



# Career Colleges and Technical Schools

Is it the right choice for you?

# Presenters

Ms. Lillian Orlich

School Counselor

Osbourn Park High School

Mrs. Nancy Pomaranski

School Counselor

Stonewall Jackson High School



# What is a career college?

Vocational schools and correspondence schools train students for a variety of skilled jobs, including jobs as automotive technicians, medical assistants, hair stylists, interior designers, electronics technicians, paralegals, and truck drivers. Some schools also help students identify prospective employers and apply for jobs.

While many of these schools are reputable and teach the skills necessary to get a good job, others may not be. They may promise more than they can deliver to increase enrollment.

Adapted from Federal Trade Commission: Choosing a Career or Vocational School



# Before you enroll....

## What are the facilities like?

Find out as much as you can about the school's facilities. Visit in person and ask to see the classrooms and workshops. Also, ask about the types of equipment – like computers and tools – that students use for training. Is the training equipment the same that's used in the industry? Call some companies to find out.

## What does the school provide?

Are there supplies and tools that you must buy? If you need help overcoming language barriers or learning disabilities, find out if the school provides help, and at what cost?

Adapted from Federal Trade Commission: Choosing a Career or Vocational School



# Before you enroll.....

## Who are the instructors?

Ask about the instructors' qualifications and the size of classes. Sit in on a class to observe whether the students are engaged and the teacher is interesting. Talk to other students about their experience.

## What is the program's success rate?

Get some idea of the program's success rate.

Adapted from Federal Trade Commission: Choosing a Career or Vocational School



# Before you enroll.....

**Completion rate:** what percentage of students complete the program? A high dropout rate could mean students don't like the program.

**Job placement:** how many graduates find jobs in their chosen field? What is the average starting salary?

Adapted from Federal Trade Commission: Choosing a Career or Vocational School



# Before you enroll....

**Debt on graduation:** of the recent graduates who borrowed money to attend the school, what percent are delinquent in paying back those loans?

**Students' experiences:** can you get a list of recent graduates to ask about their experiences with the school?

Adapted from Federal Trade Commission: Choosing a Career or Vocational School



# Before you enroll....

**What is the total cost?**

Will you pay by course, semester, or program? What about fees for dropping or adding a class? In addition to tuition, what will you pay for books, equipment, uniforms, lab fees, or graduation fees?

If you need financial assistance, find out whether the school provides it, and if so, what it offers. The U.S. Department of Education administers several major student aid programs in the forms of grants, loans, and work-study programs.

Adapted from Federal Trade Commission: Choosing a Career or Vocational School



# Finding the Right Career College

What kind of career and technical training do you want?

Education beyond high school at a career or technical school can lead to a degree, diploma, or certificate in a variety of programs like computer programming, automotive technology, business administration and management, cosmetology, and interior design.

Talk to your high school counselor or a representative at your local [One-Stop Career Center](#) (located in Manassas and Woodbridge)

Adapted from USDOE Website



# Finding the Right Career College

Which schools offer the training or program you need?

Only schools accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education are able to enroll students who receive federal student financial aid.

Also, contact the licensing agency in the state where you want to go to school to find information on schools offering the training or program you're interested in.



# Finding the Right Career College

What preparation do you need for a particular job?

Do you need to complete a specific education program to get an entry-level job in the field you are interested in? Do you need to get a license or certificate in order to work in your field of choice?

Also, find out if any special license or certification is needed to get a job in the field of your choice. If you need a certificate or license, ask any school you are considering if its graduates are eligible for licensure or certification after they complete its program.



# Finding the Right Career College

Will employers accept the training as preparation for employment?

Call the employment office or human resources department of some businesses or companies where you might like to work. Ask if they expect employees to have a certificate or license in order to be hired. Also ask if they can recommend a career college or technical school that provides the training required for employment.

Adapted from USD OE Website



# Finding the Right Career College

## Finding Schools That Match Your Interests and Goals

What kind of career and technical training do you want?

Which schools offer the training or program you need?

What preparation do you need for a particular job?

Will employers accept the training as preparation for employment?

## Choosing a School

Is the school you are considering accredited and licensed?

