

TraCen Cape May Education Update #4 | I

In this Update:

- Congratulations!!
- Question of the week – How can I get a substitute servicewide exam?
- Web page in the spotlight
- Grammar & usage corner
- Common Latin phrases everyone should know
- CG Foundation scholarships
- E-PME study resources
- Preparing students for college success
- Troops to Teachers revitalized
- ERATS update
- College Affordability & Transparency Center
- TA, GI Bill benefits, & scholarships/grants
- If you really want a degree, you CAN earn one
- *G.I. Jobs* and *Edge* magazines
- New college info
- Confused about Touro University International, TUIT, Trident U, & Touro University Worldwide?
- Before choosing a major or career field . . .
- College scholarships & grants
- Preparing for the SWE or any other test?
- GI Bill transfer & service obligation
- Space Camp & Space Academy scholarships
- Summer Energy Career Academy
- College financial aid presentations
- New college & career planning tool
- Aviation-related degrees
- Looking for a post-CG career with a bright future?
- Resources for starting & running your own business
- Got student debt?
- Free language software
- Learning another language & foreign language testing
- Thinking about taking college courses?
- Miscellaneous

Links from this page to non-Coast Guard sites are provided as a customer service and do not represent any implicit or explicit endorsement by the United States Coast Guard of any commercial or private issues, products, or services presented there.

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
MK2 Stephanie Johnson-Seltzer*	ANT Cape May	E-PME-6
CDR Owen Gibbons	TraCen (XO)	DWINTR

* First attempt

Also of note is the fact that AMTI Dan Couch just received a bachelor's degree in technical management from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. If PO Couch can do this while serving in air crews and as a recruit company commander, you can too!

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 – How can I get a substitute servicewide exam?

- Q:** I'm pregnant and my due date is within days of the SWE date. What if I can't make it to the test because I'm in labor or have just delivered my baby?
- A:** If you're unable to take the regularly-scheduled SWE due to circumstances beyond your control (such as childbirth) you'll almost certainly be able to take a substitute SWE. However, keep in mind that a substitute exam is not in your best interest so, if at all possible, try to take the test at the regularly-scheduled time. Why is this? Here's how the Enlisted Accessions, Evaluations, and Advancements Manual explains it:

“The entire advancement system is based on the premise that candidates will participate for advancement on an equal basis. Substitute SWEs can be a source of inequities to candidates. Since the SWE given on a regularly scheduled date cannot be given as a substitute, the candidate must participate on a different basis. Although substitute SWEs are closely related, they are not identical. Therefore, substitute SWEs are discouraged.”

Assuming you've been recommended by your command to participate in the exam, the only justifications for requesting a substitute exam are emergency leave, illness or hospitalization, and operational commitment. The general criteria are that your absence from the regularly-scheduled exam can't have been your fault and must have been beyond your control. For more details, see article 3.B.3.b. of the Enlisted Accessions, Evaluations, and Advancements Manual.

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: **The Servicewide Exam** (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/swe.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, **criteria** and **criterion**. (These definitions are taken from *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* and Merriam-Webster on-line, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/>.)

Criterion is the singular form of the noun meaning a characterizing mark or trait, a standard on which a judgment or decision may be based. *Criteria* is the plural form of the same word. (“The scholarship had three eligibility criteria. The third criterion (having been born in Minneapolis) shrank the pool of eligible applicants considerably.”)

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.

Common Latin Phrases Everyone Should Know

Persona non grata: Literally, personal not acceptable or welcome. The phrase is used colloquially to describe someone who's no longer welcome in a social or business situation. (“Ever since Bob screamed at the store owner, he's been persona non grata there.”)

It's also an official diplomatic term used to describe a person from one country who's no longer welcome in a host country. ("During the Cold War, numerous Soviet nationals who were caught spying inside the US were declared personae non grata and sent home.")

