

TraCen Cape May Education Update #389

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Congratulations!!

The following personnel in the Cape May area passed Coast Guard Institute end-of-course, AQEs, and other tests since the last update:

Name	Work Site	Test
BM2 Lyle Mattei	TraCen (Recruit training)	E-PME-6
HS3 Christian Ford	HSWL FO	HS2
ME2 Shawn Springer	Vessel Boarding & Security Team	ME1
SN Ashby Cappelmann*	TraCen (FE)	E-PME-4

* First attempt

Well done, all of you!!!

And if you've just finished a degree program or have any other noteworthy academic achievement to brag about, please let me know so I can recognize you for it.

Question of the Week – What E-PME stuff do I have to do to be eligible for the E-5 servicewide?

Q: I'm preparing for the November E-5 servicewide and am confused about what E-PME stuff I need to do.

A: Among many other things, to be eligible to take a servicewide exam (SWE), you must complete all E-PME requirements for the next higher pay grade. For the even pay grades (E-4, E-6, and E-8) you have to complete the E-PME Performance Requirements for the E-4, E-6, or E-8 *and* pass an Advancement Qualification Exam (AQE) covering the requirements for your current and the next higher pay grade, as follows:

E-PME-4 AQE covers E-3 & E-4 Performance Requirements

E-PME-6 AQE covers E-5 & E-6 Performance Requirements

E-PME-8 AQE covers E-7 & E-8 Performance Requirements.

Before you'll be allowed to take the AQE, you'll have to show your ESO that the statement in the REMARKS section on page 2 of the Performance Requirements has been filled out and signed by your supervisor.

For the odd pay grades (E-5, E-7, and E-9) you only have to complete the E-PME Performance Requirements – there's no test. Completion of the Performance Requirements has to be verified by your command. Just as with the even pay grades, your supervisor fills out the statement in the REMARKS section on page 2 attesting to the fact you've completed all the Performance Requirements. But someone in your command (at larger units, usually in the SPO or admin office) must actually see that your supervisor signed that statement.

Unfortunately, there is no guidance as to who, specifically, at your command is to verify the statement has been completed. (On an 87, for example, your supervisor would likely sign the statement saying you're eligible, and your OIC would verify that your supervisor signed it.) But it must be done. Don't get disqualified from taking a SWE just because you forgot to get your command's verification. As with everything else in the advancement process, it's your responsibility to make sure all eligibility requirements have been completed – and verified as completed – by the relevant SWE deadline (01FEB for the May SWE; 01JUL for the October SWE; 01AUG for the November SWE).

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 three pages: ***Helmets to Hardhats*** (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/h2h.asp>).

Grammar & Usage Corner

A number of people have asked that I expand my weekly "Frequently-Confused/Misused Words" entry to cover grammar and usage questions other than confused/misused words as well. This week, **lay** and **lie**. (These definitions are from *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*.)

First, note that what follows is only about the present tense of both words. For the past tense and more on the present tense, go to <http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/lay-versus-lie.aspx>.

Lay is a verb meaning to put or set down. It's also what's called a transitive verb, which means it requires a direct object. Huh? This simply means there's got to be something that the word "lay" applies to. You lay a book on the desk or hens lay eggs (hence the memory device my grandmother taught me, "Only hens lay"). If you're not physically setting or putting something down, don't use *lay*. For example, "I'm going to lay down" is incorrect usage.

Lie (not the untruth) is an intransitive verb; i.e., there's nothing being acted on. The word means to recline, to be or stay at rest in a horizontal position. For example, someone telling you to "Lie down and rest" would be using the word correctly. "Lay down and rest" is incorrect.

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.

Marketing Yourself for a Second Career

Between 0900 and 1130 on **Wednesday, 08 August 2012**, a lecture/Q&A session on making the transition from the Coast Guard to the civilian work force will be held in the Constantine classroom of the MCPOCG building. If you plan to leave the Coast Guard in the next five years, you and your spouse are strongly encouraged to attend. Topics covered will include:

- Competition in the job hunt
- Civilian employers' perceptions about military personnel
- Planning your job search
- Résumés, cover letters, broadcast letters, etc.
- How employers read your résumé
- Networking & the hidden job market
- Preparing for and conducting a successful interview
- Salary negotiations and benefits

To sign up, contact Mr. Gary Adams at ronald.g.adams@uscg.mil or 202-372-4089.

