Vocational schools draw career-minded

WASHINGTON — With an increased interest in vocational education, great numbers of career-minded Americans are turning to thousands of specialized vocational schools for training in a variety of occupations from auto repair to X-ray technology.

Unlike other forms of education, career education is exclusively employment-oriented, offering concentrated courses in a skills without frills setting. The number of schools — and the occupations they teach — is mindboggling.

About 10,000 vocational schools offer hundreds of occupations, and in order to make a good choice, the chairman of the Federal Trade Commission advises students to look before they leap.

"American consumers are becoming increasingly attracted to the promising value of a vocational education. Along with this growing popularity there is an increasing need for prospective students to make a careful evaluation of a specific vocational course or school before they make any fihancial commitment. The essential criterion for that evaluation should be the value of the school's training in helping students get a good job," according to Federal Trade Commission Chairman Lewis A. Engman.

The process of selecting the right career can be an exciting bargain hunt, well worth careful effort. After all, it is probably the most important purchase a person makes in his or her lifetime. The following information suggests a path that is bound to help one succeed.

First, one should choose a career which is suitable to his shopping likes or hobbies. If one has always liked to work around the house fixing the toaster, he should take a repair course. Perhaps one likes animals, if so, he should think about veterinarian assisting. There are hundreds of attractive career choices to consider.

For a complete list of possible careers one may consult a local library for the U.S. Department of Labor's "Occupational Outlook Handbook." This handbook is an invaluable source of information, covering 800 different careers.

For example, it predicts if the demand in these careers will rise, remain stable or decline through the 1970's. It described the duties and average earnings of each job and indicates what sort of training is required for entry level positions.

Next one may look into schools. He can go to the library for the U.S. Office of Education's directory of "Postsecondary Schools with Occupational Programs" which lists schools by occupational categories. For a free "Directory of Accredited Private Trade and Technical Schools," he may write to the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools, 2021 L Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.

This directory lists about 430 accredited schools teaching over 100 different careers, including auto repair, catering, data processing, diamond cutting, dog grooming, heavy equipment operation, gunsmithing, watchmaking, veterinarian assisting and others.

One may write to four or five schools for catalogues which will give important facts such as cost, a description of the courses and facilities and other pertinent bits of information.

A person may look for the school's accreditation since this is an important factor. There are many accrediting bodies recognized by the U.S. Office of Education. Is the school approved by one of them?

While accreditation, which is a voluntary process, should not be the only factor in making a choice, a school which has been accredited has undergone an exhaustive and vigorous "looking over" by experts in the occupational area it teaches.

According to the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools, the major accrediting body in this vocational area, it accredits only those schools which prepare a graduate for the job market.

Some schools will also provide lists of employers who hire the school's graduates.

A person can put this list to work. One may ask the employers for their evaluation of the school's teaching ability. Are they satisfied with the school's graduates? Will they continue to hire them?

The best test is to visit the school, even if it involves money, time and trouble — it is worth it. At the school one can compare the catalogue with the real thing. Was the catalogue accurate in its description? He can next talk to students and teachers.

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Coed holds Bell job

MURRAY HILLS, N.J. — Denise Barnes of New Orleans, La., spent her summer working in a chemistry lab at Bell Telephone Laboratories, here.

Denise's project is to prepare chemically and to characterize physically a series of "metal cluster" compounds — a cluster of metal atoms surrounded by organic molecules.

This work will help Bell Labs scientists understand the basic properties of new materials to meet future Bell System needs.

Denise was one of about 200 students from technical institutes and colleges throughout the country who participated in summer employment programs at Bell Labs.

These programs are designed to encourage minorities and women to seek scientific and engineering careers by giving them an opportunity to work closely with scientists and engineers in a modern industrial research and development laboratory.

DENISE BARNES, a college senior, worked this summer in a chemistry lab at Bell Telephone Laboratories. Denise was one of about 200 students from technical institute and colleges who participated in summer employment programs at Bell Labs.

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Tree firm vows to hire both minorities and women

PHILADELPHIA — Management of Asplundh Tree Expert Co. has signed an agreement pledging it to undertake broad programs to recruit, hire and to promote both minority and female workers.

Clarence Farmer, chairman, Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations, described the settlement as one of the most significant to be negotiated by his staff with firms which must meet the city government's "Philadelphia Plan" standards "as a condition for bidding on public contracts.

The standards demand that such companies have fully effective equal opportunity hiring and promotion programs, evidenced by satisfactory numbers of minority and female workers at all levels.

Farmer said that the Asplund agreement will have national implications, since the terms are to be applied throughout company operations in 40 states.

The accord opens the way for the awarding of two contracts totalling some $1.7 million under which Asplundh will prune trees and remove dead trees under direction of the Fairmount Park Commission.

The firm was low bidder when the Procurement Department opened bids on July 17 and Sept. 23, but awards were held up pending completion of the settlement with the Commission on Human Relations.

The agreement terms, set forth in a 21-page document signed by Farmer and Barr Asplundh, president of the company, will result in the employment of significant numbers of minorities and females.

A key provision requires the company to file a comprehensive plan with the commission within six months setting forth techniques for increasing numbers of minority and female workers at all levels of operations.

To help expedite implementation, a corporate equal employment opportunity officer responsible to the company president must be appointed with assistant EEO officers stationed at local plants at Willow Grove, Chalfont, and Philmont, Pa., and elsewhere throughout the country.

In addition, at the end of each four months thereafter, management must furnish the commission with progress reports covering implementation efforts, numbers of job openings, hires, terminations and promotions categorized according to minority group and sex.

Required under other provisions:

— Management must furnish to all employes annually a statement spelling out its equal employment policy;

— Contracts with all subcontractors employed by Asplundh must contain nondiscriminatory clauses;

— Recruitment efforts must be made through agencies and organizations specializing in minority and female employee referrals;

— All employment advertising must indicate that the company is an equal employment opportunity employer, and no sex preference may be indicated;

— Goals and timetables for implementation of the agreement must be formulated within 200 days;

— All questions relative to arrest records or national origin must be eliminated from employment application forms, and a strict accounting must be kept of all applications filed by jobseekers, whether or not they are hired; and

— The company, within six months, must complete a review of all types of jobs to insure that their requirements do not needlessly bar minority or female workers from holding them.

The number of employees who worked more than the "standard" 40-hour workweek and the number who received premium pay for hours exceeding the standard were substantially lower in May 1975 than a year earlier, according to the U. S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Shirley McBay's toughest equation: E+S+$=Ph.D.

Shirley McBay began her career as a math teacher at Spelman College in Atlanta.

She was an enthusiastic instructor, highly skilled in her subject. And she had a strong desire to study for a Ph.D. so she could develop her teaching abilities to the fullest.

But this was one equation Shirley McBay couldn't solve herself. Because it takes more than *enthusiasm* and *skill* to earn an advanced degree.

It takes *money* too.

The United Negro College Fund recognized Shirley McBay's potential. But it did more than that. UNCF awarded her an IBM Faculty Fellowship grant.

With the help of that grant, Shirley McBay went on to a doctoral degree, and then returned to Spelman where she became Chairman of the Division of Natural Sciences.

Without this kind of help, educators like Dr. McBay might never get a chance to continue their advanced education.

That's one of the reasons we began supporting the United Negro College Fund 30 years ago. It's why we've funded over 120 Faculty Fellowship grants at member colleges since 1963.

It's also why other organizations and individuals are providing their support.

The more help UNCF gets, the more UNCF can help.

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