From: <http://oedb.org/library/beginning-online-learning/50-common-latin-phrases-every-college-student-should-know> and <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/persona%2Bnon%2Bgrata>

Coast Guard Foundation Scholarships

ALCOAST 037/13 announced five different scholarships open to dependent children of active duty, retired, or deceased Coast Guard enlisted personnel, and dependent children of enlisted personnel in the Coast Guard Reserve currently on active duty. The application deadline for these is **15 March 2013**.

The Coast Guard Foundation also has two other scholarships. One is open to employees of the Aviation Logistics Center in Elizabeth City, NC (active duty officers and enlisted personnel, federal civil service employees, and their dependents). The deadline for this scholarship is **15 March 2013**.

The other program is open to dependent children of Coast Guard personnel whose parent died in Coast Guard operations. Applications for this program are accepted at any time.

For more information about these scholarships, see ALCOAST 037/13 at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/ALCOAST037-13.pdf>.

E-PME Study Resources

(courtesy of OSI Melissa Mathis, TraCen Cape May)

If you're looking for more ways to study for an E-PME AQE or for the May servicewide exam (SWE), you might want to check out these current tech resources. According to PO Mathis, "There is an app called EPME Mobile which has quizzes for the E-PME Apprentice, Journeyman, and Master materials. With the app, you can search the E-PME manuals and itemize the knowledge and performance requirements. You can also communicate with the developer about edits and updates. It's available for your tablet or smartphone." PO Mathis also pointed to "PDF Notes, an app that allows you to highlight, bookmark and take notes in any manual published in PDF format. It's for a tablet."

Also, some enterprising petty officers have created sets of electronic E-PME flashcards available at Quizlet.com. You can use them (<http://quizlet.com/subject/uscg-epme/>) or create your own, and import them to your smartphone. Two others you can use to create flashcards are Flashcards++ and StudyBlue (the latter of which is also for your computer at <http://www.studyblue.com/switch/cpt.html>).

Preparing Students for College Success

(from January Edutopia.com, 23 January)

College Readiness: A Checklist for Parents (<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/college-readiness-checklist-jeff-livingston>) Blogger Jeff Livingston shares a checklist to help make sure your high school grad is prepared for what's waiting for them on campus.

How College-Bound Students of Color Should Prepare for Life on a Predominantly White Campus (<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/predominantly-white-campus-danielle-moss-lee>) Blogger Danielle Moss Lee discusses the cultural assumptions that students of color might face on a predominantly white college campus.

How to Teach Kids to Read Critically (<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/college-readiness-critical-reading-ben-johnson>) Educator Ben Johnson gives teacher-tested tips for helping students question, challenge, and think carefully when reading.

Troops to Teachers Revitalized

The Troops to Teachers (TTT) program (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/t2t.asp>) was intended to help recruit quality teachers for public schools throughout America. The Troops to Teachers program

- helps relieve teacher shortages, especially in math, science, special education, career and technical subjects, and foreign languages;
- provides mature, motivated, experienced, and dedicated personnel for the nation's classrooms; and
- assists military personnel in making successful transitions to second careers in teaching.

The FY2013 defense authorization act made the following changes to the program (as described in MilitaryTimesEDGE magazine):

- reduces the minimum required time in service from six to four years;
- adds foreign language skills as one of the sought-after specialties;
- restores the program to the DoD's control;
- shortens the time to apply for the program from four years to three after leaving the military.

ERATS Update

Last week, ALCOAST 049/13 (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/ALCOAST049-13.pdf>) was published updating the timeline for the transition to the new Enlisted Rating Advancement Training System (ERATS). Courses and EPQs for two more ratings (FS and SK) became obsolete on 01 February 2013, replaced by Rating Performance Qualifications (RPQs). You can download RPQs from the Learning Management System on the CGPortal (<https://elearning.uscg.mil>). This means that seven ratings have now made the transition to ERATS: AET, AMT, AST, FS, MST, OS, and SK.