What are the requirements for admission?

Will your coursework transfer to another school?

Is crime at the school a problem?

Should you visit the school?

Adapted from State Council of Higher Education in Virginia website



# Finding the Right Career College

## Paying For Your Education

How much will you pay for the program or training?

Is financial assistance or student aid available?

Will you have to sign an enrollment contract?

What is the school's refund policy?

## Special Considerations

Will your program be delivered by distance education?

Does the school offer job placement assistance?

How can you avoid diploma mills and unaccredited colleges?

Have students filed complaints against the school?



# Accreditation and Licensure

Is the school you are considering accredited and licensed?

Accrediting and state licensure agencies are gatekeepers that help make sure that you receive a quality education and get what you pay for. To learn more about accreditation and state licensure, read over the short descriptions below:

## *Accreditation*

Accreditation is a good basic indicator of quality, although not every school chooses to be accredited. If a school is accredited by a nationally recognized agency, it means it has met certain quality standards established by the accrediting agency.

Adapted from State Council of Higher Education in Virginia website



# Accreditation and Licensure

Is the school you are considering accredited and licensed?

## *Licensure*

Most states have laws requiring that career colleges and technical schools be licensed or certified to offer instructional courses and programs. If a school has a license or certificate to operate, it means it has gone through a process to make sure that it meets certain standards. Some states do not require certain schools to be licensed or certified to operate legally in the state.

Adapted from State Council of Higher Education in Virginia website



# Transferability of Credits

Will your coursework transfer to another school?

When looking for a school to attend, you may want to find out if your coursework will transfer to another school for academic credit. Courses you take in one school do not automatically transfer to another school. To find out whether coursework will transfer to another school, call the admissions or registrar's office and ask if the institution will accept credits from the career or technical school you are considering.

Adapted from State Council of Higher Education in Virginia website



# Local Accredited Career Colleges



- Centura College
- Aviation Institute of Maintenance
- ECPI University
- Stratford University
- The Paul Mitchell School

# Local Non-Accredited Career Colleges certified to operate in Virginia



American School of Nursing and Allied  
Health

Canine Clippers School of Pet Grooming

The Piedmont School of Professional  
Massage

Trinity Ambassadors International College

Ultimate Health School

# A look inside a local accredited school....

- Aviation Institute of Maintenance
  - Manassas, Virginia
  - Program – Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT)
  - Prepares students to be an Aircraft Mechanic, Aircraft Technician, Aircraft Restorer and more!
  - 2015 median wage for and Aircraft Mechanic is \$28.06/hour or \$58,370 annually

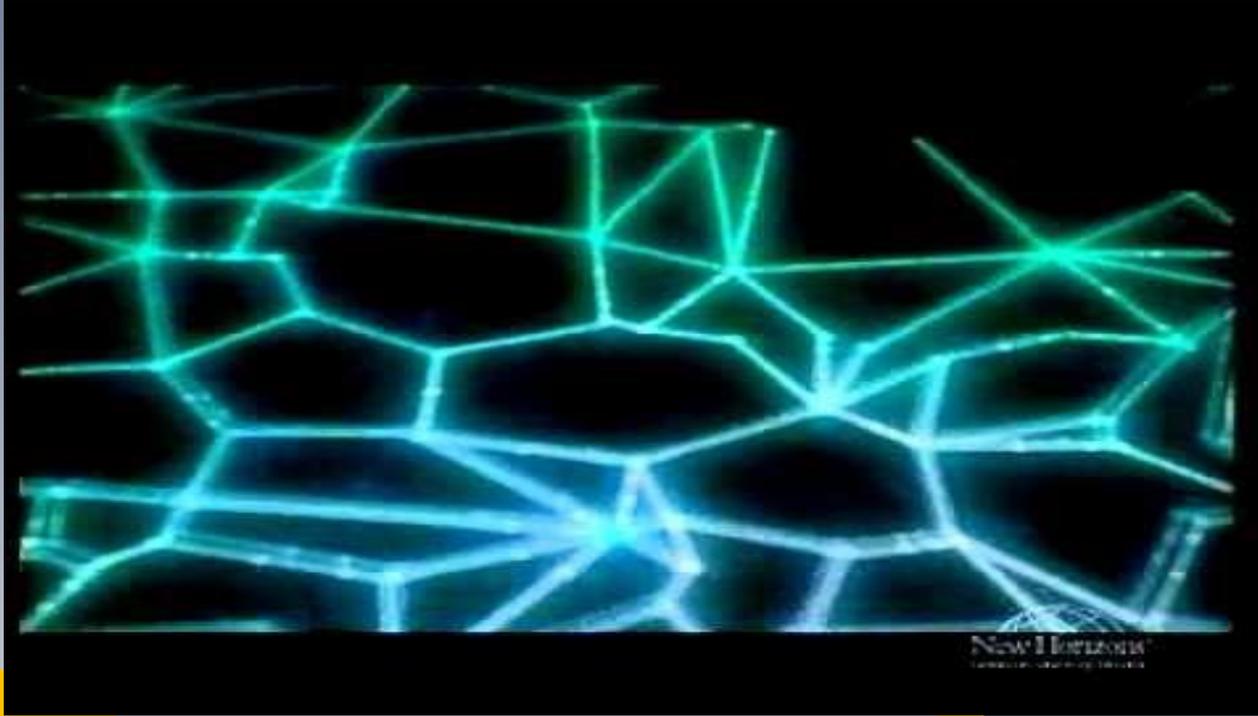
# A look inside a local accredited school....

