter the academy on and after 04 January 2011. Put another way, this change in the law applies only to members of the Coast Guard Academy class of 2015 and those following it.

EXAMPLE 1: A cadet or midshipman who graduated from one of the DoD academies in May 2003 and has remained on active duty since then became eligible for benefits under the new GI Bill at the 100% level in May 2011 (i.e., after serving his five-year service obligation and 36 months of additional active duty service). This is the case for all DoD academy graduates now and in the future.

EXAMPLE 2: A cadet who graduated from the Coast Guard Academy in May 2003 and has remained on active duty since then became eligible for benefits under the new GI Bill at the 100% level in May 2006 (i.e., after 36 months of active duty service after graduation). This will be the case for all CGA graduates up through the class of 2014.

EXAMPLE 3: A Coast Guard Academy cadet who graduates in May 2015 will become eligible for new GI Bill benefits at the 100% level in May 2023 (assuming she remains on active duty that whole time) – i.e., after her five-year service obligation and 36 months of additional active duty service.

If you're a CGA grad who applied for benefits under the new GI Bill (either via the on-line VONAPP (<http://www.gibill.va.gov/apply-for-benefits/application>) or VA form 22-1990 (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/VA22-1990.pdf>)) and were rejected, please contact Mr. Reidus Stokes (reidus.stokes@uscg.mil) so he can review your situation.

Would You Be Interested In . . .

. . . having access to college courses from renowned professors on subjects related to math and writing? If you're preparing for an ASVAB re-test, the SAT or the ACT, I may have something that would be useful to you.

“The Great Courses” is having a sale and I'm considering buying about a dozen of its courses for use (either individually or in groups) by member of Team Coast Guard.

In case you're not familiar with it, “The Great Courses (<http://www.shopgreatcourses.com/greatcourses.aspx>) brings engaging professors into your home or car through courses on DVD, audio CD, and other formats. Since 1990, great teachers from the Ivy League, Stanford, Georgetown, and other leading colleges and universities have crafted over 350 courses for lifelong learners. We provide the adventure of learning, without the homework or exams.”

You can see a list of the courses I'm thinking of getting at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/TheGreatCourses.xls>. Please look them over and let me know which (if any) would be of interest to you. You can click on the title of any course on the list to read more about it.

Grade Reports & Tuition Assistance

When you finish a course that tuition assistance (TA) paid for, please make sure you send your grade report to your ESO no more than six weeks after the end of your school's term. If you don't, you'll get a series of three nastygrams from the Navy telling you to do so or pay for the course. If you fail to respond, your pay will be garnished to reimburse the Navy for the TA spent on the course.

As to the mechanics of the process, **ignore** the text at the bottom of your TA authorization telling you to fax your grade report directly to the Navy. If you do so, there's a good chance it won't get entered into the Navy's computer. Instead, send your grade report to your ESO. (If possible, don't send your transcript; just the grade report for the course listed on your most recent TA authorization.) At <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/ta-b.asp#grades> you can find step-by-step instructions for two ways to do this.

One last thing: to ensure grade reports are recorded you should **always** go to the "My History" page in eTA (<https://eta.cnet.navy.mil/>) and check a few days after sending it to your ESO. If you see a blank space in the "Grd" column, you know that the grade report you sent didn't get to where it should have. In that case, contact your ESO to find out what happened and what to do about it.

Tutor.com

(courtesy of MCPO Kevin Isherwood, CMC at DCMS)

"Recently, there has been an uptick in CG member complaints regarding Tutor.Com participation. To clarify any misunderstandings, Tutor.Com is a DoD funded initiative in which CG members are NOT eligible to participate. I realize that the headline on the Tutor.Com homepage implies differently. However, if you read through all of the information you will see there is no mention of CG family member eligibility. The key is, "eligible" military family members and yes, Tutor.Com does know that the Coast Guard is a military service. But, the CG is not a DoD service and the CG did/does NOT pay into the program for CG family member participation. On a positive note, the CG DOES fund nearly \$20 million in tuition assistance annually for the continuing education of our folks."

