Save dates for College & Career Pathways

Do you have questions about how to pay for college, apply to college, or choose a college or training program? Join us at College & Career Pathways 2020, a free planning event for high school students, parents, and adults thinking about changing careers or going back to school.

- Castleton University: Wednesday, February 26
- Landmark College: Wednesday, March 11
- Saint Michael’s College: Thursday, March 19
- Northern Vermont University–Lyndon: Monday, April 6

While students may have the chance to attend during the day with their schools, both students and parents are invited to join us in the evening from 5:00–8:00 pm for workshops, including:

- The College Search: Finding the Right Fit
- Navigating the Admissions Process
- Financial Aid & Managing College Costs
- Scholarships—Free Money!
- Apprenticeships, Certificates & Technical Training Opportunities
- Funding Your Certificate or Technical Training Program

The evening will also feature a resource fair where VSAC grants, scholarships, and loans staff will be on site to answer your questions. Registration is FREE and opens in early January at vsac.org/ccp.

Getting ready for an empty nest?

It’s inevitable: They’ll move out, whether it’s temporary or permanent. Is your oldest the first one heading off for college, technical training, travel, or career? Or is your last child ready to fly? Either way, this part of family evolution can raise a multitude of feelings, including the anticipation of reconnecting with yourself and/or your partner and worrying about your child’s safety. Will they make good decisions and choices? Will they remember the lessons we taught them? Here’s some information provided by the Mayo Clinic for empty nesters:

- **Accept the timing.** Avoid comparing your child's timetable to your own experience or expectations. Instead, focus on what you can do to help your child succeed after leaving home.
- **Keep in touch.** You can continue to be close to your children even when you live apart. Make an effort to maintain regular contact through visits, phone calls, emails, texts, or video chats.
- **Seek support.** If you’re having difficulty, lean on loved ones and other close contacts for support. Share your feelings. If you feel depressed, consult your doctor or a mental health provider.
- **Stay positive.** Value the extra time and energy you may have to devote to your partner, friends, or personal interests after your last child leaves home.
Spotlight on VSAC Outreach

People are on the move in VSAC Outreach! Amy Lewis joined us as a GEAR UP outreach counselor in the summer of 2018. She came with a strong record of assisting students at CCV, and with great skill and energy began working with the students and staff at Colchester middle school and high school, in addition to bringing innovation to our GUIDE program. In her work with students and families, Amy quickly became the go-to resource for staff and was promoted to lead GEAR UP outreach counselor to guide and support our counselors who work in the schools. We’re excited for the experience and enthusiasm Amy brings to this role!

Liam Danaher will be the new counselor in Colchester middle school and high school, while retaining his support to Winooski. Liam moves from Richford schools to Colchester with 9 years of experience in expanding roles with GEAR UP. Liam has knowledge, energy, and enthusiasm that shines through in all he does with students and school partners.

Annalise Goyne, our Talent Search counselor in Enosburg, Berkshire, MVU, and Montgomery will be leaving to follow her passion for work in sustainability. Annalise has been an amazing counselor, colleague, and innovator. She’ll be missed, and we wish her the best of luck in her adventures.

Annalise pursues her passion

It’s time for us to say farewell to Clark Amadon, and this isn’t an easy goodbye—they never are. Clark will retire at the end of December after more than 30 years with VSAC. Clark has been working with VSAC’s college access programs since 1988. He’s assisted, advised, supported, encouraged, and been appreciated by hundreds of middle school and high school students, parents and guardians, and adults during that time. Clark has, first and foremost, encouraged students to pursue their dreams. He’s also been a leader, mentor, coach, and shoulder for new and seasoned staff members in Outreach and throughout VSAC.

For the past 20 years, Clark has been working directly with Talent Search and GEAR UP students in central Vermont. He is well-respected, and his work has been appreciated by students and school staff alike. Clark has easily developed good relationships with his students and with the school staff with whom he’s needed to collaborate in order to provide services. He has valued every student and pushed them to reach their goals when they struggled to push themselves. He’s believed in his students, even when they doubted themselves. He’ll be missed!

"Whenever I need something, Clark is available to help; and he only wants the best for me. If he thinks I'm making a poor decision, he always lets me know there's another option and a better way to go about things.” ~ Student

“We don’t know what we would do without Clark’s role to reach all of our students effectively. Clark promoted the idea of college, and access to it, for many students who would’ve fallen through the cracks otherwise.” ~ School counselor

Clark’s contributions to students, families, schools, and colleagues has been nothing short of spectacular and generous. We wish him well, warm sunny days, and good fishing. Thank you, Clark, for everything. ~ School counselor
Calling all Vermont high schoolers for their best summer yet!

Curious and enthusiastic Vermont 9th–11th graders are invited to join the Governor's Institutes of Vermont in summer 2020. Motivated young artists and learners will spend 1–2 weeks completely immersed in a topic they love, will work alongside industry-leading professionals, and will make new friends from all over the state who share their interests—all while experiencing life on a college campus. Plus, it’s tons of fun! GIV’s 10 summer institutes include the Arts (theatre, music, dance, sculpture, visual arts, film & more), Engineering, Writing, Architecture, Environmental Science, Current Issues, Astronomy, Technology, Design & Coding, and more!

GIV is dedicated to being accessible for every young Vermonter, so a sliding-scale tuition makes it affordable for you and your family. Learn more at giv.org and apply online starting February 1, 2020.

 Unsure about GIV? Try one of the Winter Weekends. Vermont 9th–12th graders can apply for an exciting and intensive hands-on, residential weekend to get a taste of what the summer institutes are like. Choose from 10 topics ranging from the visual and performing arts to leadership & humanities and STEM. There’s something for every student! Apply online December 10 through January 15. Questions? Call 802-865-4448 or email apply@giv.org.

VT Virtual Learning Cooperative: Supporting Student Achievement

Our partner, the Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative (VTVLC), helps middle school and high school students overcome 3 barriers in their education by providing:

• greater availability of courses not offered locally at a student’s school. This benefits students at smaller schools that might offer fewer courses.

• greater accessibility so students don’t have to make difficult decisions about which course to take. This benefits all students when there’s a scheduling conflict between a course that a student is required to take and another course that the student is interested in taking.

• greater flexibility for taking the courses students want during times that works for them, which supports student success

Why is online learning in middle school and high school important? Today 1 in 4 college courses is completed online, and 50% of all industry-related training is provided online. Improving student proficiency to be a successful online learner opens numerous opportunities after graduation and leads to improved outcomes for students, regardless of their long-term plans. All VTVLC teachers are Vermont-certified and are currently employed in Vermont schools.

VTVLC offers a variety of supports to build student proficiency and confidence with online learning, self-direction, and communications skills in an online, technology-rich environment. For program details and a course catalog, visit vtvlc.org.
Thank you, families!

Because you’re the architects, builders, and champions, we want to thank you for all your good advice and amazing feats to support your kids and your community. In every issue, we like to highlight a few things you do to build self-confidence and show gratitude with your kids. Keep it up—offering love and acceptance has tremendous benefits. Thank you for:

• loving your child and showing acceptance & gratitude
• letting them know you see their specific efforts or abilities
• spending time with them to play a game, ask about their day, listen to them attentively, or share a meal

Thank you families—we’re so lucky to work with you and your amazing kids.

Your spectacular students from around the 802!

Education professionals — save the date

May 14, 2020:
Transition and Career Conference
Join us on Thursday, May 14, 2020, at the Lake Morey Resort for our 15th annual conference!
Registration opens on Eventbrite April 1, 2020.

Thank you GEAR UP schools for an amazing GEAR UP Week 2019!