An amplifying e-mail from the Coast Guard Institute states, however, that the pre-01FEB requirements will apply to SK strikers until the November SWE eligibility cut-off date (01 August 2013). That is, until 01 August 2013 they may complete either the RPQs dated March 2009 or the new ones, dated November 2013 and they may take the existing SK3 EOCT until 01 August 2013.

College Affordability & Transparency Center

The US Department of Education has created a one-stop web page where you can find "information about how much it costs students to attend different colleges [as well as career and vocational schools], how fast those costs are going up, and information related to why costs are going up." (<http://collegecost.ed.gov/catc/>)

"College Scorecards . . . make it easier for you to search for a college that is a good fit for you. You can use the College Scorecard to find out more about a college's affordability and value so you can make more informed decisions about which college to attend." (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/education/higher-education/college-score-card>)

Tuition Assistance, GI Bill Benefits, and Scholarships/Grants

There seems to be a belief that you can't use other forms of financial aid along with tuition assistance (TA) or GI Bill education benefits. **This is false.**

When it comes to GI Bill education benefits, the general rule is that you can also use any other forms of financial aid except TA. (See <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/gibill-o.asp#ta>) With respect to TA, you can also use other forms of financial aid except GI Bill benefits (see <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/gibill-o.asp#ta>), but when figuring out how much TA to request, you first have to deduct the other forms of financial aid you're receiving. (See the *Performance, Training and Education Manual*, COMDTINST M1500.10C, 11.H.2.e.(11)a.)

Here's a simple example. Let's say you're taking 15 semester credits and the total cost of your tuition and fees is \$4,000. Further assume you're receiving scholarships, grants, or other non-GI Bill forms of financial aid totaling \$2,500. You'd subtract the amount of that financial aid from the total cost, which would leave \$1,500 to be covered by TA. You'd then divide that amount by the

number of credits you're taking ($\$1,500 \div 15$) – \$100/credit. You'd list \$100/credit on your TA request under "Cost per Credit (\$)". You'd then use the non-TA money to pay for fees and apply whatever was left toward your tuition, then use TA to pay for the remaining tuition cost.

If You Really Want a Degree, You CAN Earn One

(excerpted from LCOL Eurydice Stanley's article in the FEB2013 DANTES Information Bulletin)

. . . The hard-sought assimilation back into traditional life for veterans was even more challenging for African Americans. Dr. Edwin J. Nichols recalls his experiences as a Korean War veteran while attempting to use his educational benefit in the pursuit of his Ph.D. He served on active duty as a staff sergeant in the racially segregated 1279th Combat Engineer Battalion, as a member of the Michigan National Guard.

Prior to being drafted in 1950, Nichols completed nearly two years of college. Upon returning from active duty, he used two of his four-year GI Bill for undergraduate studies. In 1955, he applied for admission to a two year terminal master's degree in industrial psychology. The requirement for completion of the degree was a one year practicum in a company. Due to racism, no company in Michigan would give Nichols a practicum, despite his Korean Veteran status. Therefore, the university stated, it would be unfair to admit him as he could not fulfill the requirements for graduation.

This "Catch 22" was not a new experience for African Americans. As a result, many of their parents made sacrifices and sent their children to Europe for advanced educational opportunities. Using his GI Bill, Nichols went to Germany to complete his master's and conducted his practicum at the Mercedes Benz and Zeiss Ikon companies.

The primary challenge with studying abroad was that he had to be proficient enough in German to attend university lectures and seminars and to write his thesis. Consider the challenges Service members face as they consider going back to school – time, support, finances, fear – what if language were added to the list? "I had to also learn the regional dialect as a psychotherapist. Language proficiency was expected as I administered psychological test batteries to the apprentices of Mercedes Benz and Zeiss Ikon or worked with a patient that was psychotic. I had to be able to understand," said Nichols.

He went on to complete his Doctorate of Philosophy in psychology and psychiatry, cum laude, at Leopold - Franzens Universität in Innsbruck, Austria.

