

Alumni Support Webpage TEMPLATE

Post-High School Planning & Support

For Graduates of (INSERT NAME) High School

Congratulations!

Graduating from high school is a huge deal. You have worked hard, studied diligently, and achieved a major life accomplishment.

Top Tips for Recent Grads

- **If your post-high school program sends you a mailing or an email, READ IT!** They won't send you information you don't need. Don't risk missing out on important deadlines, paperwork, or details because you didn't read your mail.
- **Use your voice!** Don't be afraid to advocate for yourself. If you need help, ask for it. If you don't understand something, speak up. You must be your own champion, so speak up for yourself.
- **Ask as many questions as you need to until you get answers.** There are numerous new experiences to be had after high school, especially if you've also left home. If the resources on this webpage aren't quite right to answer your questions, don't hesitate to ask your boss, professor, peers, landlord, parents, etc. This goes for classes, financial aid information, banks, and just about anything else.
- **Many of your friends and peers feel just like you.** Confused? Homesick? Worried? Leaving high school is a big life transition. Chances are, most of the others in your post-high school program feel the same way. Reach out to others through clubs or other social or organized activities. Before you start, check whether your program has a social media account. It can be a great way to meet and connect with peers.

Post-High School College Transition Resources

- [Graduate Handbook: Next Steps for First-Year Students](#). Learn about the critical next steps, including resources and support, registration, commuter tips, common stages in the first year, strategies for students planning to transfer, and financial aid information.
- [A Family Guide: Supporting Your Child After High School](#). Learn how to help your child be successful in college. (Available in Arabic, Chuukese, Marshallese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese.)
- **Did Your Financial Circumstances Change?** You might be experiencing a change in income from what you reported on the financial aid application or what your previous year's taxes reflected. You should contact the financial aid department of the colleges where you applied. [SwiftStudent](#) is a free tool that helps students understand appeals and provides templates for writing a financial aid appeal letter. This tool does not share user data with third parties.

Did Your Plans Change? It's Not Too Late!

Start planning your college or career pathway today! Washington offers numerous options and supports to help you achieve the education or training you need. Financial aid and scholarships are available to keep costs down.

- [Considering A Gap Year?](#) Learn what you need to know about taking a gap year or deferring enrollment before deciding.
- **Explore potential educational programs and pathways** using [gearup.wa.gov](#) and other resources.
- **Consider Washington's** [public and private four-year colleges](#) and [community and technical colleges](#).
- **Look into** [apprenticeships](#), where you can earn money while learning a trade.
- **Learn how** [national service opportunities](#) can advance your education, as well as your career.
- **Take time to** [think about your plan](#), then make sure you [take all the steps](#) to make your plan a reality.

- Use the [financial aid calculator](#) to see what type of Washington Grant and/or Pell Grant you may be eligible to receive. Keep in mind, these are only two of the many financial aid opportunities that you may be eligible for.

Financial Aid

- **Financial aid is money to help pay for college.** It comes from the federal and state governments, colleges and universities, banks, and organizations. Applying for financial aid is a separate process from applying for admission to a college; you must complete both.
- **To receive financial aid, you must apply for it using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or, for students who are ineligible for federal aid due to immigration status, the Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA).** Colleges use the results of the FAFSA or WASFA to create a financial aid package specific to you.
- **REMEMBER: You must file a financial aid application every year you plan to attend school.** This means completing a financial aid application after October 1st each year. The sooner you complete your financial aid application, the more aid you could receive from colleges.
- **There are dozens of FREE in-person and virtual events throughout the state in October and November** if you need help filing your financial aid application. Visit <https://wsac.wa.gov/12th-year-campaign> for a list of dates and locations.

Additional Resources to Explore Your Options

Apprenticeship

- [All About Apprenticeships](#). From the College Knowledge Project. [Russian](#) | [Somali](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Vietnamese](#)
- [Become an Apprentice](#). The WA State Department of Labor and Industries can guide you through this pathway.
- [Explore Apprenticeship](#). Learn about apprenticeship programs in Washington.

2- and 4-Year School Exploration and Preparation

- [Big Future](#). Free, step-by-step approach to college and career exploration and planning tool.
- [Check Out a College](#). Information about Washington state community and technical colleges.
- [College Affordability and Transparency Center](#). This site links to the College Scorecard, College Navigator, Net Price Calculator, and more!
- [Get Schooled](#)—a free, digital college and job advisor.
- [Types of Colleges](#). From the College Knowledge Project. [Russian](#) | [Somali](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Vietnamese](#)
- [Unigo.com](#) is an online resource that lets you explore colleges, connect with current students, and get expert advice on succeeding in college and beyond.
- [Washington State GEAR UP](#). Ready to plan for life after high school? There are affordable college and career training opportunities for everyone.

Career Exploration

- [Career Bridge Washington](#). Washington's one-stop source for career and education planning.
- [Career Video Library](#). From the U.S. Department of Labor's CareerOneStop. This library includes more than 500 career videos, reflecting nearly 800 unique occupations.
- [GetMyFuture.org](#). From the U.S. Department of Labor's CareerOneStop. Offers free interest assessments, career and job-search resources, and occupation profiles for over 800 careers.
- [Job Launch](#). The #1 job search tool for young people. Start searching for an entry-level position.
- [O*Net Online](#). A career exploration tool showcases different jobs, along with the knowledge, skills, abilities, personality, and education that are helpful for each path.