Virtually Free SAT & ACT Preparation Software

eKnowledge Corporation and MLB have teamed up to provide free SAT and ACT preparation software to servicemembers and their families. If you received the software last year, you'll need to get a free upgrade. While the software is free (retail price \$200), there is a nominal charge of \$17.55 per standard SAT or ACT program for the cost of materials, processing, distribution, and customer service.

Parents of high school students applying for college next year should get this software early, so their children can begin preparing ASAP.

To obtain a military discount when you order, go to www.eknowledge.com/DANTES, or call 951-256-4076.

Spouse Education Grant

From 01 April until 01 June 2012, the Coast Guard Foundation will accept applications for a needs-based education grant for spouses of Coast Guard enlisted personnel in pay grades E-3 through E-6. The grant (\$500) is intended to help the spouses of personnel on active duty in the regular Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Reserve.

Applicants need only show enrollment in an education program or proof of a course completion (i.e., they can apply for the grant even before a course begins). Types of courses for which reimbursement is available include those offered by vocational and certification programs, as well as those offered at colleges and universities. Download the application form: http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/cgi/forms/CG_Form_1570.pdf.

Applicants will not need to provide receipts for expenses, but they will need to itemize expenses. They will also need to list some basic financial information. Transportation and child care expenses can be listed as legitimate expenses for the grant. Also part of the application process is an essay (no longer than 500 words) which addresses what it means to the applicant to be a Coast Guard spouse and describing the difference education has made to the applicant's life and the lives of the applicant's family members.

In June, a selection committee will convene to select grantees. The Coast Guard Institute expects as many as 40 spouses will receive assistance. This grant will be a somewhat different from the other grants administered by the Coast Guard Institute in that the Institute will handle the paperwork and selection processes while the Coast Guard Foundation will actually write the checks.

Emergency Management Courses

(courtesy of Mr. Brion Newman, full-time ESO at Base Seattle)

FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI) has just published an Independent Study Program Course Brochure (<http://training.fema.gov/IS/docs/IS%20Brochure.pdf>) and updated the on-line list of its course offerings (<http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslst.asp>).

If you're thinking of pursuing a career in emergency management, read the article in *MilitaryTimesEDGE* magazine (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/career017.pdf>). Also, consider Frederick Community College, which is "the only college in the country contracted with EMI to provide college credit for the Independent Study Program (ISP). We also offer an Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.), Emergency Management Certificate, and numerous specialization Letters of Recognition (LOR)." In addition to the associate's degree, the school has "articulation agreements with Northwestern State University of Louisiana, University of Maryland University College (UMUC), and Charter Oaks State College" which would allow you to get a bachelor's degree in the same field.

For more info about Frederick Community College's emergency management programs, go to http://www.frederick.edu/courses_and_programs/degree_emergency_management.aspx and http://www.frederick.edu/courses_and_programs/degree_emergmtreq.aspx.

Job Fair in Delaware

On **Saturday, 21 April 2012** from 0900 to 1300, Wilmington University will host Operation Success at its main campus in New Castle, Delaware. Operation Success is a free job fair and community outreach event for servicemembers, veterans, and their families.

Attendees will have the opportunity to attend several workshops on such topics as:

- on-line job search strategies,
- résumé writing,
- budgeting techniques,
- PTSD,
- transition assistance,
- military training to college credit,
- how to start a small business,
- Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits.

You can also meet with representatives from local colleges, universities, and support agencies.

For more information and to register, go to <http://www.OpSuccess.com>.

Tuition Assistance & Dropped Courses

If you've used tuition assistance (TA) to pay for a course, your school can bill the Navy months (or even years) after you've finished the course and the Navy will pay it without question. It seems not to matter if the authorization was (for example) for FY07 and that this is FY12: if there are funds available, the school will be paid. This could be good for you – if you actually took and passed the course.

But if you drop a course, it apparently won't matter if you cancel your TA authorization or not: if the school sends your authorization and a bill to the Navy, the Navy will re-activate the canceled authorization and pay the school! So even if you drop a course before the school's full-refund deadline and simultaneously cancel the authorization for that course, the school can still bill and get paid by the Navy. This could put you in the horrible position of having to reimburse the Navy for a course you didn't even take and then trying to get the money back from your school.

Remember: you can't use TA again if

- you haven't provided the Navy (via your ESO) with a grade report for a course paid for through TA,
- you failed a course paid for through TA and haven't reimbursed the Navy for it, or
- you're in the situation described above.

