



# Educational Opportunity Center (EOC)

VSAC's Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) program serves adults who do not yet have a bachelor's degree. Most adults served by the EOC program are the first in their families to go to college and have financial barriers to pursuing their education/training goals beyond high school. VSAC's EOC program is a U.S. Department of Education federally funded TRIO program.

## WHAT WE DO

VSAC's Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) program encourages and supports all aspects of postsecondary education and career preparation through:

- counseling and information on college and career training
- career counseling to guide education and training decisions
- one-on-one advising on financial aid
- one-on-one advising on college admissions & training programs

## OUR PROGRAM

VSAC's EOC program is a statewide program federally funded to serve 1,580 adults yearly who desire to enter the academic arena. At least two-thirds of the participants served are both potential first-generation college-bound and modest income.

Each year, our program is accountable for meeting specific performance outcomes. This helps guarantee our participants success.

The Educational Opportunity Center provides college and training access services, including help with:

- Career exploration
- Education and training options
- Financial aid applications

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact Program Director Merrilyn Tatarczuch-Koff

📧 [t-koff@vsac.org](mailto:t-koff@vsac.org)

📞 802-881-9471



## 2023–2024 Outcomes

Of the participants served who did not have a completed high school credential:

- 93% earned a high school credential

Of the participants with a completed high school credential (including those who completed a high school credential during the grant year) who were not currently enrolled in a post- secondary program:

- 95% applied for financial aid
- 91% applied for admission to a postsecondary education program
- 79% enrolled in a postsecondary education program

SCAN TO LEARN MORE



**TRIO**  
A federally funded program



# Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) Success Stories

## LUCIE HOBBS-JOHNSON

Adult learner Lucie Hobbs-Johnson moves from grief, to grit, to dental hygiene school



At 49, Lucie Hobbs-Johnson is rewriting her story, pursuing a long-held dream of becoming a dental hygienist. After years in the food industry and enduring the unimaginable loss of her daughter, Lucie found new purpose in returning to school at Vermont State University. Her path hasn't been easy—she faced academic hurdles, and the emotional weight of starting over—but she embraced the challenge. Surrounded by younger classmates, Lucie jokes that she's "like their mom," but also finds strength in the environment. "I've come this far. I can do it," Lucie says. "I may take a little extra time, but I think that's an asset. I like what I bring to it."

Lucie's journey has also been made possible by the steadfast support of VSAC's Educational Opportunity Center. A VSAC

Outreach Counselor worked with Lucie for over two years, helping her secure tuition funding, a new computer, and even support during car troubles. For Lucie, going back to school felt like an opportunity to honor her family and community. She's excelling at her pace, proving that it's never too late to chase your purpose.

Despite facing learning challenges, Andrew realized his dream to study in Japan

## ANDREW TAUBER-HERRING

Andrew Tauber-Herring grew up in a multi-generational household. He's inspired by the perseverance of his great-grandfather, a Holocaust survivor who taught himself English at the local library. Despite early struggles with undiagnosed learning disabilities including autism, ADHD, and dyslexia, Andrew held tight to his dream of going to college and living in Japan—a passion sparked in second grade. After a difficult start, he found his footing at Community College of Vermont and later enrolled at a university in Tokyo, where he's now pursuing a degree in business administration and marketing.

Along the way, Andrew received critical support from VSAC's Educational Opportunity Center. His counselor helped him navigate financial aid, offered emotional encouragement, and connected him with resources to stay on track. VSAC's assistance made the difference in helping Andrew manage the challenges of balancing school, part-time work, and his learning needs. Now thriving in Japan, Andrew is the first in his family on track to earn a college degree. He hopes to pursue a career in marketing—ideally with a Japanese video game company. "I love it here," he says. "I couldn't be happier."

