

ARNG EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

FOR THE SOLDIER



Announcing Our New Facebook Page:

The Army National Guard Education Services Facebook Page will contain a myriad of information ranging from education, apprenticeship, testing, or career-related updates, as well as updates for the Army National Guard and general information. Please “LIKE” and “SHARE”!

<https://www.facebook.com/arngeducation>



GoArmyEd and Federal Tuition Assistance Deadlines

- ◆ DEADLINE for Fall applications is 18 September 2015, 11:59 p.m. EST
- ◆ MUST apply at least 10 days PRIOR to the course start date, may apply up to 60 days prior
- ◆ REMINDERS!
 - Maximum of 16 semester hours per Soldier, per fiscal year
 - TA Pays 100 percent of tuition costs up to \$250 per semester hour

Contact your local ARNG Education Services Office for more information!

Apply online at: <https://www.GoArmyEd.com>

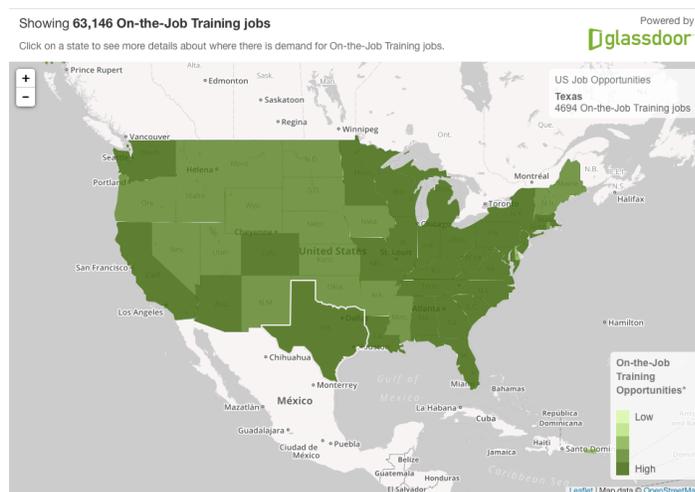
NATIONAL GUARD

Searching for Apprenticeships

The jobs and recruiting site Glassdoor has launched an “On-the-Job Training Finder” designed to make it easier for American workers to find on-the-job training career opportunities, such as apprenticeships and trainee positions, in which they can learn new skills while getting paid.

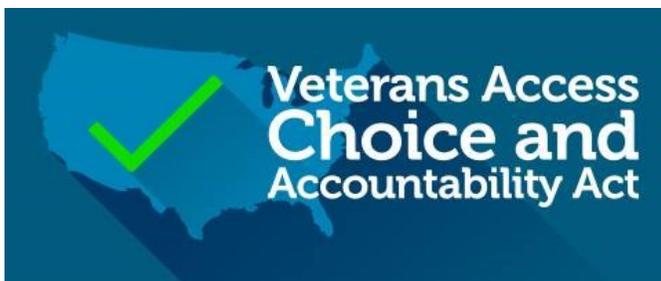
This interactive job search mapping tool enables users to simultaneously search apprenticeships, including many of those registered through the U.S. Department of Labor, in addition to non-registered apprenticeships and trainee positions, across a variety of sectors. There are currently over 63,000 on-the-job training positions being advertised by nearly 9,500 employers in all 50 states. Qualifications for these positions range in experience requirements from none to some college, or some work experience to a college degree, and/or military service. And base wages/salaries start at \$20,000 to more than \$60,000, according to Glassdoor’s salaries database, with many offering continuing advancement and earnings potential.

National Guard members who are hired as apprentices by civilian employers, who have secured VA-approval for their training programs, can collect monthly GI Bill benefit payments, in addition to their regular full-time wages, for the duration of their apprenticeship period -- which typically lasts from two to five years.



To begin searching for opportunities in your state, visit:
www.glassdoor.com/Job/job-training-finder/index.htm

“Choice Act” Expands Education Benefits



The Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014 (“Choice Act”) requires public institutions of higher learning to charge Veterans (who have transitioned from active duty within three years) and dependents using benefits under Chapter 30 (Montgomery GI Bill) and Chapter 33 (Post 9/11 GI Bill) in-state resident tuition and fees starting 1 July 2015. However, in order to allow states maximum time to comply with this requirement, this date has been extended to 1 January 2016.