The only sure way to prevent this from happening and to avoid getting a Navy nastygram saying you owe for a course you dropped is to get the authorization back from the school or ensure the school shreds it.

Learn a Foreign Language & Help People in the Third-World

Last week I got an e-mail from the founder of what he calls "a Fairtrade online school (<http://www.glovico.org/>) where native speakers can teach their mother tongues via Skype" (an example of the social entrepreneur movement in business). "In that way," continued Tobias Lorenz, "we want promote additional income opportunities in the developing world and foster intercultural dialogue. Having started out with Spanish and French last year we are currently moving into more regional languages at the moment. This feature from BBC might give you an even better idea of our venture (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-11286290>)."

You can even get your first lesson free ("just book a lesson with the teacher of your choice after your registration"). There's also a "total satisfaction guarantee. Whenever you are not satisfied with a lesson we reimburse the money you spent."

Forwarding Servicewide Exams

- Are you going to be on leave or TAD on the date of your SWE?
- Will you be in-transit due to a PCS move on the date of your SWE?
- Are you going to be away from the unit listed on your PDE for any other reason on the date of your SWE?

If so, do the following:

- find a unit you know you'll be geographically near on your SWE date,
- contact the ESO at that unit and ask if it's OK to take your SWE there,
- assuming the ESO says "yes", ask for the unit's OPFAC,
- let your SPO know to change the "Examination Board" name and OPFAC on your PDE to the name and OPFAC of that unit where you plan to take the SWE.

PPC will automatically send your exam to the unit listed as your exam board on your PDE. But it's your responsibility to make sure you've checked everything on the PDE (including your Examination Board) **before 01 April**.

If you revise the PDE info concerning your exam site and later find out you won't be able to take your exam there after all or at the scheduled date and time, let your ESO know ASAP.

The next servicewide exams (SWEs) will be held on Tuesday, 01 May (for advancement to E-5 and E-7) and on Thursday, 03 May (for advancement to E-6, E-8, and E-9).

Substitute exams are authorized only for emergencies over which you have no control. Regular leave (even if you scheduled a Caribbean cruise six months ago) is not an emergency. A wedding – even your own – is not an emergency.

For more information on just which circumstances justify requesting a substitute exam, see Article 3.B.3. of the *Enlisted Accessions, Evaluations, and Advancements Manual*.

For more servicewide exam information, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/swe.asp>.

Student Loan Consolidation

If you entered the Coast Guard with more than one student loan and are now paying them off, you might want to consider consolidating them so you only have one payment to make each month. Don't just jump at the first loan consolidation company you see an ad for, however. First, check out the Department of Education's web site on student loan consolidation: <https://loanconsolidation.ed.gov/AppEntry/apply-online/appindex.jsp>. And **please** start by reading the "Important Message" at the top of that page, concerning "a short term consolidation opportunity" available until 30 June 2012.

Student Loan Forgiveness

Starting within the next few years, you may qualify for forgiveness of the remaining balance due on your eligible federal student loans after you have made 120 payments on loans under certain repayment plans while employed full time by certain public service employers. Only non-defaulted loans made under the William D. Ford Direct Loan ProgramSM are eligible for loan forgiveness. The Direct Loan Program includes (but is not limited to) the following types of loans:

- Federal Direct Stafford Loans (Direct Subsidized Loans)
- Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans (Direct Unsubsidized Loans)
- Federal Direct PLUS Loans (Direct PLUS Loans, for parents and graduate or professional students)
- Federal Direct Consolidation Loans (Direct Consolidation Loans)

"Public service", for purposes of this program, includes employment by any federal, state, local, or tribal government entity (including the military, public schools and colleges, public child and family services agencies, and special governmental districts).

"Since borrowers must make 120 monthly payments on their eligible federal student loans beginning after October 1, 2007 before they qualify for the loan forgiveness, the first cancellations of loan balances will not be granted until October 2017." For more information about this program, go to the Department of Education's web site at <http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/PSF.jsp>.

