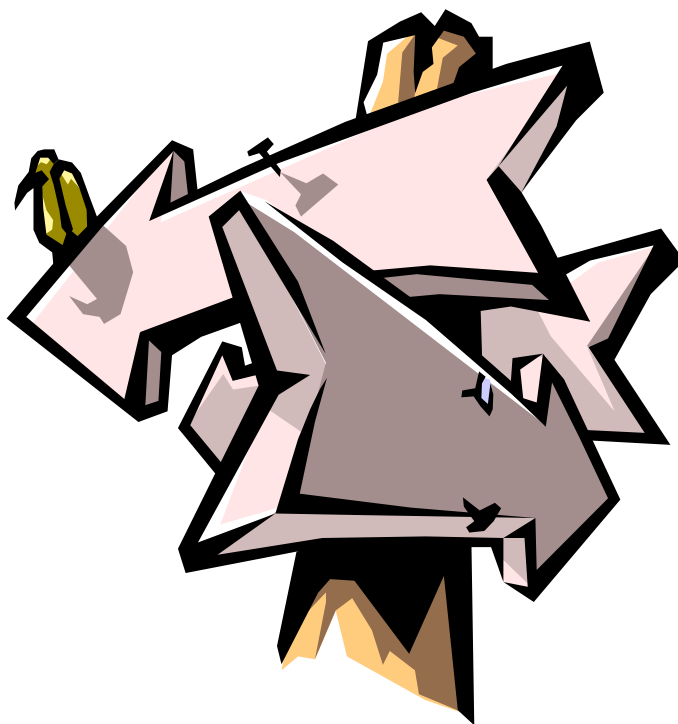


So You Don't Want To Go To College

A Guide to Local Area Vocational Training Programs



This book has been updated and revised from the original work of Connie Felder by the Midwestern Transition Site (formerly The Rochester Regional Transition Site).

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So You Don't Want to Go to College: A Guide to Local Area Vocational Training Programs

Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to provide a one-stop resource and overview of local vocational training programs for Rochester area educators, students, and parents who may wish to explore educational alternatives to traditional college degree programs. The certificate programs included in this guide are vocationally-specific programs designed to provide students with entry-level skills, in a short period of time, and jump-start their careers. Most programs can be completed in one year or less (exceptions are noted) and provide job placement assistance. Job placement statistics, including percentage of graduates who get jobs and their average rate of pay, are often available from program providers, if you ask for them.

Certificate Programs

Certificate programs are offered by local BOCES' (Board of Cooperative Educational Services'), community colleges, proprietary business/technical schools, and for-profit training organizations approved for government funding. Upon successful completion of these programs, students receive a Certificate of Completion and may qualify for state certification to perform a particular job. College credit for these programs may be awarded, depending on the course and training provider. Students do receive college credit for community college certificate programs, which can be applied to related degree programs offered by that same institution.

The certificate programs included in this guide are organized according to six major career clusters—Arts and Humanities, Business and Information Systems, Engineering and Technology, Health Services, Human and Public Services, and Natural and Agricultural Science. The interests, abilities, and aptitudes of individuals pursuing careers in each cluster are often times similar so students may wish to explore related careers within each cluster.

Financial Assistance

Most training providers can provide the student with information about possible government funding and/or financial assistance. Generally, traditional grants, like Pell (federal) and TAP (state), are not available to students participating in non-credit training programs (i.e., non-college programs) but make sure you check with the training provider. However, there are other sources of funding available to students participating in non-credit vocational training. Funding may be available through local government agencies like VESID (Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities) and Rochester Works. If you are a person with a disability or are unable to find a job or are receiving a form of public assistance (food stamps, Medicaid, and/or cash assistance), you may qualify for funding through one of these agencies. Training providers can give you more information on how you qualify for funding or direct you to these funding sources for further information. Many of the programs included here may be free to you, if you qualify for government funding.

Admissions

Admission to vocational training programs is not guaranteed, even though a candidate may meet all the admission requirements. For example, some (not all) of the vocational training programs run by BOCES may give first priority to students currently in high school; adult students (those individuals 18 years or older who have already completed a GED or High School diploma) are given admission only if there are seats left after current high school students enroll. Also, many programs must meet minimum enrollment requirements to run: otherwise, their start dates are delayed or, in some cases, programs may be cancelled.

Most programs require or prefer students have a GED or high school diploma. However, there are many exceptions, depending upon a student's particular situation and the training organization, so make sure you check with the training providers. Most programs require that adults take a basic skills test to determine math and reading abilities. Many program providers offer GED preparation classes, in addition to vocational training programs, which the student may attend, while at the same time, participating in vocational training.

