

## TraCen Cape May Education Update #401

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### Question of the Week – How do I prepare to be a teacher when I leave the Coast Guard?

**Q:** I want to teach 7<sup>th</sup> grade when I leave the Coast Guard and want to find out how to get an education degree. Where do I start?

**A:** It's admirable that you want to teach our children. Is there a specific subject you're most interested in teaching? If so, are you aware you don't necessarily have to have a degree in education to teach?

In most states you can have a bachelor's degree in some other major and still teach. And many would rather new teachers have degrees in a subject for which there's a shortage of teachers than an education degree. For example, math and science majors are sought to teach those subjects and are sometimes eligible for monetary incentives to do so. Check out the information throughout the Teachers Count web site (start at <http://www.teacherscount.org/wannateach/faq.shtml#5>).

Also, the Troops to Teachers program provides counseling and referral services to military personnel interested in beginning a second career in public education as a teacher – even if you're not planning to participate in the program. And the DANTES Troops to Teachers office will help you identify teacher certification requirements, programs leading to certification, and employment opportunities. The main web site ([http://www.dantes.doded.mil/Sub%20Pages/TTT/TTT\\_Main.html](http://www.dantes.doded.mil/Sub%20Pages/TTT/TTT_Main.html)) has all kinds of information about the program, including a new on-line way to determine if you're eligible to participate in Troops to Teachers: [http://www.dantes.doded.mil/Dantes\\_web/troopstoteachers/eligibility.asp](http://www.dantes.doded.mil/Dantes_web/troopstoteachers/eligibility.asp).

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](mailto: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: **USMAP** (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/usmap.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, **principal** and **principle**. (These definitions are taken from *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*.)

The word *principal* can be used either as an adjective or as a noun. As an adjective, it means most important, consequential, or influential; chief ("The principal reason for going was to see the president").

As a noun it can mean a person who has controlling authority or is in a leading position such as the chief executive officer of an educational institution such as a high school ("We all thought the school principal was a jerk"), one who employs another to act for her subject to her general control and instruction ("Although she had lots of employees, she was the principal in the business"), the chief or an actual participant in a crime ("All four burglars were tried as principals"), the person primarily or ultimately liable on a legal obligation ("John Smith co-signed his daughter's car loan, but Amanda was the principal"), or a leading performer ("In the new production of *Porgy and Bess*, Audra McDonald was a principal, as Bess").

It can also mean a matter or thing of primary importance, such as a capital sum placed at interest, due as a debt, or used as a fund ("The principal owed on the loan was \$150,000") or the corpus of an estate, bequest, etc.

*Principle* is only a noun meaning a comprehensive and fundamental law, doctrine, or assumption ("Legal reasoning at its best always stems from first principles"), a rule or code of conduct ("The principles underlying the Constitution were products of the Enlightenment"), the laws or facts of nature underlying the working of an artificial device ("Friction is a principle that must be taken into account when creating any mechanical device"), an underlying faculty or endowment ("Some of the principles of human nature are greed and curiosity").

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](mailto:andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil).

## Common Latin Phrases Everyone Should Know

**Bona fide:** While it's literal translation means "good faith" this term has a few different shades of meaning in modern language. In legal terms, it is used to represent something that is presented without deception or fraud, or literally in good faith, honest, sincere and lawful. It is more commonly used to mean something that's the real deal or truly authentic.

From: <http://oedb.org/library/beginning-online-learning/50-common-latin-phrases-every-college-student-should-know>

## Articles of Interest

During the past week, I came across the following articles you may find interesting, useful, or both.

- "Beyond the Online Job Boards: More Ways to Catch Recruiters' Eyes" (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/search045.pdf>)

- “Going for Two: Getting an Associate Degree Can Pay Off Big” (<http://www.militarytimesedge.com/education/degree-programs/edge-getting-an-associate-degree-can-pay-off-big-091912w/>)

## Scholarship Deadline Next Friday

I just found out that the National Naval Officers Association has a scholarship for college juniors and seniors who are pursuing degrees in science, technology, engineering, or math ([http://nnoa.memberclicks.net/assets/documents/Scholarship/appendix\\_two\\_stem\\_scholarship.pdf](http://nnoa.memberclicks.net/assets/documents/Scholarship/appendix_two_stem_scholarship.pdf)). **The deadline is 09 November 2012.**

For complete details and contact information for your questions, go to [http://nnoa.memberclicks.net/assets/documents/Scholarship/nnoa\\_stem\\_scholarship2012.doc](http://nnoa.memberclicks.net/assets/documents/Scholarship/nnoa_stem_scholarship2012.doc).