Nichols did whatever it took to obtain his degree . . . are you willing to do the same? Can you go the extra mile to reach your education goals? He encourages all Service members to pursue their education. "You are wasting an opportunity to be able to have a better life for your children and your family," he said. "When I came back with my GI Bill, there were friends of mine that went to trade school to learn tool and die with their GI Bill . . . all paths will improve your quality of life." . . .

G.I. Jobs and Edge Magazines

Drop by the Education Center (Admin/Mission Support Building, Room 113) and pick up the most recent issues of *G.I. Jobs* and *Military Times Edge* magazine. In them are articles on

- the transition from a military to a civilian career,
- stories about how military personnel have landed on their feet in new civilian careers,
- feature stories profiling specific career fields,
- short profiles of private sector career fields,
- items on applying for federal government jobs,
- items about starting/running your own business,
- education-related items, and
- items on how to get hired.

Or, if you'd rather, you can view the on-line versions at <http://mydigimag.rrd.com/publication/?i=140695> (for the latest *G.I. Jobs*) and <http://www.militarytimesedge.com/> (for *Military Times Edge*).

New College Info

Periodically, the TraCen Cape May's Education Center receives flyers, brochures, posters, and other information from colleges and universities around the country. This material is available any time during working hours (including lunch time). **The fact that this information is printed here does not constitute an endorsement of the corresponding schools or programs.**

Coastline Community College has an on-line Associate of Science degree in computer networking that includes Cisco certification courses. That is, if you complete the degree, you will be prepared to take the Cisco Certified Network Administration certificate exam. All courses that are required for the degree (and the Cisco network administration certificate) are available on-line. For more information, go to <http://military.coastline.edu/cisco/>.

Southern New Hampshire University is an accredited, not-for-profit decades-old university. It offers more than 180 on-line degree and certificate programs, affordable tuition (\$225/credit for undergrad courses), credit for military training and education, and a no-obligation transcript evaluation. For more information, go to <http://www.snhu.edu/online-degrees.aspx>.

Touro University Worldwide (TUW) just began operations late last year. It is a not-for-profit institution which currently offers three M.A. degrees, an M.B.A., and one Ph.D. degree as well as two graduate certificate programs, with plans to offer undergraduate- and more graduate-level programs. The tuition for military personnel is \$300/credit for the master's programs (including the certificates) and \$525/credit for doctoral programs. For more information, go to <http://www.tuw.edu/index.html>.

Confused About Touro University International, TUIU, Trident University International, & Touro University Worldwide?

If you are or have been a student at Touro University International, TUIU, or Trident University International and wondered what this new "Touro University Worldwide" is, read the following article by George Altman in the December 2012 issue of *MilitaryTimesEDGE* magazine.

A former military education powerhouse is trying to re-establish itself after being out of the market for years. The nonprofit Touro College and University System University sold off its on line operation serving largely military students – now a for-profit known as Trident University International – in 2007 to raise money for a medical school. Now Touro is back in the military market after serving out the terms of a five-year noncompete agreement. Its new online school, Touro University Worldwide, must rebuild from a total of 200 students and hopes to do much of that by going back to the military community, said Yoram Neumann, the school's chief executive officer and a veteran of the Israel Defense Forces. Neumann and wife Edith founded the old TUI, which quickly became one of the nation's biggest educators of military students. "Certainly, Touro was a very big player," said Jeffrey Cropsey, a former director of the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support. By 2007, Touro was bringing in \$50 million in revenue annually. Neumann then took the helm of the for-profit school, which changed its name to TUI University and later Trident.

The new TUW offers four master's degrees and one certificate program, focusing on business, psychology and communications. Officials said Touro is planning to add a handful of additional programs at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels. The military education market that Touro returns to is much more crowded than the one it started in back in 1998. "It would be a tough road for anybody" to return to the position Touro once held, Cropsey said. "Having said that, they do have a tradition." Neumann said TUW will implement a "learning guarantee" in 2013 for students who complete all of a course's requirements but don't take away the promised skills. The courses could be retaken at no cost. Students will have access to Touro's electronic materials, eliminating the need to buy books.

