

GRAB BAG

Vocational education: who, what, and where

General education enriches any career, but vocational classes prepare students for specific work. A February 2000 report by the U.S. Department of Education, "Vocational Education in the United States: Toward the Year 2000," reports on trends and statistics concerning occupational education.

One-fourth of all high school students took three or more classes in a single occupational program in 1994, according to the report. Nearly one-third continued on to a 4-year college, and half went on to community college.

Students took vocational classes after high school, too. In fact, nearly half of all posthigh school students who weren't working toward a bachelor's degree had enrolled in vocational education in 1996. The most popular programs were business, health, and engineering and science technology. And the most popular place to study them was community college.

For a free copy of the report, call 1 (800) 433-7827 or view the report online at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2000/2000029.pdf>. This and other related reports are also available through the Department of Education's new Data on Vocational Education (DOVE) system at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/dove>.



Report on teen workers

If you're a high schooler with a job, you're part of a majority. Most people 14 years old and older perform some kind of paid work, although the youngest usually don't work during school months, according to the BLS *Report on the Youth Labor Force*.

The report summarizes the results of several studies. Among the findings:

- ◆ Between 1994 and 1997, more than half of all 14-year-olds and over 60 percent of 15-year-olds worked, most as freelancers.
- ◆ Thirteen percent of high schoolers participated in job shadowing in those years.
- ◆ More than 70 percent of workers between the ages of 15 and 17 made more than the minimum wage in 1998.
- ◆ Teens from low-income families were less likely to work than other teens were from 1994 to 1998.
- ◆ Sixteen- and 17-year-olds who worked fewer than 20 hours during school weeks were more likely to go to college by 1994 than those who didn't work.

Also discussed are types of jobs held, child labor laws, and the condition of young agricultural workers.

For a free copy of the report, mail a request to the Office of Publications and Special Studies, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2 Massachusetts Ave. NE., Room 2850, Washington, D.C., 20212-0001; call (202) 691-5200; or read the report online at <http://stats.bls.gov/opub/rylf/rylfhome.htm>.

Linking jobs to the classroom

Now, it's easier than ever to get a first-hand account of what it takes to succeed on the job.

The Library of the Workplace, an ongoing project of the Center for Occupational Research and Development (CORD), profiles occupations, career paths, and job skills. On the Library's website, workers explain how they use concepts from physics, mathematics, English, government, and other academic subjects in their careers. On one page, an engineer describes how she applies the Fourier analysis techniques she learned in math class to the work she does now. On another, an Internet solutions consultant explains why writing concisely is essential for his job.

Workers also discuss the importance of a well-rounded education, basic math and English skills, and other abilities, such as teamwork, research, troubleshooting, and dealing with irate customers.

Call CORD, (254) 772-8756, or browse the Library of the Workplace at <http://cord.org/workplacelibrary>.

