

# TraCen Cape May Education Update #390

## In this Update:

- Congratulations!!
- Question of the week – how can I avoid getting a letter from the Navy in the future?
- Web page in the spotlight
- Grammar & usage corner
- New college info
- Looking for a post-CG career with a future?
- Online Academic Skills Course
- New fiscal year & tuition assistance
- Scholarships
- FY13 officer program submission deadlines
- New grad school search engine
- How to Become a SuperStar Student
- The Secrets of Mental Math
- What happens after I submit a TA request?
- Thinking about taking college courses?
- Don't postpone college because you're at an operational unit
- Career & education planning tools
- Miscellaneous

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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
ET3 Jay Ossiander	ESD Cape May	ET2

Well done, PO Ossiander!!!

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 Avoid Getting a Letter from the Navy in the Future?

**Q:** I received a letter from the Navy stating that I never submitted my grades for the spring 2012 semester. I decided to use GI Bill benefits instead. Can you please shed some light on this situation for me? Thanks.

**A:** You have to remember that the Navy people who are the Coast Guard's agents for TA don't know anything you don't tell them, through your ESO. So if they don't get word that you're not using TA for a course and don't get a grade report for that course when the school's term is over, they assume you failed it and their computer automatically generates a letter like the one you got.

So, to avoid getting the letter (the first in a series of letters, actually) you've got to do one of two things: cancel your TA authorization before your school's full-refund deadline or provide a grade report for the course listed on your authorization after the school term ends.

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: **College Course & Credit-by-Exam Study Aids** (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/studymaterials.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, ***between...and*** and ***from...to***.

Too often on TV and the radio, I hear people say something like "Between 200 to 500 people blocked the doors". And, occasionally, some say "The car was from 50 and 100 feet away when it blew up". Both are incorrect usages.

When expressing an estimate, the word *between* is paired with *and*: "Between 200 and 500 people blocked the doors". The classic *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*, by Henry Fowler, states: "In the commonest use of *between*, i.e., where two terms are separately specified, the one & only right connexion [sic] between those terms is *and*. But writers indulge in all sorts of freaks." He presents a number of examples of "the more exceptional and absurd of these", including *between...to*.

An alternative is "From 200 to 500 people blocked the doors", although *from...to* more correctly refers to movement between two places. *From* is never paired with *and* ("From 200 and 500 people blocked the doors").

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).

## 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.***

**Atlantic Cape Community College** offers many career training programs (<http://www.atlantic.edu/conted/CareerTraining.htm>) as well as academic degrees. Its new Aviation Studies degree "is designed to provide pathways for students seeking careers in aviation and will include tracks in air traffic control, commercial pilot, and airport management." ACCC "will continue to offer an AAS degree in Air Traffic Control Terminal for those who are interested in taking the FAA's Air Traffic Selection and Training (AT-SAT) exam." Check out ACCC's complete offerings at <http://www.atlantic.edu/program/degrees/degreePrograms.htm>.

## Looking for a Post-CG Career with a 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://engineers.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,
- earnings,
- related occupations,
- sources of additional information.

Bismarck State College in North Dakota (<http://energy.bismarckstate.edu/programs/>) can get you ready for these careers via its **on-line degree, certification, and non-degree programs** in the following energy-related fields:

- Electric power
- Electric transmission systems
- Energy management
- Instrumentation & control
- Mechanical maintenance technology
- Nuclear power technology
- Petroleum production
- Power plant technology
- Processing plant technology
- Renewable generation
- Water & waste water.

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. For more information, go to <http://energy.bismarckstate.edu/programs/>.

## Online Academic Skills Course

"Peterson's Online Academic Skills Course (OASC) is 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>.

NOTE: On Saturday, 25 August, Peterson's will be updating the software that controls access to OASC. As a result, you won't be able to use OASC until sometime on Sunday, 26 August.

## New Fiscal Year & Tuition Assistance

If you're using or thinking of using TA, keep in mind that you can't currently apply for TA for any courses starting on or after 01 October 2012. The Coast Guard Institute can't obligate funds until Congress has signed a check to us for TA funding, via an appropriation bill.

If you've been hearing rumors that TA will be cut drastically in FY13 because of the country's fiscal problems, they're nothing more than rumors. Do **not** assume they're true. No one – except, perhaps, a few flag officers – knows what shape TA will take in the coming FY. It *could* be that maximum amounts would be set lower than they are now (e.g., less than \$4,500 per FY and less than \$250/credit), whole classes of people *could* be prohibited from using TA (e.g., Reservists or civilians), the number of credits a person can use TA to pay for *could* be limited, or things *could* remain the same. We just don't know what TA will look like after 30 September.

If anyone says s/he knows what TA will be like in the coming months, do your part to control rumors and ask exactly where she got that information. If she starts out with "Well, I heard that . . .", tell her she's spreading unfounded rumors that do nothing but stir people up and to knock it off.

## 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>.

**Chief Warrant Officers and Warrant Officers Association**  
(courtesy of CWO4 Dianne Trawick)

Check out the Art and Eleanor Colona Scholarship (<http://www.cwoauscg.org/cwoa-forms/Colona-Scholarship-Application-and-Instructions.pdf>) for enlisted personnel and CWOA members' dependents, and the Chief Warrant Officer John A. Keller Scholarship ([http://www.cwoauscg.org/cwoa-forms/Keller\\_Scholarship\\_Application\\_2012.pdf](http://www.cwoauscg.org/cwoa-forms/Keller_Scholarship_Application_2012.pdf)) for members of the CWOA and their dependents.

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

**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.

	<b>Officer Program</b>	<b>Recruiting Office Deadline</b>	<b>CGRC Deadline</b>	<b>Selection Board Meeting Date</b>
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!

## 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](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 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](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>.

## 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/sitest.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](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 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.