

FINDING MEANINGFUL WORK: ALTERNATIVES TO COLLEGE

(this list is updated regularly, so check back periodically to see new additions)

GENERAL CAREER INFO, FINDING A JOB

[MASSHIRE](#) and [MASSHIRE SOUTH SHORE](#)

MASSHIRE helps connect job seekers with job providers. It's a great place to start looking for work, especially when you need ideas and inspiration. You have to register with them first, and then they will send you information about job fairs and hiring fairs. They work with larger entities like the MBTA, Post office, and other industries.

[CAREER ONE-STOP](#)

Find career information, research programs, learn about career outlooks and how to find a job or job training program.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE & VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS:

WASHINGTON MONTHLY RANKINGS for VOCATIONAL CERTIFICATES

Rankings are not just for 4-year colleges. Check these out for inspiration (keeping in mind that rankings are only one "opinion" among many. Programs in [Cosmetology](#), [Dental Support](#), [Health Diagnostics](#), [Medical Administration](#), [Medical Assistant](#), [Nursing](#), [Precision Metal](#), [Somatic Bodywork](#), [Vehicle Maintenance Repair](#).

[CAPE COD COMMUNITY COLLEGE](#): unique programs (there are MANY other certificate programs at 4Cs... this is just a sampling)

- [Aviation Maintenance Technology](#) - 24-month program that teaches you how to repair and maintain every part of an airplane. Complete your FAA certification. Earn upwards of \$70K/year starting salary.
- [Alcohol & Substance Abuse Counselor](#) - earn a certificate and help others through recovery programs (while also learning about your own recovery)
- [Bookkeeping Clerk Certification](#)
- [Culinary Arts Certification](#)
- [Funeral Service Studies](#) - learn about embalming, bereavement & support, legal issues, ceremonial practices in different cultures
- [Fire Science Program](#)
- [Homeland Security Certificate](#)
- [Landscape Design & Construction](#)
- [Medical Interpreter Certification](#) - learn how to translate from/into your native language in a medical context. Spanish, Portuguese especially needed.

[MASSASOIT COMMUNITY COLLEGE](#): Massasoit has a wealth of programs. Here are a few programs our students have been interested in:

- [Dental Assistant Program](#)
- [Diesel Technology Training](#)
- [Java/Microsoft Office Certification](#)
- [Paramedic Certification](#)
- [Veterinary Technology Program](#)

BRISTOL COMMUNITY COLLEGE: BCC, located in Fall River, has many programs. BCC programs align well with programs at UMass Dartmouth, if you want to continue with a 4-year degree. Here are a few programs and short courses that might interest you:

- [Biotech & Forensic DNA](#)
- [Dental Hygiene Program](#)
- [Culinary, Hospitality, Baking & Pastry Arts](#)
- [Cybersecurity & Digital Forensics Program](#)
- [Electro-Mechanical w/Green Energy Program](#)
- [Offshore Wind Program](#)
- [Sustainable Agriculture Programs](#)
- [Veterinary Health Care Program](#)
- [Real Estate License Exam Prep Course](#)
- [Excel Bootcamp](#) & Essential Business Skills courses
- [Writing a Business Plan Course](#)

TRADES, TECHNOLOGY, & CRAFT



construction/trades



maritime/boats



automotive



technology



craft/making things

[MA UNION APPRENTICESHIPS THAT ARE HIRING NOW](#)



Apprenticeship is paid training in a trade or craft. This is an active list that is constantly updating. Read through this now to see what strikes you as interesting. Come back in May just before you graduate to see what's available. Must be 18 and a high school graduate to apply to most of these. EARN \$ while you learn!

[APPRENTICESHIPS IN MA: MORE INFO](#)



Info from MA Government site about upcoming apprenticeship recruitments as well as info about how to become an apprentice. Watch the short video.

[AMERICAN COLLEGE OF THE BUILDING ARTS](#)



Learn any of these trades: Blacksmithing, Carpentry, Architecture, Plaster, Stone Carving, or Timber Framing. Most colleges offer a degree upon completion. ACBA builds upon the degree by adding in journeyman level trade expertise, an extensive portfolio of real-world projects, a liberal arts curriculum integrated with the trades. Students are setup for multiple career paths in in-demand fields. Located in Charleston, SC.