Scholarships

Below are descriptions of a number of scholarships open to military personnel, their dependents, or both. **Be aware, however, that these are just a few of thousands of scholarships you or your dependents may be eligible for.** They're the low-hanging fruit, the ones most often publicized and (as a result) the ones that have the most applicants. If you really want some serious money from scholarships, you'll apply to all you're eligible for – especially those not widely known. For more about scholarships (including how to find and apply for them in a systematic manner), go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/scholarships.asp>.

Fleet Reserve Association Education Foundation

The FRA Education Foundation offers many different scholarships to eligible full-time students who are U.S. citizens attending accredited colleges and universities in the United States. For more information, go to <http://www.fra.org/foundation>. The deadline for submitting applications is **15 April 2012**.

Coast Guard Chief Warrant and Warrant Officers Association

Applications are now being accepted for the Art and Eleanor Colona Scholarship Grant, sponsored by the Coast Guard Chief Warrant and Warrant Officers Associations (CWOA). Children of regular Coast Guard personnel, Reservists on active duty, and retirees may apply for the \$4,000 scholarship (to be paid in four installments of \$1,000 per year). The application deadline is **01 June 2012**. For more information, go to see ALCOAST 136/12 at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/ALCOAST136-12.pdf>.

Waldorf College

(courtesy of Mr. Marc Fagenbaum, full-time ESO at Base Miami)

To recognize the sacrifices made by the family members of military servicemembers and public safety personnel (firefighters, law enforcement officers, EMTs & dispatchers) Waldorf College in Iowa will award eight scholarships for on-line students and two for residential students in 2012 through the Hero Behind the Hero Scholarship Program.

Two scholarships (one for the military spouse or dependent and one for the firefighters/law enforcement officer spouse or dependent) will be presented on the award dates listed. Applicants not selected may continue to apply for a maximum of five scholarship award dates.

Scholarship Application Periods

Scholarship Award Dates

01 JAN 2012 – 30 APR 2012	May 2012 (residential)
01 FEB 2012 – 31 MAR 2012	April 2012 (on-line)
01 APR 2012 – 03 MAY 2012	June 2012 (on-line)
01 JUN 2012 – 31 JUL 2012	August 2012 (on-line)
01 AUG 2012 – 30 SEP 2012	October 2012 (on-line)
01 OCT 2012 – 30 NOV 2012	December 2012 (on-line)

Go to <http://www.waldorf.edu/Online/Tuition---Financing/Scholarships/Hero-Behind-the-Hero> for more information and a link to an on-line application. Or you can e-mail hero@waldorf.edu or call 877-267-2157.

Top Colleges for Veterans

Military Times Edge (published by the same company that publishes *Navy Times*) recently created a list of colleges and universities which takes into account criteria 500 student-veterans felt were the most important to them. You can find the list at <http://militarytimesedge.com/projects/best-for-veterans/best-colleges-for-veterans/2011/>.

Thinking About Taking College Courses?

If you're interested in taking college courses, but are unsure where to start or what to do first, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/starting.asp>. The seven steps provided there will help you

- understand terminology and how you progress toward a degree,
- figure out whether you need a degree to enter the field you want to work in,
- if a degree will be helpful, determine what you want to major in,
- find colleges/universities which offer degrees in your desired major,
- request degree plans from your chosen school(s),
- submit a request to the Coast Guard Institute for an education assessment and to have official transcripts of your assessment sent to colleges you've identified, and
- pick your first course.

This is the hardest part of the process. Once you've done this, it's just a matter of deciding which type of funding to use (tuition assistance, GI Bill, scholarships, loans, or a combination of these) and applying for it. Tuition assistance (TA) and GI Bill funding is easy to use and readily available. You've got to plan ahead if you want to get scholarships because applications are usually due at specific times of the year that might not coincide with dates your courses begin. And loans, while they're readily available, should be your last recourse.

Career & Education Planning Tools

Many people in the Coast Guard – military and civilians alike – are unsure of what career fields best match their personal interests and abilities. While you might be extremely competent at what you're doing in the Coast Guard, you might have skills you'd rather put to use in some other field. ESOs throughout the Coast Guard (including TraCen Cape May's) have access to many different tools you can use to assess your interests and possible ways to earn a living while pursuing those interests.

For more information, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/discover.asp> and <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/sitestest.asp>.