Students should contact each program provider for information on the programs in which they have an interest. Although several organizations may offer training programs for the same type of job or career, each program may be very different. For example, each BOCES school operates independent of one another. So, the course content of the machining program offered by one BOCES location may be very different from the course content of the machining program taught at another BOCES location. Each program offered by various training providers should be researched thoroughly by the student to determine which one best fits their career goals, learning style, financial requirements, and scheduling needs.

Disclaimer

The information presented here is meant only as a guide of local programs. Programs may be available which are not included and information may not be current. Programs are constantly changing in response to changes in the labor market and the job market. Always check directly with training providers for up-to-date program offerings, requirements, schedules, and costs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS
Local Area Vocational Training Programs
by Career Clusters

ARTS AND HUMANITIES

VISUAL ARTS

<i>Interior Design</i> —Monroe Community College	1
--	---

BUSINESS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

BUSINESS

<i>Accounting</i> —Bryant & Stratton	2
<i>Accounting</i> —Genesee Community College	3
<i>Accounting Assistant</i> —Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES	4
<i>Business</i> —Bryant & Stratton	5
<i>Customer Service and Sales</i> —Greece Central School District	6
<i>Graphic Design</i> —Bryant & Stratton	7
<i>Hospitality Management</i> —Genesee Community College	8
<i>Retailing</i> —Finger Lakes Community College	9
<i>Sales and Customer Service</i> —Genesee Community College	10
<i>Small Business Management</i> —Monroe Community College	11

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

<i>Computer Applications for Professionals</i> —Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES	12
<i>Computer & Support Technician</i> —Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES	13
<i>Computer Information Systems</i> —Genesee Valley BOCES	14
<i>Computer Support Specialist</i> —Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES	15
<i>Information Technology</i> —Bryant & Stratton	16

SECRETARIAL/CLERICAL

<i>Administrative Assisting</i> —Bryant & Stratton	17
<i>Applied Computer Applications</i> —Finger Lakes Community College	18
<i>Business Computer Technology</i> —Monroe #1 BOCES	19
<i>Business & Office Technology</i> —Orleans/Niagara BOCES	20
<i>Information Processing</i> —Monroe Community College	21
<i>Office Assistant Skills</i> —Rochester Educational Opportunity Center	22
<i>Office Technology</i> —Finger Lakes Community College	23
<i>Office Technology</i> —Genesee Valley BOCES	24
<i>Office Technology</i> —Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES	25
<i>Office Technology/Accounting Clerical</i> —Greece Central School District	26
<i>Office Technology/Secretarial Sciences-Clerk Typist</i> —Monroe Community College	27
<i>Paralegal</i> —Bryant & Stratton	28
<i>Professional Office Careers</i> —Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES	29
<i>Word Processing/Typist</i> —Genesee Community College	30

ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

AUTOMOTIVE

<i>Auto Body Repair</i> —Genesee Valley BOCES	31
---	----

<i>Auto Technology</i> —Genesee Valley BOCES	32
<i>Auto Services</i> —Monroe #1 BOCES	33
<i>Collision Repair Technology</i> —Monroe #1 BOCES	34

CONSTRUCTION

<i>Building Maintenance</i> —Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES	35
<i>Carpentry</i> —Monroe #1 BOCES	36
<i>Carpentry/Cabinet Making</i> —Genesee Valley BOCES	
<i>Commercial Drivers License</i> —Rochester Educational Opportunity Center	37
<i>Commercial Electricity</i> —Monroe #1 BOCES	38
<i>Construction Trades</i> —Rochester Educational Opportunity Center	39
<i>Custodial Technician</i> —Monroe #1 BOCES	40
<i>Electricity, Plumbing and Heating</i> —Genesee Valley BOCES	41
<i>Facilities Technician</i> —Monroe #1 BOCES	42
<i>Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning(HVAC)</i> —Monroe Community College	43
<i>Heating, Ventilating, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration</i> —Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES	44
<i>Residential Electricity</i> —Monroe #1 BOCES	45
<i>Trade Electricity</i> —Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES	46

ENGINEERING

<i>Drafting</i> —Genesee Community College	47
<i>Engineering Graphics/Computer Aided Design</i> —Genesee Valley BOCES	48
<i>Electronics</i> —Genesee Valley BOCES	49

MECHANICAL

<i>Class B CDL</i> —Genesee Valley BOCES	50
<i>Commercial Driver's License</i> —Rochester Educational Opportunity Center	51
<i>Heavy Equipment</i> —Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES	52
<i>Metal Trades</i> —Genesee Valley BOCES	53
<i>Metal Trades</i> —Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES	54
<i>Precision Machining</i> —Monroe #1 BOCES	55
<i>Tooling and Machining</i> —Monroe Community College	56
<i>Tractor Trailer</i> —Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES	57
<i>Welding</i> —Monroe #1 BOCES	58