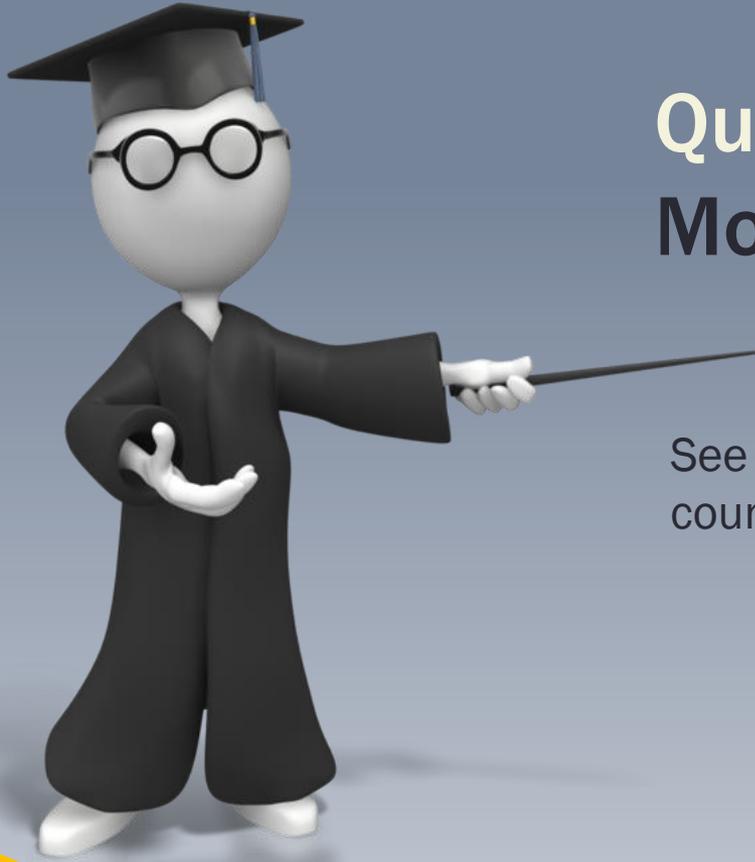


# A look inside a local non-accredited school....

- New Horizons Computer Learning Center
  - McLean, Virginia
  - Over 30 certification programs
  - Career programs
    - Network Support Technician (28 class days)
    - Microsoft Windows Server 2012 Administrator (15 class days)
    - Information Security Professional (15 class days)
    - Project Management Professional (6 class days)
    - Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) (4 class days)
  - 2015 Median Pay - \$24.75 per hour or \$51,470 annually

# A look inside a local non-accredited school....





# Questions? More Information?

See your school counselor or career  
counselor!