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>.

Council of College and Military Educators

(courtesy of MSTCS Lumpkin at Sector Delaware Bay, from military.com)

"Each year the Council of College and Military Educators offers fifteen \$1000 scholarships for Servicemembers, Military Spouses, and Veterans who are working towards the completion of higher education degrees. The 2013-14 CCME Scholarship Applications must be submitted online at <http://ccmeonline.org/scholarship>. This year's online application will be available July 16 must be completed by the October 1, 2012 scholarship application deadline.

Read the Military Advantage Blog (<http://militaryadvantage.military.com/2012/07/scholarship-update-ccme-2013/>) for more details.”

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

01 AUG 2012 – 30 SEP 2012
01 OCT 2012 – 30 NOV 2012

Scholarship Award Dates

October 2012 (on-line)
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.

Helmets to Hardhats

If you're leaving the Coast Guard and are interested in working in construction and construction-related career fields, you should check out Helmets to Hardhats (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/h2h.asp>). To quote the Helmets to Hardhats web site,

Making a successful transition from the military into the civilian workforce can be difficult. Transitioning military veterans face the same challenges as any other job hunter – getting their résumé to the right people, learning how to sell themselves, tracking down promising leads, following-up with employers, headhunters, job placement agencies... etc. Not many people are comfortable with this process and veterans have the added stress of trying to translate the skills they learned in the military into language that civilian employers can understand. The process can feel overwhelming, especially if it seems like meaningful help is unavailable.

Helmets to Hardhats (H2H) was formed for this reason and is dedicated to helping National Guard, Reserve, retired and transitioning active-duty military members connect to quality career and training opportunities in one of America's most challenging and rewarding industries – the construction industry.

Latest Issue of G.I. Jobs Magazine

Drop by the Education Center to pick up the latest issue of G.I. Jobs magazine. In it are sections on

- personal finances,
- the transition from a military to a civilian career,

- stories about how military personnel have landed on their feet in new civilian careers,
- a feature story profiling a specific career field,
- a short profile of a private sector career field,
- items on applying for federal government jobs,
- items about entrepreneurship,
- education-related items, and
- items on how to get hired.

And, as is to be expected, there are lots of ads – but these are mostly ads to let readers know about job opportunities.

New Education Financial Aid Reference Book

The Education Center just received the latest edition of *Financial Aid for Veterans, Military Personnel, and Their Families*. The book contains information on scholarships, fellowships, and grants-in-aid available only to military personnel, veterans, and their families. Drop by to look it over, or (if you want it) you can have the edition this one replaces.

Caveat: Please don't limit your search for these types of aid to only those listed in this book. You and your dependents are also eligible for awards open to the population at large. And keep in mind that when a book like this is published, most military people gravitate toward its listings, which makes competition for those awards heavier.

Low value and obscure awards are more likely to be overlooked by most people which makes competition for them lighter. The bottom line is: don't limit yourself in your search for scholarships – check out (and apply for) *any* you're eligible for. For more info on scholarships in general, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/scholarships.asp>.

New YN1 EOCT

ALCOAST 287/12 (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/ALCOAST287-12.pdf>) announced that to be eligible for the May and October 2013 SWEs, YN2s must have passed the latest YN1 EOCT before 01 February 2013. This is true even if you passed the previous YN1 EOCT.

New MK2 Course

ALCOAST 305/12 (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/ALCOAST305-12.pdf>) announced that a new MK2 course (course number 0232, edition 6) is now available. You can order a hard copy from the Coast Guard Institute (via your ESO) or download it from the CGPortal (<https://elearning.uscg.mil>), where you'll also find the current MK EPQs. You must complete the latest EPQs before you can take the MK2 EOCT.

The previous version of the course (0232/5) will become obsolete and the tests for that course will not be scored after 01AUG2012. Until then, passing either 0232/5 or 0232/6 EOCT will qualify you for the November 2012 SWE.

FY13 Officer Program Submission Deadlines

Tentative dates for submitting applications for officer programs have been posted on the Coast Guard Recruiting Command's (CGRC's) web site (<http://www.gocoastguard.com/find-your-career/officer-opportunities/programs/program-forms-and-deadlines>). Below is a tabular version of what's on CGRC's web site.

