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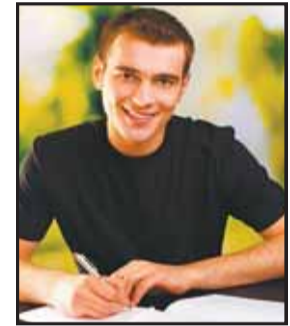
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THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MANATEE COUNTY FEATURES A STUDENT AND A CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION TEACHER



## InnoVators Get Ready to Work



Everybody is talking about the economy. As a student in middle or high school, it may seem like an adult problem. But the older you get, the closer the time comes to when you become part of the economy—and your wallet will feel heavier or lighter, depending on your job. So here is the million-dollar question: are you getting ready to work? You can start getting ready today—read more to find out how.

- Every year counts.** Your performance throughout high school will be recorded, and your grades from your freshman year onward will determine whether you are accepted to college and if you receive scholarships. The experience and skills you gain in high school will determine what kind of job you can get when you graduate.
- Every course counts.** Your high school offers many career-based electives that will equip you with a valuable skill that you can take right to the workforce.
- Every degree counts.** First, get your diploma. Then, continue as far as you can in your education, whether you attend Manatee Technical Institute for a great career start or go to a community college or four-year university.
- Every skill counts.** Take as many career courses as you can to gain real skills for real jobs. Think ahead. Career courses teach skills in computer technology, design, drafting, television production, agriscience, healthcare, early childhood education, family and consumer science, business technology, marketing, and accounting.
- Get certified.** Manatee County high school students can earn industry sponsored certifications—there are at least 25 different certifications available. Certifications prove to employers that you have TOP SKILLS! Examples include Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) or Microsoft Certified Application Professional (MCAP), but there are too many to list here. See the complete list at [www.ManateeAct.com](http://www.ManateeAct.com).
- Build your resume.** Your resume is a one-page summary of why someone should hire you. Building your resume can happen through education, good grades, work, internships, volunteering, club memberships (especially leadership roles), and skill-building.
- Internships.** Here is the dilemma: *to get a job, you need experience; to get experience, you need a job.* Overcome this problem through an internship—a job where you may work for free, but the experience can be priceless. To get an internship, work with a career counselor. Or, research and contact someone who works in a field that interests you. Craft a letter expressing your interest, and ask if you can work for free for a set time period to gain experience.
- Job shadow.** In a job shadow, you arrange to spend a day in a workplace observing what happens in that job. A career advisor or teacher may help you arrange a job shadow. Job shadows help you understand what certain careers are all about.
- Volunteer.** Volunteering gives you real job experience, offers a valuable service to the community, and may help you qualify for scholarships that require community service hours. See [www.volunteermanatee.org](http://www.volunteermanatee.org) and [www.volunteermanatee.org/manateens.html](http://www.volunteermanatee.org/manateens.html) to get involved.
- Join a club.** Career and technical student organizations (CTSOs) develop leadership abilities and workplace skills. Join one and build your resume. Your school may offer these: FFA, FBLA, TSA, FCCLA, HOSA, DECA, FPSA, FBA, and SkillsUSA.
- Develop good character.** Employers want to hire and keep people with good work habits. Florida Ready to Work offers a free Work Habits course online. If you already have a Florida Ready to Work user name and password, you can access this free course on your own at [www.MyFloridaReadytoWork.com](http://www.MyFloridaReadytoWork.com).
- Get the advantage—get the Credential.** Getting ready to work means earning the Florida Ready to Work Credential. Pass three assessments in Applied Math, Reading for Information, and Locating Information. Career and Academic Advisors at each Manatee County high school have more information on how you can earn your Credential. Some local employers such as Pierce Manufacturing, Tervis Tumbler, PGT, and Sun Hydraulics are already using the Credential to improve employees' skills. See [www.FloridaReadyToWork.com](http://www.FloridaReadyToWork.com) and [www.SuncoastReadyToWork.com](http://www.SuncoastReadyToWork.com) for more information.



**Regional Careers:** Occupations and current wages in the Suncoast Workforce Region.

Occupation Title	Entry Level	Experienced
Minimum wage	\$7.21	-
Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	\$18.51	\$28.07
Firefighters	\$13.87	\$22.46
Licensed Practical Nurses	\$15.07	\$21.09
Registered Nurses	\$20.90	\$32.24
Computer Programmers	\$20.98	\$39.07
Chefs and Head Cooks	\$17.24	\$26.19

**Source:** <http://fred.labormarketinfo.com>  
 FL Labor Market Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics & Wages Program

**Career Pathway:** Students desiring a career in any of these areas can find related educational programs at these schools:

- Manatee Technical Institute,
- Manatee Community College,
- University of South Florida

## WEB Wise

Check out the following websites:

- [www.ManateeACT.com](http://www.ManateeACT.com)
- [www.MyFloridaReadytoWork.com](http://www.MyFloridaReadytoWork.com)
- [www.volunteermanatee.org/manateens.html](http://www.volunteermanatee.org/manateens.html)

## Explore IT

Take a personal inventory – and get ready to work.

- Review the 12 tips above.
- Write down five ways you are getting ready to work, given your current education and experience. You can feel good about these!
- Write down five ways you can improve yourself and get ready to work. Develop an action plan!
- Set concrete goals based upon your list of ways to improve. Include a timeline. For example, your goals may include: “Earn the Florida Ready to Work Credential by June,” or “Volunteer at least 150 hours by the end of my senior year,” or “Register with Manatee Technical Institute by June 1 for a career program.”



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