Before Choosing a Major or Career Field . . .

If you're considering a particular college major or career field, you should first check out the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/home.htm>). Not only does it tell you what type of education and/or training you need to enter and advance in a specific career field, but it also tells you things like what the pay is likely to be and what the hiring prospects are in the future.

College Scholarships & Grants

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>.

Doodle 4 Google

Google holds an annual contest for K-12 students in the U.S. to redesign the Google logo. This year, the theme is “My Best Day Ever....” One winner will earn a \$30,000 college scholarship, as well as a \$50,000 technology grant for their school. Templates are available online. The application **deadline is Friday, March 22, 2013**. For complete information, go to <http://www.google.com/doodle4google/>.

Military Commanders' Scholarship Fund

A lot of people are satisfied with GI Bill money for their dependents' education or for themselves. But when it comes to money for college, more is always better than less. Don't assume that if you're receiving financial aid from one source, others are closed to you. You and your dependents can use your GI Bill education benefits *and* scholarships *and* grants. So don't leave any stone unturned; part of your or your dependents' college plan should include finding and applying for all free sources of financial aid you or they are eligible for.

The Military Commanders' Scholarship Fund is one such source. It's aimed at dependent children of uniformed personnel and military retirees who hold valid exchange and commissary shopping privileges at the time of application. For complete information, go to <http://sms.scholarshipamerica.org/militarycommanders/guidelines.html>. The **application deadline is Friday, 15 February 2013**.

CGES Dependents' Scholarships

Every year (assuming funds are available), the CG Exchange System offers scholarships to dependents of Coast Guard personnel (regular and Reserve military, retired military, current civilian NAF and appropriated-funds employees, uniformed PHS personnel, and Auxiliarists.) This year, the application **deadline is Thursday, 28 February 2013**. For complete information, see ALCGPSC 147/12.

ScholarshipAmerica

Among other things, the web site ScholarshipAmerica (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.

Preparing for the SWE or Any Other Test?

Check out the tips on effective studying and test-taking skills at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/studying.asp>.

GI Bill Transfer & Service Obligation

Despite ESOs' best efforts since August 2009 to ensure everyone knows about the additional service requirement you incur when you transfer new (Post-9/11) GI Bill education benefit, some people are telling us they're about to retire and weren't aware of it.

*The general rule is that you must serve for four years after the date you transfer any or all of your benefit. For those who became **eligible for retirement between 01 August 2009 and 01 August 2012, different service obligation periods apply (see <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/gibill-33b.asp#obligation>).***

If you've transferred any or all of your benefit and leave the Coast Guard voluntarily during the service obligation period, you "must go back into the Portal and revoke [your] transfer (return transfer months to zero)," according to Mr. Reidus Stokes, the GI Bill person at PSC. You'll also need to "visit the PSD (FS) website (<http://www.uscg.mil/psc/psd/fs/GI%20Bill.asp>), print the "Revocation of Post 9/11 Transfer Benefits", sign it, date it, and e-mail or fax" it to him. "If any benefits were used, [you] will be placed in an overpayment status by the Department of Veteran Affairs" and the DVA will follow its procedures to recover the money it paid out for your dependent's education, housing allowance, etc.

If you believe you were not properly notified of the opportunity to transfer your new GI Bill benefit to dependents while you were in uniform, you can request a correction of military records to allow for transferability. To do this, submit an "Application for Correction of Military Record Under the Provisions of Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 1552" (<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eforms/dd0149.pdf>) to the Coast Guard Board for Correction of Military Records.

