

# THE PATHS TO EDUCATION AFTER HIGH SCHOOL



There are many paths of education that can help a student achieve their career goals after high school. This guide breaks down those pathways, provides financial aid options and highlights in-demand careers in some of Indiana's fastest-growing industries.

## *Apprenticeships*

Apprenticeships are 2- to 5-year occupational training programs where students learn skills for a specific field through hands-on instruction, typically while earning money.

### **Potential Careers:**

Electricians, commercial loan officers, pharmacy support staff and data analysts.

## *Associate Degrees*

Associate degrees usually take 2 years to complete during a full-time program and can open the door to a range of career options for students.

### **Potential Careers:**

Hotel managers, aviation mechanics, paralegals and surgical assistants.

## *Trade Programs*

Trade programs are 1- to 2-year professional training programs where students learn skills for high-priority industries and receive certificates or non-degree credentials.

### **Potential Careers:**

Medical/dental assistants, robotics technicians, business managers, automotive mechanics and IT specialists.

## *Bachelor's Degrees*

Bachelor's degrees generally take 4 years to complete if attending full time. They provide a variety of career options after graduation.

### **Potential Careers:**

Social workers, teachers, engineers and financial consultants.

## *The Military*

Joining the military is another option for getting an education after high school, and many programs pay for education during or after service. Depending on the branch, the length of service ranges from 4 to 8 years.

### **Potential Careers:**

Communications, health science, manufacturing and information technology.

## *Advanced Degrees*

Advanced degrees include master's, doctorate and other professional degrees. Advanced degrees are often needed to move into high-level managerial, specialized and executive positions. Depending on the field, advanced degrees can take 2 to 5 years (or more) to attain after completing a bachelor's degree.

### **Potential Careers:**

Corporate financial managers, aerospace engineers, physician assistants and computer and information research scientists.

# PAYING FOR EDUCATION AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

Discussing finances when planning for education after high school can feel difficult. Many students and parents may believe it's impossible to pursue because of their financial situation. The truth is, there are MILLIONS of dollars in financial aid available each year! Financial aid is money to help pay for college or career school. Here are the top 4 types of financial aid:



## 1. Grants

Grants offer free money for education after high school and are often awarded based on financial need. Grants can come from the federal government, state government, colleges and private or nonprofit organizations.



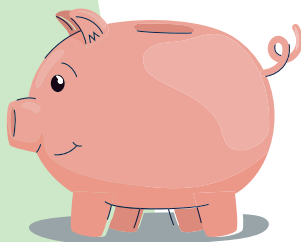
## 2. Scholarships

Many nonprofit and private organizations offer scholarships to help students pay for education after high school. Scholarships are money that doesn't have to be paid back and are often awarded based on a family's financial circumstances (**need-based**), a student's achievements (**merit-based**) or a group or population a student belongs to (**affinity-based**).



## 3. Work-Study

Work-Study programs provide part-time jobs for students who demonstrate financial need, allowing them to earn money and help pay for expenses toward their education after high school.



## 4. Federal Student Loans

There are subsidized and unsubsidized federal student loans to help cover the cost of education after high school. These loans must be paid back and accumulate interest (additional money that grows over time that must also be paid back). While loans are helpful, students should try to limit how much debt they take on.



*Learn more about the difference between Direct Subsidized Loans and Direct Unsubsidized Loans?*

<https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/subsidized-unsubsidized>



*All of these resources can be applied for by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, also known as the FAFSA.*

[studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid](https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid)