

# TOP 10 WAYS TO PREPARE FOR COLLEGE



**Stay involved...**  
in school & community activities. Consider volunteering or being part of a club. It's quality, not quantity that counts.



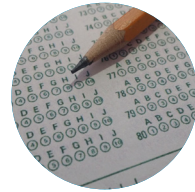
**Visit campuses...**  
of college you're interested in. Narrow down your top choice to find the right fit for YOU!



**Fill out the FAFSA...**  
This is a must-do first step to find money for college.



**Keep your GPA up...**  
It's more important than you might think! A good GPA opens up doors to more scholarships and more opportunity at your chosen college.



**Take practice ACT/SAT tests...**  
so you can be better prepared for the actual test and get a better score.



**Research scholarships...**  
you might qualify for and fill out the applications. Take time with the essays.



**Finish college applications...**  
as early as possible - don't wait until the last minute.



**Most importantly... connect with others!**  
Talk about your plans & ask for help from school counselors, college advisors, family, teachers, recent college grads, and other mentors in your life.



**Explore challenging courses...**  
such as advanced placement, dual enrollment, and honors level options at your high school.



**Explore careers...**  
by identifying your skills and interests, job-shadowing, or taking online career placement tests.

# 70% OF JOBS WILL REQUIRE EDUCATION AFTER HIGH SCHOOL BY 2020 WHICH PATH WILL YOU CHOOSE?



OCEANA COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK  
www.oceanacan.org • 231-301-8210

## OUR VISION:

Oceana County encourages all students to pursue and complete education and training beyond high school to help alleviate poverty, build and sustain a vibrant economy, and ensure global competitiveness within our local workforce.

Dear Parents,

**High school is an exciting time!** Your child may be adjusting to a new school, new teachers, a harder class schedule, more homework, new friends and becoming more independent. Your child still needs your help, involvement and support. Parents, grandparents, and other caring adults play a critical role in a child's education.

**Did you know** that numerous studies identify you as the single most important factor in your child's decision to go to college? Regardless of whether or not you attended college, your consistent and unwavering reinforcement of the importance of lifelong learning is the greatest factor in a child's decision-making process.

**You can help your teen succeed** by taking time to learn about college and financial planning; including understanding the process, meeting deadlines, and talking to the right people.

**Together,** you can share these important goals to help them succeed this year and beyond towards a career after high school.

**In today's world** education after high school is becoming a necessity for career-track jobs that pay a living wage and provide opportunity for promotion. College isn't limited to four-year universities. High quality certificates, skilled trades training, degree programs at community colleges, and technical schools are great routes through college to prepare for a career.

**You are not in this alone** — it's really a team effort! You play a critical role in helping your student put together the team when planning for college! Help expand the amount of adults in your student's life who can help. Encourage them to talk about their goals with parents/guardians, other family members, teachers, coaches, guidance counselors, and/or religious leaders.

# CHOOSING A CAREER

## 1. KNOW WHAT YOU LIKE & ENJOY WHAT YOU DO

Think about your passions, likes, and dislikes. Don't limit thinking to just schoolwork but also think about extracurricular or household activities. This will help you to choose a career that you will enjoy.

## 2. CONSIDER YOUR STUDENT LOAN DEBT -TO-INCOME RATIO

Studies prove education does pay; however, it is a long-term investment and you may need to borrow money. Financial experts recommend that you limit your debt to no more than 15-20% of your take-home pay. Research your potential major and career online to investigate what one may make and compare this to what college will cost you.

## 3. KNOW THE JOB MARKET

When looking at possible careers take a look at the projected growth and demand along with current unemployment trends. The US Department of Labor keeps a good handbook where you can check here: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/most-new-jobs.htm>

## 4. ITS NOT A REST-OF-LIFE DECISION

Choosing a major or training option does not lock you into a career for the rest of your life. A credential equips you with a desirable set of skills and abilities that can be applied to any number of employment opportunities!

### Encourage your student to participate in annual opportunities in the Oceana Community!

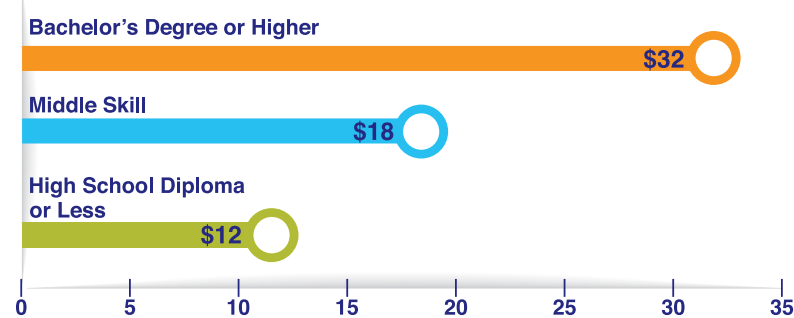
Information available at your counselor's office and [www.oceanacan.org](http://www.oceanacan.org)

- Job Shadow Opportunities "Students in the Workplace"
- Financial Aid Information Night November
- College and Career Fair February of Junior Year
- Campus Visits
- Mentoring Opportunities
- SAT Prep Courses February
- Pre-College Credit Experiences AP (Advanced Placement)
- Dual Enrollment, CTE (Career & Technical Education)
- PROMESA Summer Success
- ASM Tech Early College

### College enables your student to:

- Earn more money and gain financial security
- Find a greater range and number of job opportunities
- Expand knowledge and skills to be successful in our complex world
- Allow expression of thoughts clearly in speech and in writing
- Increase understanding of the world and community

**60%L 2025** 60% of Oceana Residents will have a post-secondary degree or credential by 2025



The bar chart above shows the median wage of occupations broken down by the required level of education. It shows that there is a strong correlation between high levels of education and higher median wages. Middle-skill jobs are those that require education or training beyond high school but less than a bachelor's degree.

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