[AUTO SCHOOL GUIDE](#)

Auto School Guide is a comprehensive, automotive school directory. Need information about quality schools for mechanic training? Educate yourself about your automotive technician career opportunities. Find info on mechanic schools, motorcycle mechanic schools, diesel mechanic schools, aircraft schools, marine mechanic schools and more. If you are interested in a career in automotive training, truck driving, or even collision and refinishing, Auto School Guide can provide you with only the finest technical colleges that can give you the opportunity for success in the automotive industry. Check out our feature auto school and our other automotive technology education resources. We also provide the latest news in the automotive industry.

[BUILDING PATHWAYS SOUTH](#)

A pre-apprenticeship program bringing South Shore residents into high-skill, high pay careers in the union Building Trades. PBS provides you with career readiness and occupational skills training, classroom and hands-on learning experiences, and will provide career placement services, connecting you with labor unions and professionals once you complete the program. This program is FREE but you have to apply.

[CODING & PROGRAMMING BOOTCAMPS: A GUIDE](#)

Coding bootcamps are intensive, short-term training programs in web or mobile development, design, or security. These programs are offered both online and in-person and typically take less than four months to complete. The tech industry also continues to be a lucrative industry. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects a 15% increase in information technology (IT) and IT occupations between 2021 and 2031, nearly double that of the average expected growth for all other industries. In 2021, these workers also earned a median annual salary of \$97,430, more than double the national median salary across all jobs.

[GREAT LAKES BOAT BUILDING SCHOOL](#)

Preparing students for rewarding careers in the marine industry. 2 programs: Comprehensive Career Boat building - 12 month program (CCBB) and Marine Service Technology (MST) 12 month program. Located in Cedarville, Michigan.

[IYRS SCHOOL OF TECHNOLOGY & TRADES](#)

IYRS School of Technology & Trades is a non-profit, post-secondary experiential learning institution in Newport, Rhode Island and is the premier marine trades and modern manufacturing school in the United States. IYRS offers education & training programs for people with a passion for thinking and working through their hands. Our students are aspiring craftspeople, designers, makers, and technicians who come to IYRS to learn advanced craftsmanship and technical skills to go on to careers in a wide range of industries, including yacht building, historic restoration, fine furniture making, wind energy, aerospace, consumer goods prototyping, and more. Scholarships available.

[THE LANDING SCHOOL](#)

The Landing School of Boat Building and Design, located in Arundel Maine, is the oldest operating school of its type in the United States and the first to be accredited by The Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC). In addition, The Landing School is the only school in the world offering accredited programs in Yacht Design, Wooden Boat Building, Composite Boat Building and Marine Systems under one roof.

[MASSACHUSETTS GIRLS IN TRADES](#)

An organization set up to support women in trades and technical work. They organize job fairs, promote networking, and provide education to female-identifying high school students interested in learning about high-paying careers in building trades specifically.

[MASS MARITIME: OFFSHORE WIND TRAINING](#)

Complete the globally recognized GWO Safety Training. This is the first location in the US to offer all five levels of GWO Basic Safety Training for Offshore Wind. Connect to local labor unions who are working in Offshore Wind, one of the most significant emerging industries in the region.

[MERIT AMERICA](#)

Break into tech without quitting your day job. Start a career in IT Support, Java Development, Data Analytics, UX Design and receive training certification from third party training providers like Google. Apply to the program with a high school diploma. Program is one year of evening/online courses and includes weekly small group meetings and 1:1s with a dedicated coach. Merit America is a non-profit organization. There are no up-front costs for any programs. Only AFTER you are placed in a high-paying job, the program will charge you a small monthly amount for four years. If you lose your job or your income drops below the threshold, payments pause.

[MTTI](#)

MTTI, based in Seekonk, RI, is a technical/trade school that provides training programs in automotive and motorcycle mechanics, building and property trades, office management, medical billing, etc.

[NEW ENGLAND INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY](#)

Earn a Certificate or do a bridge program to an AA or BA/BS degree. Programs are tech-focused but also include programs like vet tech, building construction, automotive, cyber security, game design, etc.