	Officer Program	Recruiting Office Deadline	CGRC Deadline	Selection Board Meeting Date
01-13	DCA, WIFI, DCL, MARGRAD	09 OCT 2012	05 NOV 2012	03 DEC 2012
02-13	OCS-T	14 NOV 2012	05 DEC 2012	14 JAN 2013
03-13	SRDC, PA	29 OCT 2012	10 DEC 2012	04 FEB 2013
04-13	CSPI	14 JAN 2013	19 FEB 2013	18 MAR 2013
05-13	DCE, DCIO, DCL, DCSS, MARGRAD, DCPA	25 FEB 2013	25 MAR 2013	15 APR 2013
06-13	OCS-R	04 MAR 2013	01 APR 2013	13 MAY 2013

I didn't list an "ESO Deadline" for each program because there's no need for applicants to be under additional time pressure. I don't care when you get your application to me as long as I can get it to the Recruiting Office by its deadline. Plan accordingly.

New Grad School Search Engine

PhDs.org (<http://graduate-school.phds.org/>) is a new web site which allows you to use specific criteria to search for graduate programs (master's and doctoral) in dozens of fields. It also provides information about individual programs (including costs), rankings, and resources related to getting into and succeeding in grad school, life as a graduate student, finding work after receiving your graduate degree, a Scientists' Career Guide, and dozens of other resources listed under the heading "The Big Picture". Check it out!

Did the Institute Receive My Grade Report?

Many TA users aren't aware that they're responsible for making sure the Navy (via the Coast Guard Institute via their ESO) has a grade report for each course TA paid for.

Your school may say it's going to send it to the Navy, but oftentimes the grade report doesn't get into the right person's hands or doesn't get sent at all. In such cases, the student thinks all's well when it's not. Remember, it's **your** responsibility to provide grade reports to your ESO (who sends them to the Institute which inputs them into the Navy's computer). If your grade reports don't get entered into the Navy's computer, the amount TA paid for your course could be deducted from your pay.

If you've sent a grade report to your ESO, you can check to see if it actually got into the Navy's computer by logging into eTA (the same program you use to apply for TA) and going to the "My History" page. Blank spaces in the "Grd" column indicate courses for which no grades have been entered into the computer. That could mean your ESO didn't forward your grade report to the Institute or someone at the Institute didn't put it into the computer. Either way, you're on the hook for the TA spent on the course until a grade report is recorded.

It's a good idea to check this page no more than a week after you send your grade report to your ESO, just to ensure the grade report gets entered in a timely manner.

How to Become a SuperStar Student

TraCen Cape May just acquired the DVD course, "How to Become a SuperStar Student". The course includes 18 half-hour lectures. Here's a bit about it the course.

"The number one problem facing many high-school students: They haven't been taught how to learn. Because our current educational system focuses on test results, on making sure students memorize the facts and material needed to pass standardized tests, few students are deliberately taught about learning — about developing the particular mind-set and using the specific skills that can help them graduate with exemplary grades and an exemplary mind.

"In fact, learning is a skill that your student can easily make a part of his or her everyday life and use as a powerful tool for success, both inside and outside the classroom. All it takes is a mastery of research-proven strategies, including

- recognizing one's learning style, and tapping into its specific strengths;
- taking notes effectively to avoid missing out on what's being covered in class;
- knowing how to organize and prioritize homework and class projects;
- solving problems with creativity and critical thinking; and
- approaching tests with focus, thorough preparation, and confidence.

"Professor Michael Geisen, the 2008 National Teacher of the Year, has spent his teaching career showing thousands of students these and other skills. And with "How to Become a SuperStar Student" he can give you the same vital skills that will carry you through high school, college, and well into the challenges of adult life. This highly engaging 18-lecture course is a commonsense guide to learning, one that addresses the areas that students have the most difficulty with—and that parents show the most concern about. Packed with advice, tips, tricks, and resources, this masterfully updated version of our highly popular study guide course has the power to transform your student's education into a world-class learning experience."

To see if this course might be for you, check out

http://www.thegreatcourses.com/tgc/courses/course_detail.aspx?cid=1050. If you decide it is, individuals and groups are welcome to use it in the Education Center.