Be aware, however, that (to quote the instructions on the form) you must "show to the satisfaction of the Board by the evidence that you supply, or it must otherwise satisfactorily appear in the record, that the alleged entry or omission in the record was in error or unjust. Evidence, in addition to documents, may include affidavits or signed testimony of witnesses, executed under oath, and a brief of arguments supporting the application. All evidence not already included in your record must be submitted by you. The responsibility of securing evidence rests with you."

Space Camp & Space Academy Scholarships

The Military Child Education Coalition funds up to 15 scholarships every year for children enrolled in grades 6 through 9 to attend a six-day Space Camp or Space Academy program in Huntsville, AL. Its purpose is to show young men and women firsthand what it takes to be an astronaut. Activities include simulated Space Shuttle missions, training simulators, rocket building and launches, scientific experiments, and lectures of the past, present, and future of space exploration. The program takes a unique, fun, and hands-on approach to learning outside the classroom. Students leave with a greater appreciation for school and their studies.

For more information about the scholarship and a link to the application form, go to <http://www.militarychild.org/parents-and-students/programs/bernard-curtis-brown-ii-memorial-space-camp-scholarship>. And to check out the programs themselves, go to <http://www.spacecamp.com/>. **The application deadline is Sunday, 10 March 2013.**

Summer Energy Career Academy

The National Energy Center of Excellence at Bismarck State University in North Dakota is soliciting 14- to 16-year-old participants in its second Summer Energy Career Academy. The three-day program (25-27 June) is "designed to provide participants an opportunity to engage in various energy-related lab experiments, visit energy companies and learn about the amazing career opportunities". Dorm rooms and food will be provided at no cost to the participants; transportation to and from the Academy is participants' responsibility, however.

The applications deadline is Friday, 01 March 2013. For more information (including the complete agenda and the on-line application), go to <http://energy.bismarckstate.edu/nece/academy/>.

College Financial Aid Presentations

Last week, CollegeWeekLive (<http://www.collegeweeklive.com/>) sponsored Financial Aid Week for college students and their families. You can watch the recorded presentations on its web site by logging in (it's free), and then clicking on the "Paying for College Videos" button. Among the topics are "Building a Career to Pay for College", "Are You Scholarship Ready?", "Career Information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics", "The 1-2-3 Step Approach to Paying for College", and many others.

New College & Career Planning Tool

Military personnel now have access to another tool to help them plan for college or a career after the Coast Guard. Kuder, a “provider of Internet-based tools and resources that help students and adults achieve their educational and career planning goals”, has an Internet-based program designed specifically for military personnel. It’s called Journey, and you can find out more about it and how to access it from a flyer you’ll find at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/Journey.pdf>.

Journey and other similar tools (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/sitest.asp>) are powerful tools in helping you decide your future career path and what to major in, if you decide to pursue a college degree.

Aviation-related Degrees

If you’re interested in a post-Coast Guard career in aviation and would like to get a related degree, there are a number of accredited colleges and universities around the country which offer these degrees, some by distance learning. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (<http://worldwide.erau.edu/index.html>) is the most widely known of these. But there are others with equally good programs such as Atlantic Cape Community College (<http://www.atlantic.edu/program/degrees/AviationStudies.htm>) and Mercer County Community College (<http://www.mccc.edu/aviation/>) in New Jersey as well as Utah Valley University (<http://uvu.edu/aviation/>) and probably others.

Before you set your mind on one school over another, do your homework; compare what each school has to offer – including a price within your financial aid limits. Keep in mind that publicly-funded schools are usually quite a bit less expensive than private non-profit or for-profit schools. To keep track of what you find out about each school, and for ease of comparison, consider using the college comparison worksheet (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/Worksheet.pdf>).

Looking for a Post-CG Career with a Bright Future?

If you’re looking for a recession-proof career, you might consider companies that generate and distribute energy. Nearly 40% of current workers in utility companies are expected to retire or leave within the next five years. Openings include security officer positions, which you might be hired for without specialized training (depending on your current rate), engineers, line workers, plant operators, pipe fitters, welders, and others.