[NORTH BENNET STREET SCHOOL](#)

NBSS teaches students to become professional craftspeople. Training programs in Carpentry, Bookbinding, Cabinet & Furniture-making, Jewelry Making & Repair, Locksmithing & Security Technology, Piano Technology Tuning/Repair, Violin-making & Repair. Programs are 1 or 2 years. Located in Boston's North End.

[PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY](#)

Certificates and Associates degrees (as well as Bachelors) in many different fields, esp. auto mechanics, auto body repair, manufacturing, culinary arts, construction equipment, manufacturing, nursing/healthcare, business administration, etc.

[STONEHILL COLLEGE: PHOTONICS CERTIFICATE PROGRAM](#)



Photonics, the study of light-based technology and other applications of optical science, is rapidly expanding. But the supply of qualified workers is inadequate to fulfill industry hiring needs, particularly personnel involved in assembly, quality control, testing, repair and technical work. This certificate program is designed to equip program participants with the skills and experience needed to thrive in this burgeoning market. This certification is a **12-month, 24-credit program, 3-nights a week** to prepare students - with little or no background in the field - for careers as technicians in the integrated photonics industry.

[TESLA START](#)



Tesla START is an intensive 14-week training program that provides students across North America with the skills necessary for a successful career at Tesla and beyond. During the program, students develop technical expertise and earn certifications through in-class theory, hands-on labs and self-paced learning. This is a non-exempt position. Successful graduates of the program will have the opportunity to accept full-time employment at a Tesla Factory within 30 days of graduation. (Various locations: California, North Carolina, Washington, Florida, Texas, Colorado)

[UNIVERSAL TECHNICAL INSTITUTE](#)



Training programs at different sites across the country in specialized auto mechanics (NASCAR, BMW, Ford, Mercedes, GM, etc.), motorcycle mechanics, aviation maintenance tech, diesel, marine engines, robotics and automation, wind power, and more.

[VERMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE](#) (soon to become part of VERMONT STATE UNIV System)



Earn a Certificate, Associate's, or Bachelor's degree in a number of areas including agriculture, food, software, automotive, aviation, business, etc.

WENTWORTH INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY: Workforce Training Programs



[Construction Supervisor](#) (12-week program)

[Journeyman Electrician](#) (12-week program)

[YEAR-UP](#)



Year-Up is a one-year training program in information technology that contains an internship component. The program is free and you get paid a stipend. Must be from a low-/middle-income family.

NATURE & ENVIRONMENT

[RANGER SCHOOL @SUNY COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTRY](#)

Become a forest ranger through this Associates (AAS) degree program at SUNY Environment. Leads to possible careers in recreational settings, resource management, tree care, land surveying, running a nursery, and much more.

[TEMPLE UNIVERSITY'S PARK RANGER LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY](#)

Temple's Park Ranger Law Enforcement Academy (Ambler, PA campus) is a full-time, 19-week program consisting of more than 700 hours of professional instruction designed to prepare and enable students to obtain employment with the National Park Service as a seasonal law enforcement ranger. The curriculum places particular emphasis on visitor and resource protection, federal law and procedure, authority and jurisdiction, natural and cultural resource management, officer safety and survival skills, and physical conditioning. Upon successful completion of the program, students are awarded a certificate of completion from the Temple University Park Ranger Law Enforcement Academy (PRLEA) and the National Park Service-Law Enforcement Training Center (LETC).

[WILDLANDS FIREFIGHTING TRAINING/APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM](#)

Learn the basic skills to become a wildlands firefighter. Challenge yourself to new limits! You have to apply and it's competitive. Commitment: 3,000 on-the-job training hours and 2-month residential firefighting academy in California.

TRANSPORTATION

[ALPHA-ONE FLIGHT SCHOOL](#) (Plymouth)

Have you ever wanted to fly? Get flight training for airplanes & helicopters.

[AVIATE - UNITED AIRLINES](#)

Dream of flying but don't know where to start? United Aviate Academy will help you get your Private Pilot License and join the Aviate program in as little as two months. Once in the Aviate program, you'll complete training at the United Aviate Academy, build experience at our partners and be on track to Captain at United.