## Other Scholarship Sources

**The scholarships described here are just a few of thousands 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>.

### ScholarshipAmerica

Among other things, the web site ScholarshipAmerica ([http://scholarshipamerica.org/open\\_scholarships.php](http://scholarshipamerica.org/open_scholarships.php)) has descriptions of and links to not-so-widely-known scholarships. (The less well-known they are, the more likely you are to be successful in getting them.) The descriptions include opening and closing dates.

### 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 Period**

01 OCT 2012 – 30 NOV 2012

#### **Scholarship Award Dates**

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](mailto:hero@waldorf.edu) or call 877-267-2157.

## Junior Officers, Listen Up!

Many junior officers are unaware of the procedures for ensuring promotion boards and detailers know about higher education they’ve completed and their extracurricular career development activities. You should fill out form CG-4082

(<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/CG4082.pdf>) and e-mail it (with scanned copies – front and back – of your official transcript or a certified copy of it) to the appropriate person at the Personnel Service Center Military Records Branch (PSC-psd-mr, formerly known as adm-3) (<http://www.uscg.mil/psc/adm/adm3/contact.asp>).

If you want an advanced degree entered into DirectAccess, fill out form PPC-2030 (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/PPC2030.pdf>), attach copies of your diploma and the corresponding transcript, and take it to your SPO or other YN who enters data into DirectAccess.

Your SPO or YN can also enter Graduate Record Exam (GRE), Law School Admission Test (LSAT), and other standardized test scores into DirectAccess. To send such scores directly to PSC-psd-mr – which is highly recommended – follow the instructions outlined on page 19 of the *Officer Postgraduate and Advanced Education Application Process Guide* ([http://www.uscg.mil/opm/Opm1/Opm1docs/AY13\\_PG-AdvEd\\_Process\\_Guide\\_FINAL%205-3-2012.pdf](http://www.uscg.mil/opm/Opm1/Opm1docs/AY13_PG-AdvEd_Process_Guide_FINAL%205-3-2012.pdf)).

### In-State Tuition Rules for Dependents & Military Personnel

All public higher education institutions which receive funding under the Higher Education Act are required to charge eligible personnel in-state tuition.

Military personnel who have been on active duty for 30 or more days, along with their dependent spouses and children, became eligible on 01 July 2009 to receive in-state tuition at public colleges and universities in the state where they reside or are permanently stationed. Those eligible will continue to pay the in-state tuition rate as long as they remain continuously enrolled at the institution even if the sponsoring servicemember is reassigned outside the state.

### Cape May & Atlantic County Training & Employment Services

If anyone in your family is looking for work or to get training for a job, check out the Atlantic Cape May One-Stop Center on-line (<http://www.learntrainwork.com/main/training.asp>). Free job training may be available for many different types of work, including:

- Automobile Mechanic
- Cardiovascular Technician
- Casino Card Dealer
- Certified Nurse's Aide
- Medical Assisting
- Massage Therapy
- Office Technology Specialist
- Phlebotomy
- Surgical Technician

### Help Yourself with a SOC Agreement

If you're taking courses from a school that's part of the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) consortium, do yourself a favor and get a SOC agreement as soon as you've completed the number of credits your school requires for you to complete its residency requirement. Do so even if you're not in a SOCCOAST program.

Why? Because a SOC agreement (a degree plan and contract with your school) locks in the courses you have to pass to get your degree.

Why is this an issue? Unfortunately, colleges sometimes will change degree requirements while you're working on your degree. (Essentially, they move the goalposts.) If you have a SOC agreement with your school, the school has to honor it – even if the school changes the requirements for completing the degree program you're pursuing.

To find out if your school's a SOC school, go to SOC's web site ([http://www.soc.aascu.org/pubfiles/socmisc/SOC\\_Cnsrtm\\_Schools\\_2012-07.pdf](http://www.soc.aascu.org/pubfiles/socmisc/SOC_Cnsrtm_Schools_2012-07.pdf)).

### Five Surprising \$100K Jobs That Don't Require a Degree

Practically everyone you talk with about your future tells you, "Get a degree!!" But while data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that people with degrees generally face a reduced prospect of unemployment and have a higher earning potential ([http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep\\_chart\\_001.htm](http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_chart_001.htm) and <http://www.focus.com/images/view/8740/>), that's not the case for everyone.

A recent article on Monster.com highlights this fact and lists five high-paying careers available to people who don't have college degrees (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/jobmisc029.doc>).

### 8 Ways to Boost Your ACT and SAT Scores

This article, on the blog "The College Solution" (<http://www.thecollegesolution.com/8-ways-to-boost-your-act-and-sat-scores>), actually provides five tips to help you prepare to take an ACT or SAT and three about what to do with the scores you receive. The on-line preparation resources alone make the article worth reading, but there's sound advice throughout the short article.

### Do You Have Student Loans to Repay?

The new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) just published a report about repayment of student loans by military personnel (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/CFPB-LoanRept.pdf>). Among other things, it reported that "Many servicemembers are adopting less favorable repayment plans, which may lead to thousands of dollars in excess debt" and describes the many options military personnel have for repaying education loans.

The report also contains a link to a new Student Debt Repayment Assistant (<http://www.consumerfinance.gov/students/repay/>).

### Certification & Licensing

If you plan to continue working in the field represented by your rating, after you leave the Coast Guard, and don't plan to get a college degree right away, you should seriously consider getting a certification or license in your chosen field beforehand.

For you, it . . .

- bridges the gap between your educational experience and real-world work requirements,
- verifies your understanding of fundamental software engineering principles,
- shortens your training cycle and quickly increases your contribution,
- demonstrates your commitment to expanding your knowledge and increasing responsibilities and level of professionalism,
- confirms your proficiency of established software development practices, and
- sets you apart from others via a credential developed by, and for, software engineering professionals.

For employers, it . . .

- reduces the new-hire training cycle,
- protects the organization's investment in a competent and proficient workforce,

- standardizes software development practices, and
- provides independent assurance that employees can perform on real-world projects.

You can take tests for certificates and licenses in hundreds of career fields, a sampling of which you can see at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/cert.asp#tests>. The cost of most of these tests is reasonable, but you can get reimbursed (up to \$2,000 per test) from your GI Bill benefits if you don't want to absorb the cost yourself (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/cert.asp#gibill>).

Another way to demonstrate to future employers your ability to do well in a given job is via ACT's National Career Readiness Certificates (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/cert.asp#ACT>). More and more employers are using these certificates to determine which applicants are the best qualified for their jobs.

## USMAP

USMAP (United Services Military Apprenticeship Program, <https://usmap.cnet.navy.mil/usmapss/static/usmap.jsp>), is a program through which active duty enlisted personnel can earn certification for skills learned on-the-job and through related technical instruction.

You can complete apprenticeships in 125 trades through USMAP by documenting work experience you acquire on the job, while performing your regular military duties. No after-hours work is required.

The only extra work you have to do is keep track of hours spent in each category of work, fill out your record sheets, and once a quarter send a report of your accumulated hours to USMAP to receive credit for them.

"USMAP enhances your job skills and shows your motivation for more challenging military assignments." Once you've completed the required work hours in each of the skills listed for the trade, your record will be verified then submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor from which you'll receive a certification that you've completed the specified apprenticeship program. This will be "a definite advantage in getting better civilian jobs since employers know the value of apprenticeships."

For more information about USMAP, go to <https://usmap.cnet.navy.mil/usmapss/static/usmap.jsp>.

## Trying to Figure Out Your Future?

A lot of people drop into the Education Center to tell me "I want to take on-line classes" without any idea what courses they want to take or what they want to do with the courses they do take. While I could respond with "Pick a course and we'll set you up with TA", any ESO would be doing you a disservice if that was her/his response.