The Center for Energy Workforce Development is a non-profit consortium of electrical, natural gas, and nuclear utilities and their associations formed to help utilities develop solutions to the coming workforce shortage in the utility industry. Check out its Troops to Energy Jobs initiative at the bottom of this page (<http://www.cewd.org/index.asp>) and <http://military.getintoenergy.com/index.php>.

And once you’ve read a bit about the types of work that’s likely to become available, check out the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (<http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm>) to find out more about

- the nature of the work,
- required training,
- other qualifications,
- advancement opportunities,
- current and future employment prospects,
- projected earnings,
- related occupations,
- sources of additional information.

Thomas Edison State University here in New Jersey also has an on-line Bachelor of Science in Applied Science and Technology degree in Energy Utility Technology (<http://www.tesc.edu/ast/bsast/Energy-Utility.cfm>). The tuition is \$250/credit – the maximum tuition assistance will pay.

Bismarck State College in North Dakota (<http://energy.bismarckstate.edu/programs/>) can get you ready for these careers via its on-line certification, associate's and bachelor's degree, and non-degree programs in almost a dozen energy-related fields.

If you follow the news, you know that these industries are crying for people with training in these areas.

The maximum per-credit tuition is currently \$227 (depending on which program you're pursuing) with fees totaling approximately \$22/credit – less than the maximum tuition assistance will pay. For more information, go to <http://energy.bismarckstate.edu/programs/>.

Resources for Starting and Running Your Own Business

If you're thinking about starting your own business, either while you're still in uniform or after you leave the Coast Guard, be aware you don't have to have a degree in business. In fact, there are few courses in a business major that will help you create and operate a small business. See the courses typical associate's (<http://www.tesc.edu/business/asba/index.cfm>) and bachelor's (<http://www.amu.apus.edu/academic/programs/degree/15/bachelor-of-business-administration>) business administration majors have to take. These all take large amounts of time and cost money.

On the other hand, you can find a huge number of resources on the Internet for entrepreneurs. A large sampling is at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/smallbiz.asp>. While these still take time to study and absorb, there are no assignments or tests, as in college courses, and they're free.

These resources are applicable to all types of small businesses on many different subjects (e.g., drafting a business plan, finding funding, etc.). There are also sections aimed at those interested in starting not-for-profit businesses and those interested in social entrepreneurship. (Contrary to popular belief, not-for-profit doesn't mean "no profit" or that you can't earn a substantial salary. It just means most of the profit has to be put toward specific things, usually plowed back into the business.)

Finally, drop by the Education Center to pick up a copy of the book *Best Career and Education Web Sites*. Chapters 7 ("Self-Employment and Small Business") and 8 ("Temporary Work, Contract Employment, Freelancing, Teleworking, and Volunteering") have many great leads.

Got Student Debt?

A recent issue of *The Washington Monthly* contained a short guide to different types of student loan repayment plans. You can find it at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/finance005.doc>.

Also, check out the info at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/loans.asp#repayment>.

Free Language Software

Mango Languages on-line now available to District 5 personnel, courtesy of Ms. Monica Bailey (full-time ESO at Base Portsmouth). Its features include:

- 50+ basic courses (35 foreign languages and 15 ESL Courses)
- 45 complete courses (32 foreign languages and 13 ESL Courses)
- Ability to download and use mobile versions (for iPhone and Android App)
- Unlimited remote access to all online course material.

You can get more information from Mango's web site at www.mangolanguages.com. If you're interested in using the program, contact Ms. Bailey at monica.r.bailey@uscg.mil.

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), Mango (www.mangolanguages.com), and “Rosetta Stone” (<http://www.rosettastone.com/>), which everyone’s seen on TV) are but a few 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>.

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.

Is On-Line 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.

TraCen Cape May Testing Schedule

As of next Monday (28 January 2013), tests at TraCen Cape May will be 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

Alternating 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 probably administering a test (and, because I don't want to disturb examinees I 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 which you're welcome to check out. 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.