[MBTA](#)

Want to drive a train or a bus? Attend a recruitment event through MassHire to learn more. Events take place about every month.

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY SERVICE

[AMERI CORPS](#)

AmeriCorps pays you to do service work in cities across the country. You'll earn enough to support yourself and also earn a \$5000 grant that can be applied to college tuition at a later date.

[CITYYEAR](#) - BOSTON (and other cities- you can choose)

Commit one year of community service, helping to make a difference in an elementary school in a community that needs your support. Great pay, benefits, college scholarships, career coaching.

[WORLD-WIDE OPPORTUNITIES ON ORGANIC FARMS](#)

The WWOOF network matches organic farms with individuals willing to work. Costs \$30 for membership, plus your own travel expenses. You can be a WWOOFER in a number of different countries.

CULINARY & HOSPITALITY

[CULINARY INSTITUTE OF AMERICA](#)

Certificate, Associates, Bachelors, and Masters degrees in all areas of culinary arts, nutrition, restaurant management, marketing, culinary education, etc.

[AUGUSTE ESCOFFIER SCHOOL OF CULINARY ARTS](#)

Work in a fine-dining restaurant. Start your own food truck, restaurant, or catering business. Pastry Arts! Lead and manage others where you already work. Whatever your goals, Escoffier can help get you there faster with the flexibility of online or on-campus learning. (Texas and Colorado)

MILITARY SERVICE

[How to Join the Military](#)

One website for everything: find a website for each of the six branches of the military ([Air Force](#), [Army](#), [Coast Guard](#), [Marine Corps](#), [Navy](#), [Space Force](#)). Find a recruiter, compare salaries, etc.

[MASSACHUSETTS NATIONAL GUARD](#) (air, army, etc)

Learn leadership skills and gain technical experience. Training typically requires one weekend each month, with a two-week training period once each year. Get a degree with money for school (100% Tuition & Fees Waived), learn job skills (over 130 careers) that translate to the civilian world, make bonds that last a lifetime, and earn pride for life.

LANGUAGE & TRAVEL

[EF LANGUAGES ABROAD](#) (short-term or longer sessions available)

Learn a language by traveling! 10 languages, 50 destinations, programs as short as 2 weeks long or as long as a year. Attend a Zoom session to learn more. Financial aid may be available.

[LTL LANGUAGE SCHOOL](#)

Accredited. Study Asian languages for any length of time, and choose from different housing options: home-stay, home-stay where you also teach English, private apartment, group living, etc. Live/study language in China, Japan, Singapore, Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan. VIRTUAL LANGUAGE CLASSES ALSO AVAILABLE>

ARTS

[BLACKBIRD ACADEMY](#)

The mission of The Blackbird Academy is to prepare students for careers in music production and live sound in the best possible way - via mentor-based training. Students learn from a unique cast of professional instructors and award-winning guest lecturers. Located in Nashville, TN.

[VANCOUVER FILM SCHOOL](#)

Programs in animation & visual effects, acting for film/TV, digital design, film production, game design, make-up for film/TV, sound design, VR/AR design & development, writing for film/tv/games. VFS's unique, accelerated one-year education model balances intensive and industry-led theory with direct production experience. Students are ready to become entertainment and creative media arts professionals in just one year. With award-winning faculty and mentors from top studios and companies, VFS constantly adapts its acclaimed curriculum to meet the evolving demands of the industry.

GAP-YEAR PROGRAMS

[GAP-YEAR ASSOCIATION](#)

Search for specific programs based on factors such as timing, financial aid, end goal, etc. Programs range in length from a few weeks to a year. Programs in wilderness/outdoor adventures, sustainability, language, creative arts, etc. Programs charge tuition.

[GAP-YEAR INTERNSHIPS](#)

Spend a year gaining language skills and professional experience at the same time. There is a good chance that these are unpaid internships, however.

[GO OVERSEAS - GAP-YEAR PROGRAMS](#)

Scholarships available but you have to apply early.

[POST-GRADUATE YEAR at an INDEPENDENT SCHOOL](#)

Many independent boarding and day schools offer an additional year of high school—the PG Year—as an intermediate step between high school and college. This especially benefits students who