

# TraCen Cape May Education Update #410

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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:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Work Site</b>	<b>Test</b>
SN Darrian Grinde*	TraCen (training support)	E-PME-4
GM2 Andrew Bigwood	TraCen (Armory)	E-PME-6
GM3 Stephen Casagrand	TraCen (Armory)	GM2

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 – Why should I take the E-PME-4 test so long before I go to “A” school?

**Q:** I graduated from boot camp three months ago and I’m on the list for “A” school, but it’s probably going to be at least a year before I go. My ESO is telling me I should take the E-PME-4 test ASAP. Why does it matter when I take it? Can’t I just take it in “A” school?

**A:** There’s no requirement that you take it before going to “A” school; you can wait to study for and take the E-PME-4 test (called an AQE) once you get there. But be aware that your days in “A” school will be spent in class learning the skills you’ll need to perform the duties of your rating. You will not get any time during the school day to study for or take the E-PME test.

On the other hand, once the school day is over, with the exception of an occasional duty day, your time will be your own. So if you wait to prepare for and take the test when you’re at “A” school, what would otherwise be your liberty time will be taken up (at least for awhile) with E-PME preparation and testing.

If you use your time now (especially when you have a quiet watch), you’ll be able to do whatever you want in your free time during “A” school. Another reason to work on it now is that you’ll almost certainly find it easier to find people who’ll take the time to quiz you on your Performance Requirements and sign them off during the work day. That probably won’t be the case in “A” school, where people who can sign them off are busy with work during the day, and likely to want to go home immediately after the work day is over.

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: **Getting Started – Step 5 (military service transcripts)** (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/step5.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, the difference between **tortuous** and **torturous**. (These definitions are taken from *Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* and Merriam-Webster on-line, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/>.)

*Tortuous* is an adjective meaning marked by repeated twists, bends, or turns; winding or marked by devious or indirect tactics. (“The mountain road, with its many hairpin turns and switchbacks was tortuous” or “The Watergate conspiracy and cover-up were the notoriously tortuous crimes”.)

*Torturous* is also an adjective, but it means causing torture or cruelly painful, full of pain or suffering. (“The Spanish Inquisition was notoriously torturous”, “The patient’s relatives had to make the torturous decision to disconnect his life-support system”, or “The post-infection treatment for rabies was as notoriously torturous as the disease itself”.)

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

**De facto:** The literal translation of this phrase is “from the fact”, but the phrase is used in American English to mean “in fact”. (“The vice president was the *de facto* head of the country.”)

The term is usually used to distinguish what is supposed to be the case from what is actually the reality, and is often contrasted with *de jure* (“from the law” or “lawful”). In the U.S., the two phrases are often paired when discussing racial segregation. “The Jim Crow Laws of the southern states, which endured through the 1960s, were examples of *de jure* segregation. In contrast, *de facto* racial segregation, which occurred in other states, was accomplished by factors apart from conscious government activity such as real estate red-lining and various employment practices.”

From: <http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/de+jure>

## Weekly Education Update Becomes Bi-weekly

After nearly ten years of publishing a newsletter every Friday, my work schedule change provides a good reason for sending it out every other Friday instead. (I'll have a day off every other Friday.) So you'll see the next newsletter on Friday, 15 February.

## Take the ACT Next Week

I'll be administering the **ACT Assessment** (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/act.asp>) on **Thursday, 14 February 2013 starting at 0730**. There are two seats available on a first come first served basis, so let me know ASAP if you want to take one of these tests.

DANTES Test Control Officers (ESOs who've been specifically designated) may administer these tests only for uniformed personnel. In general, military personnel are authorized to take one ACT **or** one SAT paid for by DANTES. So if you want to take both, one would free and you'd likely have to pay for the other. The ACT costs \$35; the SAT costs \$50.

ESOs may administer the ACT at any time of the year, and can administer the SAT during all months except July, August, and September. You can see a comparison of the SAT and ACT at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/comparison.asp>.

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

You can read/download *Preparing for the ACT* (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/PreparingACT.pdf>) and *Taking the ACT* (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/TakingACT.pdf>) for more information about the test. As for actual preparation materials, check out <http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/index.html> and <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/act.asp#prep>.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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>.