TraCen Cape May Testing Calendar

Tests at TraCen Cape May are administered by appointment according to the following schedule:

Tuesdays (0730): EOCTs, RATs, and AQEs*

Wednesdays (0800): Defense Language Proficiency Tests

Thursdays (0745): college tests, CLEP tests, DSSTs, SATs, ACTs

* If operations or your work schedule make it impossible for you to take an EOCT, RAT, or AQE on a Tuesday morning, you can take it on a Thursday morning.

This schedule leaves most of the day on Tuesdays, as well as all day on Mondays and Fridays available for other occasional tests, counseling, and other face-to-face interactions with you. When no one is taking a language test, the doors to the Education Center are open on Wednesdays, as well.

If you call and I don't answer the phone, I'm usually administering a test (and, because of the noise, can't talk on the phone) or otherwise busy with someone in the office. E-mail is the best way to get in touch with me at andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil.

Leaving the Coast Guard?

If you're leaving the Coast Guard within the next twelve months (whether through retirement, resignation, or expiration of your enlistment), you should be making plans for what you'll be doing after you take off your uniform for the last time. Check out the information on my web site related to career transition (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/careertrans.asp>).

Also, stop by the Education Center to check out the (small) supply of booklets related to rejoining the civilian work force. Here are the topics of the booklets:

- Jobs With a Future
- How to Develop Job Resources
- The Resume
- The Cover Letter: A Resume Should Never Stand Alone
- The Mature Resume: The Resume with Experience
- The Follow-up Letter

- The Interview
- How to Choose a Career: A Guide to Self-Assessment
- Civilian Again
- Leaving the Service ... and Beginning Your Next Career
- Military to Civilian: Your Resume and Job Hunt
- Effective Goal Setting: How to Reach the Goals You Set for Yourself

You should also request an education assessment from the Coast Guard Institute (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/collegefaq.asp>) to get a transcript of college credit you've acquired through your service in the Coast Guard. ***If you don't request an assessment before you leave active duty, you can't get one (or a transcript) later.***

If you're not planning to go to school right away, you'll probably need to find work. Here are two excellent resources for finding a job – or even a second career. Also, Military.com has a very good series of web pages devoted to veterans (<http://www.military.com/Careers/Home>).

And don't discount the idea of working in the public sector. Not only are there thousands of jobs in the federal government, identical to private-sector jobs in which you can put your skills, knowledge, and experience to use while maintaining job security unavailable in the private sector. There are a number of web sites at which you can find information useful to military personnel transitioning to civilian life and veterans.

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management has a veterans' employment web site called "Feds Hire Vets" (<http://www.fedshirevets.gov/>). Its purpose is to implement the federal government's strategy for recruiting and employing military veterans. It's intended to be the preeminent source for federal employment information for veterans, transitioning service members, and their families. And the main federal government jobs web site is at <http://www.fedjobs.gov/>.

And (courtesy of Brion Newman, full-time ESO at Base Seattle) the state of Maryland also has a similar site called the Military to Federal Jobs Crosswalk (Mil2FedJobs, <http://www.mil2fedjobs.com/>) to help you "translate military occupations to federal jobs".

Finally, don't overlook government jobs entities at other levels – state, county, municipality, school district, port district, etc. – which provide benefits similar to those available through the federal government.

ACCC's Library Open for Studying

One more thing: the new campus's classrooms, labs, and library are all state-of-the-art. Even if you're not ready to register for classes right away, you should take the opportunity to visit the campus and look around. The Director of Academic and Student Services has extended a personal invitation to anyone who'd like to use the library to study, for research, or for pleasure reading. It's very quiet, well-lit, and has very comfortable furniture.

Education Center Library

The TraCen Education Center has a binder full of SparkCharts Quick Reference Guides on almost 40 subjects. You're welcome to use these in the Education Center or make copies to take with you. You can check out the subjects available at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/books.asp#spark>.

In addition to SparkCharts, the Education Center also has a library of books on leadership, management, Coast Guard history, and other topics. Also in the library are the latest Professional Qualification Guides (PQGs) and Enlisted Performance Qualifications (EPQs) for each rating.

The Education Center also has dozens of brochures and books on college, financial aid, the officer program application process, and other things. If there are multiple copies, you're welcome to take one.