

GRAB

Nursing scholarships and information

More than 1 million new registered nurses will be needed between 2000 and 2010, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Nurses should be able to find plenty of opportunities: a study by the American Hospital Association and other organizations found a 13-percent average vacancy rate for registered nursing jobs in 2001. Along with good job prospects, nurses enjoy high pay, with BLS data showing their median earnings in the top quartile for all workers.

If statistics like these tempt you to consider a nursing career, two associations can help you get started. The Johnson and Johnson Foundation for Nursing's Future offers free information about nursing careers. Call tollfree, 1 (888) 981-9111 for brochures, posters, and videos that briefly describe nursing specialties, the types of training available, and nurses' earnings, benefits, and employment prospects. An online version of these and more in-depth recruiting materials, together with a database of scholarships and schools, is available at www.discovernursing.com.

The National Student Nurses Association offers more than \$100,000 in scholarships to nursing students every year. For more information, call (718) 210-0705 or visit www.nсна.org/career/index.html before the February 1 application deadline. Also available on the Association's Web site is career information, including booklets and articles describing nursing school and life on the job.



Employers' participation in school-to-work

Programs that expose students to the workplace all share one essential ingredient: employer participation. A survey by the Society for Human Resources Management offers some insight into why employers choose or decline participation in job shadowing, internships, and mentoring.

The major barriers to involvement, according to the study, are lack of entry-level positions (cited by 52 percent of nonparticipants), insufficient knowledge of programs (cited by 25 percent), and lack of time (18 percent) and expertise (7 percent). Liability and cost were stumbling blocks for 5 and 3 percent of nonparticipants, respectively.

For additional survey results, including employers' views on the effectiveness of various school-to-work programs, call (703) 548-3440 to order the report. You may also read the report online at www.shrm.org/surveys/results.

No more 9 to 5? Flexible hours for many

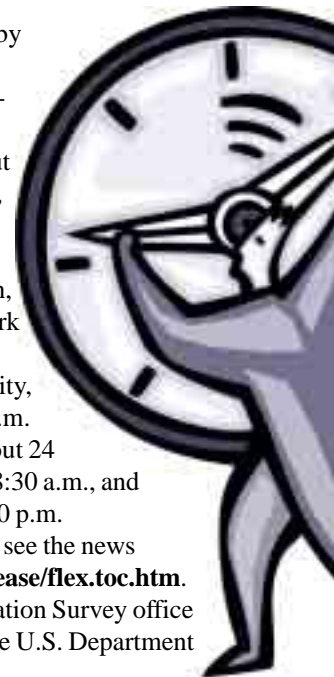
Flexible work schedules are becoming common, especially for workers in some occupations.

In May 2001, about 29 percent of all full-time, wage-and-salary workers set their own starting and stopping times, according to BLS. That's more than double the number who reported having flexible hours 10 years ago. Most flexible scheduling arrangements were informal, but 11 percent of workers had formal flextime agreements with their employers.

Freedom from the time clock varied by occupation. More than half of full-time college teachers, mathematical and computer scientists, and natural scientists could set their own schedules. And about 46 percent of executives, administrators, and managers and 41 percent of salesworkers could. In contrast, only about 18 percent of precision production, craft, and repair workers varied their work times at will.

Even with these high rates of flexibility, however, working from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. remains the most popular schedule. About 24 percent of workers start between 8 and 8:30 a.m., and about 30 percent end between 5 and 5:30 p.m.

For more information on this survey, see the news release online at www.bls.gov/news.release/flex.toc.htm. You may also call BLS's Current Population Survey office at (202) 691-6378 or through the tollfree U.S. Department of Labor number, 1 (866) 487-2365.



BAG

Free career guidance from the military

Regardless of whether you're interested in joining the military, the U.S. Department of Defense can help you make career decisions.

One resource the Department offers is a free career aptitude test, the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). The test measures ability in basic subjects, such as language, mathematics, and mechanics. All those enlisting in the military take this test to determine which occupations they are qualified for, but anyone who is at least a high school sophomore can take the test. And test takers have no obligation to join the military.

A free career exploration workbook, also offered by the Department of Defense, includes a career interest test and matches the scores on the interest and aptitude tests with civilian and military occupations. Another section of the workbook describes career exploration techniques.

To take the ASVAB and receive the career exploration workbook, register with your high school guidance counselor. To learn more about the ASVAB and about military careers and training, visit www.todaymilitary.com or www.militarycareers.com. Or, call tollfree, 1 (888) 855-HERO (4376).

Suggestions welcome

Do you have an item for the Grab Bag?
Send it to Olivia Crosby, PSB 2135, 2
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Eighth graders, 12 years later

How was the eighth-grade class of 1988 faring a dozen years later? A survey by the U.S. Department of Education set out to answer that question.

As part of an ongoing longitudinal study, a new report describes the labor market and educational experiences, marriage and family creation, and civic activity of people who were in the eighth grade in 1988. According to the study:

- ◆ Most of the group liked their jobs, with 86 percent of the employed satisfied overall, 79 percent satisfied with job security, and 71 percent satisfied with their promotion opportunities. Satisfaction was even higher for those with college degrees, reaching an overall rate of 94 percent for those with master's degrees.
- ◆ Forty-seven percent of the group had earned some college credits, but not a degree, after high school; 29 percent had earned a bachelor's degree. Those who, as eighth graders, had taken algebra, participated in extracurricular activities, or attended private school were more likely to earn college credits.
- ◆ Sixty-one percent of the group had received job training during the year before the survey. Those who had high school diplomas or college degrees or who had scored higher on eighth grade mathematics tests were most likely to have had training.

For more study results, order a copy of "Coming of Age in the 1990's: The Eighth Grade Class of 1988 12 Years Later" by calling tollfree, 1 (877) 4-ED-PUBS (433-7827). You also may view the report online at nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/2002321.pdf.