## 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 deadline for submitting applications is Friday, 15 February 2013.**

## 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.**

**Touro University Worldwide (TUW)** just began operations late last year. It is a not-for-profit institution which currently offers three M.A., 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>.

TUW is not to be confused with Trident University International (a for-profit school) even though both grew from the same seed. For help in sorting this out, see the next item below.

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

If you are or have been a student at Touro University International or TUIU 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.

## 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>.

### 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](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.

## 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.**

## A Common Myth About College Financial Aid

Parents of college-age children “often don’t realize . . . that money set aside for college does not represent some sort of money time bomb. These assets usually don’t hurt a family’s chances for financial aid.” For the complete article, go to [http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505145\\_162-57562859/a-common-myth-about-college-financial-aid/](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505145_162-57562859/a-common-myth-about-college-financial-aid/).

## 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.

## Parents: Associate's Degree Before Bachelor's Saves Money

A report released yesterday by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (<http://www.studentclearinghouse.info/snapshot/docs/SnapshotReport8-GradRates2-4Transfers.pdf>) found that 71% of the students who earned an associate's degree "and then moved to a four-year college graduated with a bachelor's degree within four years of transferring," according to Katherine Mangan in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* on 08 November. For those who didn't have an associate's degree before transferring, the number was 55%.

## Preparing for the ACT Assessment & SAT Reasoning Test

Free eKnowledge ACT and SAT preparation software is available through contributions from NFL and MLB players, as well as many other organizations (<http://www.eknowledge.com/USCG>).

If you received the software last year, you'll need to get a free upgrade. While the software is free (retail price \$200), you must pay \$13.84, which covers the cost of technical and customer support, registration, licensing, processing, handling, and worldwide shipping.

Other resources, include the web sites of the ACT Assessment (<http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/index.html>) and SAT Reasoning Test (<http://sat.collegeboard.org/practice>) and

- ePrep (<http://www.eprep.com/>)
- Grockit (<http://grockit.com/>)
- Number2.com (<http://www.number2.com/>).

## 8 Ways to Boost Your ACT and SAT Scores

This short article, on the blog "The College Solution" (<http://www.thecollegesolution.com/8-ways-to-boost-your-act-and-sat-scores>), provides five (rather than eight) tips to help you prepare to take an ACT or SAT. The other three are 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 piece.

## Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessel Courses

A lot of people want to know if they can use tuition assistance (TA) or the GI Bill to pay for a vessel captain's license course. The general rule for TA is that the course has to be offered by a nationally- or regionally-accredited institution AND must yield credit applicable to a degree at the school that's offering the course.

As to the GI Bill, it all depends on whether the state in which the course is offered has approved the course for GI Bill funding. For more info about whether a particular course is covered by the GI Bill, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/gibill-o.asp#saa>.

Mr. Monty Mathis, full-time ESO at Sector St. Petersburg, has identified what seems to be the only college which offers distance learning courses to prepare you to take the 100-ton captain's license exam. And, because you can earn college credit for them (through Northeast Wisconsin Technical College), they're covered by TA. For more information, go to [http://www.nwtc.edu/academics/degrees/publicsafety/criminaljustice/Documents/8657GSPS%20Public%20Safety%20Maritime%20Course\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.nwtc.edu/academics/degrees/publicsafety/criminaljustice/Documents/8657GSPS%20Public%20Safety%20Maritime%20Course_brochure.pdf).

## 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/necce/academy/>.

## 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.”

## 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>).

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 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/>.

## 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, check out a sampling of resources for entrepreneurs at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/smallbiz.asp>.

There you'll find general resources 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 the popular notion, 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. There's also a section with links to labor market information.

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>.

## Before Diving In, Find Out if Distance Learning is 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.

## Find the Right College

Check out the Department of Education's "College Navigator" web site (<http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>).

## 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](http://www.mangolanguages.com). If you're interested in using the program, contact Ms. Bailey at [monica.r.bailey@uscg.mil](mailto: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](http://us.tellmemore.com/free_demo)), Mango ([www.mangolanguages.com](http://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.

## 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](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 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.