Why? First, every college and university in the country decides for itself whether to accept credits from any other source. So if you just blindly start taking courses without knowing where you want to get your degree or what you want to major in, you may find that the school you start with doesn't offer your desired degree or major. Worse, you may also find that when you try to transfer the credits you earned the school that you want to get your degree from won't accept them.

Also, you may not need a degree to accomplish what you want in life. Do you want to open your own car repair shop, picture framing business, or beauty shop? You probably don't need a degree to do so. That's not to say you don't need specific education (and training), but you can often get that for free or without taking all the courses needed to get a degree.

So before jumping into college courses, work backward from your ultimate goal. Start by asking yourself this question "Do I need a degree to \_\_\_\_\_?"

To answer the question, call the HR department of companies (or government agencies) which hire people who do what you want to do. (Make sure you make it clear you're not looking for a job, but just information.) Or, if you want to work for yourself, drop by some businesses which do what you want to do and ask the owners.

In either case, ask them: do I need a degree to \_\_\_\_\_? If they say "Yes", ask what you should major in, whether you need an associate's, bachelor's, or master's degree, and what schools you should look at to get the required degree in the required major. If the answer is "No", ask what kind of training, education, and/or experience you need.

A really good source of ideas and information is the Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (<http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm>). It's a gold mine of information about every career field imaginable including what prospects for finding work are for each field, what training/education you need to get into it, etc. Another is "G.I. Jobs" magazine (<http://gijobs.com>) which – every month – highlights career fields that do and don't require degrees.

The bottom line is that you shouldn't just start taking courses – even general education courses – unless you know whether you'll be able to use them to complete your chosen degree and whether you even need to get a degree.

## Learning Another Language & Foreign Language Testing

There are a number of software applications that help you learn a foreign language. "Tell Me More" ([http://us.tellmemore.com/free\\_demo](http://us.tellmemore.com/free_demo)) and "Rosetta Stone" (<http://www.rosettastone.com/>, which everyone's seen on TV) are but two of these.

But don't go out and buy one just because everyone's talking about it. Before you order the software, do some research, including <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/LanguageLearning.pdf>.

- **Check the price.** The only direct Coast Guard-related funding available to reimburse you language software you buy on your own is the Coast Guard Foundation grant – which is only available to regular Coast Guard enlisted personnel and Reserve enlistees on active duty (i.e., not drilling Reservists or officers).
- **Ask around; see if you can find others who have it.** Find out if it helped them learn what they need to know to talk about Coast Guard-related matters (e.g., law enforcement) in the target language. Unless you just want to learn another language for fun, if the software doesn't help you learn what you need to learn it's probably not worth buying.
- **Foreign Language Proficiency Pay (FLPP).** If you want to earn FLPP as one of your unit's designated interpreters, it's highly unlikely a commercially-available language course will give you the proficiency needed to get the necessary rating on the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT, see <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/dlpt.asp>). And keep in mind that even if it does, your unit has to have designated interpreter billets *and* you have to be formally assigned to one of those billets. (Most operational units have only two or three interpreter billets.)

If you really need to know a second language for work, the Coast Guard will probably pay for you to learn it. But a method other than software may be more effective. That is, if all you can do after months of using a computer program is make small talk that helps you locate a good restaurant, it's probably not worthwhile for Coast Guard purposes.

Check around to see if there are any intensive language training courses available in your area through a college/university, a commercial language school, or a government agency. For example, now that the Coast Guard and the Customs and Border Protection agency work for the same cabinet secretary, you may find that you can get into a CBP language training program that either the Department or Coast Guard will pay for.

And, of course, you can always take college courses in the target language. Tuition assistance will pay for them and you'll also earn college credit from them.

You can also find loads of (mostly) free resources for learning and/or practicing foreign languages at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/languages.asp>.

## CLEP's Forgotten Cousin

In addition to CLEP (the College Level Examination Program) tests, which most people have heard about, there are also DSSTs. Like CLEP tests, DSSTs are essentially final exams for college courses. They earn you 3 credits, which means that unlike the five most popular CLEP tests (which earn you 6 credits each), there's less material covered in each of DSST. And, unlike CLEP tests (which are now only available in a computer-based format), you can take paper-based DSSTs through many ESOs.