HEALTH SERVICES

CLERICAL/RECORDKEEPING

<i>Health Information Clerk</i> —Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES	59
<i>Medical Assisting</i> —Bryant & Stratton	60
<i>Medical Billing</i> —Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES	61
<i>Medical Office Assistant</i> —Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES	62
<i>Medical Secretary</i> —Rochester Educational Opportunity Center	63
<i>Medical Secretary/Transcriptionist</i> —Monroe #1 BOCES	64
<i>Medical Terminology</i> —Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES	65
<i>Medical Transcription</i> —Monroe Community College	66
<i>Medical Transcription</i> —Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES	67
<i>Office Technology: Medical Secretary</i> —Genesee Community College	68
<i>Secretarial with Medical Transcription</i> —Genesee Valley BOCES	69

DIRECT PATIENT CARE/SERVICE

<i>Certified Nurse Assistant—Genesee Valley BOCES</i>	70
<i>Certified Nurse Assistant—Rochester Educational Opportunity Center</i>	71
<i>Certified Nursing Assistant—Orleans/Niagara BOCES</i>	72
<i>Certified Nursing Assistant—Rochester City School District</i>	73
<i>Dental Assistant—Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES</i>	74
<i>Dental Assisting—Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES</i>	75
<i>Dental Assisting—Monroe Community College</i>	76
<i>Emergency Medical Technician—Monroe Community College</i>	77
<i>Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedic—Finger Lakes Community College</i>	78
<i>Health Care Support Specialist—Greece Central School District</i>	79
<i>Licensed Practical Nurse—Genesee Valley BOCES</i>	80
<i>Licensed Practical Nurse—Rochester Educational Opportunity Center</i>	81
<i>Licensed Practical Nursing—Orleans/Niagara BOCES</i>	82
<i>Nurse’s Assistant—Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES</i>	83
<i>Pharmacy Technician—Greece Central School District</i>	84
<i>Phlebotomy & Laboratory Technician—Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES</i>	85
<i>Phlebotomy Technician—Via Health, Rochester General Hospital</i>	86
<i>Practical Nursing—Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES</i>	87
<i>Surgical Technician—Rochester Educational Opportunity Center</i>	88
<i>Unit Health Clerk—Rochester Educational Opportunity Center</i>	89

HUMAN AND PUBLIC SERVICES

EDUCATION

<i>Childcare Technician—Rochester Educational Opportunity Center</i>	90
<i>Child Development—Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES</i>	91
<i>Child Development Associate—Rochester Educational Opportunity Center</i>	92
<i>Child Development Renewal—Rochester Educational Opportunity Center</i>	93
<i>Early Childhood Education—Genesee Community College</i>	94
<i>Early Childhood Education—Monroe Community College</i>	95

PERSONAL

<i>Barber Styling—Shear Ego</i>	96
<i>Cosmetology—Continental</i>	97
<i>Cosmetology—Genesee Valley BOCES</i>	98
<i>Cosmetology—Rochester Educational Opportunity Center</i>	99
<i>Cosmetology—Shear Ego</i>	100
<i>Esthetics—Continental</i>	101
<i>Esthetics, Skincare and Make-up—Shear Ego</i>	102
<i>Nail Specialty—Continental</i>	103
<i>Nail Specialty—Shear Ego</i>	104
<i>Nail Technician—Rochester Educational Opportunity Center</i>	105
<i>Nail Technician—Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES</i>	105
<i>Waxing—Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES</i>	107
<i>Culinary Arts—Rochester Educational Opportunity Center</i>	108
<i>Food Management—Monroe Community College</i>	109
<i>Food Service/Culinary Arts—Genesee Valley BOCES</i>	110
<i>Food Service Production/Entry Level Cook—Monroe Community College</i>	111
<i>Gerontology—Genesee Community College</i>	112
<i>Human Services—Monroe Community College</i>	113

<i>Professional Pet Grooming</i> —Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES	114
<i>Travel Agent</i> —Genesee Community College	115
<i>PROTECTIVE</i>	
<i>Criminal Justice</i> —Finger Lakes Community College	116
<i>Criminal Justice</i> —Genesee Community College	117
<i>Criminal Justice/Corrections Administration</i> —Monroe Community College	118
<i>NATURAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES</i>	
<i>ANIMAL SCIENCE</i>	
<i>Animal Science</i> —Genesee Valley BOCES	119
<i>Taxidermy</i> —Finger Lakes Community College	120
<i>HORICULTURE</i>	
<i>Landscape Technician</i> —Rochester Landscape Technicians Program	121
<i>Ornamental Horticulture</i> —Finger Lakes Community College	122
<i>Outdoor Recreation</i> —Finger Lakes Community College	123
<i>APPENDIX A: List of Local Vocational Training Providers</i>	124
<i>APPENDIX B: Review of Literature Regarding Vocational Education</i>	127
<i>REFERENCES</i>	313