

Alternatives to Military Service



Educational and Vocational Resources in New York

One-on-One Counseling

Settlement houses and community centers have a program called “Options” which provides individual counseling for people who would like to attend college. They provide assistance with college applications, SAT preparation, financial aid, and how to obtain scholarships. This is a free service which is offered at many locations throughout New York City. Information about specific programs can be found by going to the United Neighborhood Houses website at www.unhny.org and clicking on Member Agencies. There are three locations in Queens, including the Forest Hills Community House (www.fhch.org); Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement House (www.rissettlement.org); and Sunnyside Community Services (www.scsny.org).

Financial Aid to Pay for College

The Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) is the college student financial agency for New York State. HESC administers more than 15 grant, scholarship, and loan programs, including the nation’s largest state grant--the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP). www.hesc.com/bulletin.nsf/

Job Training Programs

The New York State Department of Labor has a database of training programs for various kinds of jobs. It can be accessed by going to www.workforcenewyork.org/etp/

The Department of Labor also lists apprenticeship opportunities with trade unions. These jobs pay very well. For more information, go to www.labor.state.ny.us/pressreleases/ApprenticeshipArchive.shtm

Non-Traditional Employment for Women (NEW) is a nonprofit organization that trains women for jobs in the building trades, the transportation and utilities industries, and in other historically male industries. These are high paying jobs that can lead to economic independence. Go to www.new-ny.org for more information.

More Information on Financial Aid, Scholarships, and Grants for Education

The U.S. Department of Education website has information on a wide range of topics intended to assist people who want to attend college. This includes information on how to apply for financial aid, how to choose a college, and many other topics. Go to **www.ed.gov**.

You can access the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) by going to **www.fafsa.ed.gov**. This application is used by the U.S. Department of Education to determine how much Federal financial aid you are eligible for.

www.college-scholarships.com allows you to do free web searches for financial aid and scholarships. It offers tips on how to take the SAT and ACT tests. It also has information on colleges and universities throughout the United States. This includes downloadable applications for many of the colleges listed.

You can submit a profile of yourself and information about your educational goals on **www.fastweb.com** and obtain specific information about which colleges offer the program you are looking for and information about scholarships, grants, and work study opportunities.

The Smart Student Guide to Financial Aid, at **www.finaid.org**, provides information about a wide range of ways to finance a college education.

www.scholarships.com allows you to submit a personal profile and to obtain information about financial aid geared to your particular situation.

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Public Service Opportunities

AmeriCorps is a network of local, state, and national service programs that connects people with public agencies and non-profit organizations throughout the United States. Volunteers work in the areas of education, public safety, health, and the environment. AmeriCorps participants have been involved in a wide range of different activities including the following:

- Tutoring and mentoring disadvantaged youth
- Fighting illiteracy
- Improving health services
- Building affordable housing
- Teaching computer skills
- Cleaning parks and streams
- Managing or operating after-school programs
- Helping communities respond to disasters
- Building organizational capacity

There are full- and part-time positions available. Full-time AmeriCorps members who complete their service earn tuition benefits to apply to graduate school or assistance in repaying student loans. www.americorps.org

The Peace Corps is a federal program established by President Kennedy in 1960 as a way of promoting peace and cross-cultural understanding. It provides people with the opportunity to live and work in developing countries around the world. Volunteers work in the areas of education, health care, agriculture, environmental preservation, and information technology. The Peace Corps provides volunteers with the opportunity to travel, to learn other languages, and to immerse themselves in cultures radically different from their own.

Peace Corps volunteers are provided with a stipend on which to live in the communities where they are placed. Each volunteer receives \$6,000 after completing a two-year commitment to the program without any restrictions as to how it can be used. www.peacecorps.gov

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