For a complete list of DSSTs that are available, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/dsst.asp>. A number of these tests cover subjects you've mastered during your Coast Guard service, either on-the-job or in training you've received. You may be able to pass the tests below with very little preparation, depending on your rate.

- Introduction to Computing
- Principles of Finance
- Principles of Financial Accounting
- Management Information Systems
- Organizational Behavior
- Personal Finance
- Human Resource Management
- Principles of Supervision
- Ethics in America
- Fundamentals of Counseling
- Drug & Alcohol Abuse
- Here's to Your Health
- Principles of Public Speaking
- Technical Writing
- Criminal Justice
- Introduction to Law Enforcement

The first time you take a DSST (like a CLEP test), it's free. If you need to re-take it, you have to pay for it. The waiting period between your tests is 90 days.

Keep in mind that these are tests – not courses. The links to each exam you'll find at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/dsst.asp> take you to that exam's short fact sheet which outlines the topics covered on the test, provides suggested references to study to prepare for the test, and a number of sample questions. But, on the whole, you have to find study materials that will work for you and study without a curriculum or instructor.

## Is Your Student Loan Interest Rate Too High?

If you're not eligible for a student loan forgiveness program or find that even after consolidating your student loans the interest rate is still too high, be aware that the Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act requires your lender to reduce to 6% the interest rate on any student loan you incurred after 14 August 2008 and before you entered the military, for as long as you remain in uniform. That is, if you have a student loan with an interest rate higher than 6%, you can get it reduced to 6% retroactive to the date you entered the military or 14 August 2008, whichever was later.

For more information, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/loans.asp#max>.

## Software Home Use Programs

Anyone who has a valid Coast Guard e-mail address (uscg.mil) is eligible to participate in home/personal use programs from Microsoft, Adobe, and McAfee. To quote ALCOAST 437/12, "Software purchased through the home use programs may be used for as long as the purchaser remains employed or associated with the Coast Guard and maintains a uscg.mil email account. Upon termination of Coast Guard employment or association, the home use software must be removed from your computer. Software purchased under the Adobe personal use program does not have to be removed from your computer upon termination of Coast Guard employment or association."

See ALCOAST 437/12 for details.

## Is Distance Learning for You?

If you're trying to decide between taking courses in a classroom or via distance learning (aka distance education), you owe it to yourself to use one or more of the on-line assessment tools available from DANTES and various colleges (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/distance.asp#01>). Spending some time with these tools could save you time and a lot of aggravation down the road.

## Online Academic Skills Course

Another resource to use both for tests like the AFCT/ASVAB and for college courses is Peterson's Online Academic Skills Course (OASC). To quote its web site, it's "designed for individuals who want to build a solid academic foundation by improving their math and verbal skills in order to score well on exams, advance their education, and excel in their careers. . . . OASC is available for free 24 hours a day, seven days a week on the web to service members (regular and Reserve), civilian employees, and their families."

The course (at <http://www.nelnetsolutions.com/dantes>) includes

- a pre-test (to gauge your strengths and weaknesses)
- a Customized Learning Path™ (a personalized set of lessons based on your pre-test results)
- lessons which include interactive activities, flash cards, quizzes, and practice tests,
- a post-test (to evaluate your progress).

For more information, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/oasc-faq.pdf>.

## Giveaways in the Education Center

In addition to for-the-taking booklets on college majors and financing college, the Education Center (Admin/Mission Support Building, Room 113) also many copies of

- *College.edu – Online Resources for the Cyber-Savvy Student*
- *College Success Guide: Top 12 Secrets for Student Success*
- *Best Career and Education Web Sites*
- *Online Learning*
- *DANTES College Career Workbook*
- *College Success Tips for Adult Learners*

Drop by and see what's available.

## 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.

## 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 (0745): EOCTs, RATs, and AQEs\* **or** Defense Language Proficiency Tests (DLPT)

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

Fridays (0745): EOCTs, RATs, and AQEs

\* If someone has made an appointment to take a DLPT (a 6-hour test), there will be no 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](mailto: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 Rating Performance Qualifications (RPQs) for each rate.

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.