The Secrets of Mental Math

TraCen Cape May also acquired the DVD course, "The Secrets of Mental Math" to help you prepare to re-take the AR or MK parts of the ASVAB or to learn short-cuts that will help you in college courses or in everyday life. The course includes 12 half-hour lectures. Here's a bit about it the course.

"One key to improving and expanding your math potential lies in the powerful ability to perform mental math calculations. Solving basic math problems in your head is a gateway to success in understanding and mastering higher mathematical fields such as algebra, statistics, and calculus. It's a skill that offers other lifelong benefits, including

- giving you a competitive edge in school or at work;
- keeping your mind active and sharp at any age;
- improving your performance on standardized tests; and

- learning to solve problems by using a variety of methods.

“Mental mathematics also is valuable when you’re shopping for groceries or figuring out how much to tip at a restaurant. Believe it or not, learning how to do mental math can be fun. “The Secrets of Mental Math” is Professor Arthur T. Benjamin’s exciting 12-lecture course which guides you through all the essential skills, tips, and tricks for improving and enhancing your ability to solve a range of mathematical problems right in your head.”

Read more on this course at http://www.thegreatcourses.com/tgc/courses/course_detail.aspx?cid=1406. If you decide it’s up your alley, individuals and groups are welcome to use it in the Education Center.

What Happens After I Submit a TA Request?

Many first-time users of tuition assistance (TA) don’t know what to do after they’ve submitted a request for TA. First, after receiving notification that your request has been approved, download it and review it carefully to make sure there are no errors.

If there aren’t you provide the authorization to your school (the cashier, bursar, or whomever the official is who takes your money) after putting your SSN on it and signing it.

After you finish the course, you have to provide a grade report to your ESO for every course listed on the authorization. Do this as soon as your grade report becomes available.

For more detailed information about what to expect after submitting your TA request and about your responsibilities while taking a TA-funded course and afterward, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/ta-b.asp>.

Continuing Education Courses

Cape May County Technical School District, at the Technical Center for Continuing Education (TCCE at exit 11 on the Garden State Parkway), offers dozens of courses in topics as varied as:

- NJ licensing (e.g., Black Seal, dental radiology, wastewater, cosmetology, etc.)
- General interest technical (e.g., auto repair, cabinetmaking, woodturning, etc.)
- Job/business technical (e.g., HVAC, art metal work, electrical house wiring, masonry, upholstery, welding, etc.)
- Ballroom dancing
- Special training (e.g., defensive driving, digital photography, dog obedience, genealogy, financial education, etc.)
- Computer applications
- Cooking/baking
- Languages
- Health and fitness
- Office, business, and careers

These courses are all extremely reasonably priced, with classes generally meeting in the evenings.

In addition, the TCCE has on-going **free** GED preparation courses and testing, adult basic education courses, ESL courses, citizenship courses, and computer literacy courses running continuously throughout the year.

For more information, drop by the Education Center for the latest course booklet or go to Cape May Tech's web site at <http://www.capemaytech.com/adult-education/evening-continuing-education.html>.

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.

Don't Postpone College Because You're at an Operational Unit

Have you thought about taking a college course, but rejected the idea because you're concerned ops may get in the way of completing it? If so, check out self-paced college courses (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/schools.asp#self-paced>).

They have the benefit of being quicker to complete than semester- or quarter-based college courses (most schools allow you to complete them in as few as six weeks) while they're structured so you learn the material in digestible chunks rather than being left completely on your own.

These courses have the added benefit of not being tied to a traditional term: you can start at any time. They also give you a huge amount of flexibility: you can take almost as long as you want to complete the course (up to 12 months in most cases) and there are no set dates for lessons or tests. And some schools offer whole degree programs this way.

Check out some of the many reputable schools which offer self-paced (or independent study) courses at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/schools.asp#self-paced>.

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 Schedule

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

Mondays (0745): EOCTs, RATs, and AQEs

Tuesdays (0745): EOCTs, RATs, and AQEs

Wednesdays (0800): Defense Language Proficiency Tests

Thursdays (0745): EOCTs, RATs, and AQEs; college tests, DSSTs, SATs, ACTs

Fridays (0745): EOCTs, RATs, and AQEs

College placement, AFCT, and all other tests will be scheduled on a case-by-case basis.

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 I'm 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.

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.