CAREER INTEREST ESSAY

Welcome to your Junior year! We will do a bit of career exploration to help you learn more about yourself, what you like to do, and identify skills and talents that you have. You will be completing a job application with 3 references, a cover letter, and a resume with references. ***Please remember that we will only meet for 30 minutes/week – in order to meet some deadlines, you will have to put in some time outside of class. Running Start and WVTech students must also meet all of the same deadlines and expectations☺***

STEP 1

If you have not already begun your Bridges career interest survey, here is the information for the website and creating a student account:

Go to: Bridges.com

[Create a new portfolio (*ONLY if you have NOT already created one*]

Site ID: **OBTAIN FROM ADVISER**
Site PW: **OBTAIN FROM ADVISER**

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Use your e-mail address to create your portfolio so it is a unique name; write down (put the info in your phone?) your portfolio name (e-mail address) and the password you used to create YOUR portfolio.

STEP 2

Once you have created your portfolio, complete the two (2) **Quick Quizzes** in the **Choices Explorer** section (**Career Finder** and **Cluster Finder**) – you will also need to complete the **Learning Style Inventory** …more on that later…

In **Choices Explorer –** click on [Start with a quick quiz]

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After completing the 'Career Finder', on the **HOME** tab in Bridges, click on the 'Find other ways to explore careers' link. Here you will find the 'Cluster Finder' quick quiz.

The cluster finder will help you to quickly identify your top 3 career clusters. Remember to ADD your career clusters to your portfolio.

You may also click on the Career Finder and Cluster Finder links on the **WORK** tab to review your information and explore careers – just click on the 'See Your Results Now' link. Remember to add the careers you've chosen to your portfolio (link in upper right corner of page).

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After completing the Career Finder survey, you will get a screen that looks something like this:

You can now sort your career choices based on different criteria, such as interests and skills. Your interests and skills will be on the right side of the screen – these are your strengths. You should explore careers in your top 3 categories – the sections on the graphs with the longest bars ☺

STEP 3

Investigate several careers within your top 3 categories (career clusters) – write down 5 careers that interest you. These careers should NOT be all from the same career cluster – explore multiple options. Two (2) careers should NOT require college (but can include jobs with post-high school training such as apprenticeships or on-the-job training opportunities) and three (3) should require some sort of college (2-4 years or more). After you have investigated some careers, add the careers you've chosen to your portfolio. Make notes in a WORD document about what you learn – this will be the framework of your essay.

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STEP 4

Your first ROUGH DRAFT should be the beginning of your research – this does NOT need to be in a formal essay format – can just be your notes – this is just for a progress check to make sure you have begun the project. The second ROUGH DRAFT should begin to look like an organized essay; again this is a progress check. The FINAL paper needs to be organized, proofread, and portfolio quality.

Paragraph 1	Introduce your topic…what are your top 3 career clusters and the 5 jobs you've chosen to investigate
Paragraphs 2-5	Each paragraph should talk about a different career and its cluster, skills needed, schooling, apprenticeship options, where you would go to school or get additional training, where can you work to do this career, what kind of wages can you expect to earn (low to high is fine), promotion opportunities, and what is the outlook for the career like – please cite ALL of your sources.
Paragraph 6	The final paragraph of your essay must specify the career you are most interested in from your research and why – it must be a career that is within your top 3 career clusters. This is the career that you will do your job shadow on.

All of the information you need to write your career paper can be found in Bridges or the resources listed below. You must cite ALL of your sources – should be done as in-line citations. Work through your drafts and meet all deadlines – each draft will be a graded assignment.

STEP 5

Finalize your career paper – proofread your essay BEFORE you submit to your adviser and make all necessary (suggested) corrections – staple drafts on top of previous drafts and turn all drafts in to your adviser. **Print 2 copies of your final essay – one for portfolio, one for adviser.**

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Career Clusters & Pathways GROUP Project:

- ★ Identify the 6 career clusters
- ★ Identify the career pathways within the clusters
- ★ Give 5-7 examples of careers within each of the **PATHWAYS**
- ★ Color-code clusters/pathways
- ★ Create poster/graphic demonstrating above

Career Clusters & Pathways Resources:

- ★ Career Tech @ http://www.careertech.org/career-clusters - Great resource for career clusters and job listings as well as skills required for different career opportunities
- ★ College Foundation of North Carolina - create a free account and explore career clusters @ http://www.cfnc.org
- ★ O-Net Online http://www.onetonline.org/
- ★ Bureau of Labor & Statistics http://www.bls.gov - this site is a great free resource for researching the outlook/future of jobs, earning potential, and training/education, including the Occupational Outlook Handbook.
- ★ Glencoe Publishers Career Information http://www.glencoe.com/sec/careers/index.html
- ★ Bridges.com, WORK TAB (blue), find the link below Clusters & Pathways

If you have questions, we are available to help you ☺