The Department of Veterans Affairs expanded the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship (“Fry Scholarship”) to include the spouses of Service members who died in the line of duty. The Fry Scholarship pays eligible dependents up to 36 months of the full, 100% level, of the Post-9/11 GI Bill. This includes the tuition and fee payment, a monthly housing allowance, and a books and supplies stipend. The Fry Scholarship is available for children and surviving spouses of Service members who died in the line of duty after September 10, 2001. Surviving Spouses eligibility ends 15 years after the Service members death or upon the spouses remarriage. Surviving children’s eligibility ends on their 33rd birthday.

For more information on the “Choice Act,” visit the Department of Veterans Affairs Website at:

<http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/702.asp>

GI Bill Comparison Tool

Before going back to school this fall, check out the user-friendly Department of Veteran Affairs GI Bill Comparison Tool to estimate benefits, compare schools, and much more.

If you are thinking about using GI Bill benefits to attend a VA approved education or training program, I recommend you check out the VA's **GI Bill Comparison Tool**. This tool brings together information from more than 17 different online sources and three federal agencies and provides key information about college affordability and value so GI Bill beneficiaries can choose the best education program to meet their needs.

This user friendly tool is designed to make it easier for our GI Bill beneficiaries to estimate their education benefits, determine potential out-of-pocket tuition expenses, review graduation rates, do a side-by-side comparison of institutions they are interested in attending, and re-

ceive useful information and statistics about the institution.

Before fall enrollment begins, use this tool to estimate your GI Bill benefits, and determine the right school and programs to best fit your needs. The results of the GI Bill benefits calculator are an estimate and not an official determination of benefits.

Your decision to apply for certain GI Bill benefits could impact your eligibility for other benefits. Contact your State or Territory Education Services Office if you have any questions or concerns about this process.

The GI Bill Comparison Tool can be found at: www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/comparison

Stretch Your School Dollars

In recent years, changes have been made to the Army's Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) Program affecting new ARNG Soldiers wanting to attend college. Soldiers who were once eligible to use FTA upon enlistment are now required to complete AIT and serve at least one year before becoming eligible. One of the most commonly asked questions by these individuals is "How can I go to school if the Army won't pay for it?"

Choosing a School

The answer starts with where to attend school. A typical student pursuing a Bachelor's Degree should consider spending their first two years at a Community College. Four-year institutions and private for-profit institutions can cost an "arm and a leg." In my state of North Carolina for example, a student who spends their first two years at a Community College will spend an average of \$2,160 per year as opposed to the \$8,296 it would cost to attend a public four-year institution. Attending a Community College for the first two years could save a student up to \$12,272! So why is this important? Because if the military is not paying for it, you have to find another way.

State Tuition Assistance Programs

Some states have their own tuition assistance programs. Unless otherwise specified in your state's tuition assistance policy, the use of either the Chapter 1606 (MGIB-SR) or Chapter 1607 (REAP) GI Bill program is allowed in conjunction with your state tuition assistance. That means you can use your state tuition assistance, your GI Bill benefits under the Chapter 1606 program, and any financial assistance you receive from FAFSA.

The current full-time rate for benefits under the Chapter 1606 program is \$367 per month, which is paid directly to the Soldier. The average cost of attending a community college is about \$1,080 per semester. Soldiers will receive \$1,468 in benefits from Chapter 1606 for a semester spanning four months. With a \$200 GI Bill Kicker, that amount increases to \$2,268. That leaves at least \$388 per semester to spend on books. If state tuition assistance pays for tuition and the Soldier is eligible to receive other financial aid, they could save the GI Bill payments each semester to use later on.

How to Apply

Once you are ready to apply for benefits, log-on to the VA's online application program (VONAPP). You will need to provide a copy of your Notice of Basic Eligibility (NOBE). So what is this NOBE? The NOBE is a counseling document that provides the Soldier with a quick overview of the Chapter 1606 GI Bill program. You are highly encouraged to study this document, as it will explain the program to you and how to keep your benefits. Soldiers who enlist or extend with a GI Bill Kicker need to review their Kicker contract as well, since it will explain the program to the Soldier and how to retain benefits. Just remember that completion of advanced individual training (AIT) is required in order to be eligible for either the Chapter 1606 or Kicker programs.

The GI Bill Manager located in your State's Education Office can answer any questions that you have regarding these programs.

—Article submitted by:
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