



Multiple Pathways to Success for DC Students

*Debbie Carty
Executive Director
debbie@newfuturesdc.org
202-384-5854*



New Futures supports DC's low income youth in their quest to achieve economic self-sufficiency by completing post-secondary education.

We partner with thirteen community-based organizations, who nominate promising candidates to us.

We support all forms of post-secondary education:

- ▶ **Short-term professional certifications**
- ▶ **Associates degrees**
- ▶ **Bachelors degrees**

Setting the Stage

From the original Double the Numbers report:

- ▶ ***9 percent of incoming 9th graders complete college “on time”***
- ▶ ***90+ percent never start college or fail to finish their degree***

The Double the Numbers effort is making significant strides in encouraging and enabling DC students to pursue and persist in college.

But...

- ▶ **What about all of those students who don't go to college?**
- ▶ **Of those students who start college, what about those who fail to obtain a degree?**

What more can we do to ensure career success and economic self-sufficiency for all DC students?

New Futures' Experience

New Futures works with students pursuing multiple program types, both college and non-college.

Our 158 scholars are from very low income families, and have often faced challenges in their lives.

College Success Stories:

- ▶ Several of our students have successfully completed bachelors degree programs and gone on to promising careers.**
- ▶ Three have even completed masters degree programs, and others are in progress in their pursuit of advanced degrees.**
- ▶ We applaud their determination and take great pride in their accomplishments.**

But, unfortunately, that has not been the case of all of our students...

Compelling Reasons Why We Support Other Options

Since scholarships were first awarded in 2001, we have observed the outcomes of our students and have learned:

- ▶ Those pursuing short-term professional certificates are very likely to complete their programs and begin promising careers in a relatively short period of time.
- ▶ Those pursuing 4-year degrees may drop out before completion or, if going part-time while working, struggle toward an almost impossible 9-10 year goal.
- ▶ Those who drop out are often left discouraged and in debt, with poor career prospects.

February 2010 Research Study

“We often assume that a higher degree guarantees earning a higher salary and having greater economic opportunity. This assumption is not always the case. One- and two-year credentials can represent a viable path to economic prosperity, particularly for those graduates who, for whatever reason, do not earn more advanced degrees.”¹

¹ Orozco, Viany and Jennifer Wheary, *Graduated Success: Sustainable Economic Opportunity Through One- and Two-Year Credentials*, Dēmos, February 4, 2010, http://www.demos.org/pubs/graduated_success_Final.pdf

February 2010 Research (cont.)

Eight years after graduating from high school:

- **43 percent of certificate holders earn a higher salary than associates degree holders**
- **27 percent earn more than bachelors degree holders**
- **31 percent of associate degree holders earn more than bachelors degree holders**

Further study is recommended to see salary comparisons on a longer term basis.

February 2010 Research (cont.):

Reasons for success by certificate / associate degree holders:

- These programs train in specific skills needed for specific jobs and careers; not all college programs have specific vocational focus.
- Some specialized areas in health care and engineering are higher paid than some fields for which a bachelors degree is required.
- The importance of completion: Earning a one-year credential or an associates degree is better than failing to complete a four-year degree.

Different Options for Different Students

- A Bachelors Degree is a great option for many young people.
- We should continue to support those that are ready and able to take this promising step.

***-- Continue Double the Numbers' efforts
toward college access and persistence --***

Different Options for Different Students (cont.)

However, for those who have other specialized skills or interests, or those who are unable to pursue a 4-year degree at the time of high school graduation:

- ▶ Help them to explore other post-secondary options available:
 - ▶ Community colleges
 - ▶ Specialized vocational schools

- ▶ Value those choices as a positive step towards increased earning potential and promising career options.

- ▶ Remember - this does not prevent pursuit of a more advanced degree or credential in the future.

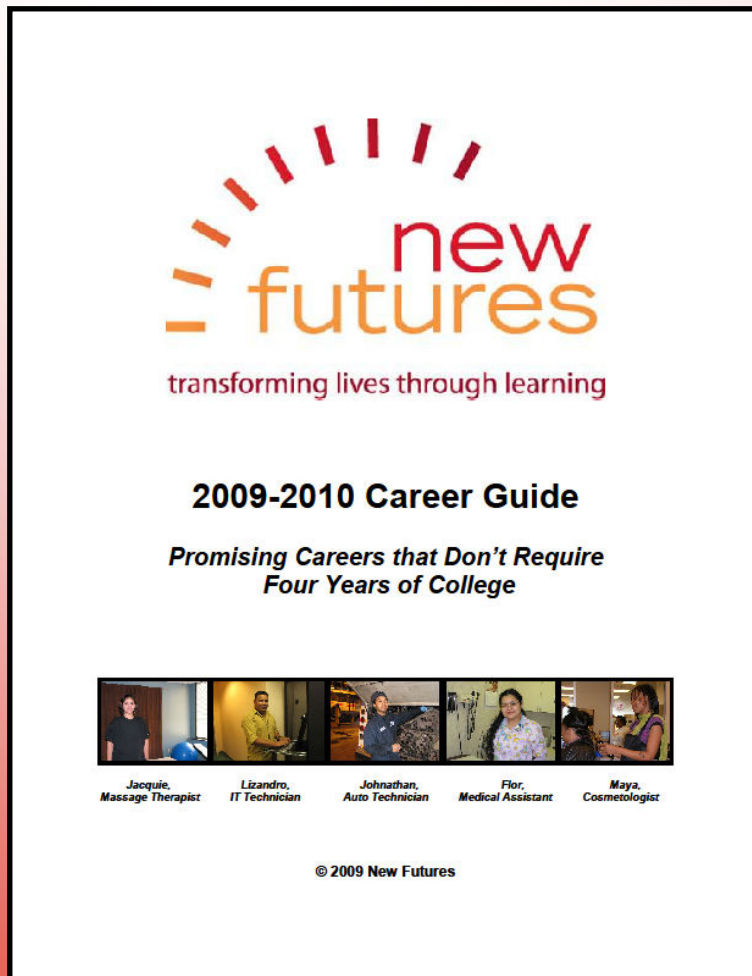
Need to Learn More about Post Secondary Options?

Most experts agree that post-secondary education in some form is essential to success in today's job market.

- Professional certification programs
 - Offered at community colleges and specialized vocational schools
 - Often result in certification or license
 - Train individuals for a specific job / career
 - Promising options include computer technicians, medical field certifications, auto technicians, massage therapists, cosmetologists, paralegals, construction/trades
- Associate degree programs
 - Terminal degrees – good career prospects
 - Transferable degrees – a step toward further education
 - Achievable goal for many, even part-time students

Sharing Resources

New Futures' Career Guide:



For each of the 26 careers featured:

- ➡ Description
- ➡ Educational Requirements
- ➡ Certifications
- ➡ Job Environment
- ➡ Job Outlook
- ➡ Income Comments
- ➡ Further Career Growth
- ➡ Local Schools* (locations, programs, schedule options, prices, contact info)

** Visited and interviewed by New Futures before including in the guide*

Available on our website: www.newfuturesdc.org
(upper right corner of the home page)

new futures

Careers Featured in the Guide

Medical / Health Fields:

- Nursing Assistant
- Medical Assistant
- Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
- Registered Nurse (RN)
- Medical Office Administrator
- Medical Coder
- Radiology Technician
- Respiratory Therapist
- Dental Assistant
- Dental Hygienist
- Pharmacy Technician
- Physical Therapy Assistant

Massage Therapist

Personal Care Fields:

- Cosmetologist
- Esthiologist
- Barber

Chef / Pastry Chef

Childcare Worker / Preschool Teacher

Paralegal

Help Desk Technician / IT Support

Automotive Technician

Aviation Mechanic

Heating, Ventilation and AC Technician

Building / Construction Trades

Heavy Equipment Operator /
Commercial Driver

Success Stories



Jacquie – Senior Massage Therapist



Maya – Cosmetologist, now pursuing accounting at Montgomery College



Lizandro – Network Administrator



Flor – Medical Assistant, about to begin school for her RN degree



Johnathan – Metrobus technician, hoping to pursue graphic design

Summary

- There is more than one way for a young person to obtain post secondary education and embark on a promising career path.
- Sometimes, a professional certification is a good choice.
- Sometimes, a multi-step approach is a good choice, where a student starts with a certification or associates degree, and later goes back to complete his or her bachelors degree.
- These shorter-term options should be considered for students who can not or do not want to pursue a 4-year college program.
- We are hopeful that the New Futures Career Guide can be a useful resource for young people and their mentors, when exploring the full range of post-secondary program options.