



Apprenticeship: Earn while you learn

Did you know that, every year, thousands of people earn money while learning new skills? They're apprentices, and their paid training helps pave the way to a career.

The usual practice in registered apprenticeship is for someone new to an occupation to receive on-the-job training along with occupation-specific technical instruction. This instruction may take place through distance learning or in a classroom. Apprentices are paid employees, so they earn wages for the time they spend working on the job, and some employers pay for all or part of the related technical instruction. Upon finishing an apprenticeship—determined by length of program, competency assessment, or a combination of the two—participants receive a nationally recognized completion certificate.

Nearly half a million people enter registered apprenticeship programs each year in the United States. There are plenty to choose from: about 29,000 programs covering roughly 1,000 career areas are registered with the U.S. Department of Labor. The list of apprenticeable occupations includes chefs, child care development specialists, dental assistants, law enforcement agents, and pipefitters. This list is updated periodically to reflect our changing workforce; for example, wind turbine technician was added recently as the first apprenticeable “green” occupation.

Registered apprenticeship programs conform to certain guidelines and industry-established training standards. The programs may be run by businesses, trade or professional associations, or partnerships with businesses and unions.

To learn more about apprenticeship processes and occupations or for links to other sources of information, visit the Department of Labor's Registered Apprenticeship Web site at www.doleta.gov/oa, email etapagemaster@dol.gov, or call toll-free, 1 (877) US-2JOBS (872-5627).

Guidance on career guidance for offender reentry

Stable employment is a key factor in the successful rehabilitation of law offenders. And now there's a resource available to those who provide job-search guidance to offenders.

The National Institute of Corrections wants to improve offenders' long-term employment prospects. The Institute's “Career Resource Centers: An Emerging Strategy for Improving Offender Employment Outcomes” is a how-to guide for establishing a career center in correctional facilities, parole and probation offices, or community organizations. The guide offers practical information in multimedia formats—all at no cost.

The print publication includes a description of the common elements of career resource centers, an explanation of how to work with inmate career clerks and build community ties, and a discussion about the role of assessment. A companion DVD provides career assessment software, videotaped interviews with practitioners, and some of the basic materials used in a center, such as the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

To get your free guide, ask for item number 023066 when writing to the National Institute of Corrections Information Center, 791 North Chambers Road, Aurora, Colorado 80011; or when calling toll-free, 1 (800) 877-1461. Or, visit the Institute online at <http://nicic.gov/features/library/default.aspx?library=023066>.



Scholarships for minority students

Minority students with leadership skills, a good GPA, and college aspirations could be eligible for a Gates Millennium Scholars scholarship for use at the university of their choice. Recipients who progress satisfactorily toward a degree may renew the scholarship each year—all the way through graduate school for students in certain subject areas.

The Gates Millennium Scholars program, funded by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, covers unmet educational costs for selected African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian and Pacific Islander American, and Hispanic American students. In addition to financial assistance, scholarship recipients receive mentoring services, academic encouragement, and access to an online resource center that provides information about internship, fellowship, and scholarship opportunities.

Minority applicants for the renewable awards must be enrolling for the first time as degree-seeking undergraduates at an accredited college or university, be U.S. citizens or legal residents, meet Federal Pell Grant eligibility criteria, demonstrate leadership through community service or other activities, and have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.3 (on a 4.0 scale) or have earned a high school equivalency credential. Funding continues for

scholars who pursue graduate study in computer science, education, public health, and some other fields.

The program is administered by the United Negro College Fund, which has partnered with other scholarship programs to reach minority students who have academic and leadership potential. For more information, including access to online application forms, visit www.gmsp.org. You can also call toll-free, 1 (877) 690-4677, or write to Gates Millennium Scholars, P.O. Box 10500, Fairfax, Virginia 22031.



CLEAR WINNER

Data and other complex information are often not so reader-friendly. The *Occupational Outlook Quarterly* tries to make complicated topics comprehensible to its audience—and a recent award suggests success.

The 2010 ClearMark Awards from the Center for Plain Language recognized the best use of clear language in business, government, and nonprofit writing. *Quarterly* submissions were honored in the public-sector documents category. Judges evaluated 160 entries on criteria such as word choice, sentence structure, and organization and design details.

These were the first awards presented by the Center for Plain Language, but writing prizes are not new to the *Quarterly*. Previous honors, including those from the Society for Technical Communication and the National Association of Government Communicators, demonstrate the *Quarterly's* long-standing commitment to quality.