

# CareerAbilities

December 2007

Howard Community College Counseling and Career Services and Disability Support Services have begun a monthly on-line newsletter to increase student awareness of programs, services and issues that are important to students with disabilities. These newsletters will inform students about the many opportunities offered through Counseling and Career Services (CCS) and Disability Support Services (DSS) to prepare them for and to obtain employment.

These opportunities may include educational programs and services, employment and training programs and services, and employment issues unique and not so unique to people with disabilities. These newsletters will help us provide you with information that you can use to make choices about your career goals and to transition from a student to an employee in the career of your choice. We welcome suggestions about topics that you would like us to address and encourage you to stop into our offices and use the many services that we offer free of charge to HCC students.



*Your goals are the road maps that guide you and show you what is possible for your life.*

## WEB SITE OF THE MONTH

<http://www.careervoages.gov/careervideos-main.cfm>

This website has short videos on dozens of careers that explain what the job is, where it is done, the education and skills needed and other valuable information. It can be used to further identify careers you might be interested in pursuing.

## THIS MONTH'S QUIZ

- T or F 1. Goals make the future seem more real.
- T or F 2. It is best to delay making career decisions until you are sure you have identified the perfect career.
- T or F 3. It is not a good idea to choose two career goals.
- T or F 4. Short term goals should be attainable in less than a year.
- T or F 5. Goals must be believable and achievable.

Answers to quiz on page 3

### Counseling & Career Services

Mon, Tue, Wed 8:30am-8pm  
Thu, Fri 8:30am-5pm

### Disability Support Services

#### Counselor Hours

Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri 9 am-5pm  
Tue 9 am-8pm

For any questions or concerns, please contact  
Ann Kukulies at 410.772.4009

To receive a copy of this Newsletter thru e-mail, contact Ann Kukulies at 410.772.4009

*This one step - choosing a goal and sticking to it - changes everything.*

## **MAKING DECISIONS AND SETTING GOALS ABOUT YOUR CAREER**

**M**aking decisions can be difficult. In the last two newsletters the importance of self-assessments and career exploration in the career planning process was discussed. Self-assessment and career exploration have some fun and interesting aspects—getting to know yourself better and discovering information about careers that interest you. The third step in the journey toward a career is the decision making process: What are your short and long term goals going to be? For many people, making that decision is a difficult step to take.

Why is it important to set career goals? Having career goals gives you a direction in which to focus your attention and provides a basis for prioritizing your activities, your time and your finances. For college students, career goals go hand in hand with educational goals and thus, with course selections and majors. Goals also make the future seem more real. They provide a base from which to plan and discuss your future and lay a realistic foundation for your life in the world of work. That base also allows you to explore possibilities if particular aspects of your chosen career require accommodations for your disability.

There are some myths about making career goal decisions. The first myth is that there is only one good or right decision and that all other decisions are bad or wrong. Another myth is that the decisions you make now must be final decisions. The third myth is that if you have done a thorough career exploration, it will be easy to make a decision about career goals. Many people can identify several careers in which they would find satisfaction and success. Choosing and committing yourself to one of those careers doesn't mean you can never change your mind. You could also choose to pursue two goals at the same time. This choice works well when the two careers could complement one another, such as a career in business and finance. Sometimes when you have committed yourself to a career decision for a long enough period of time to evaluate how well that career "fits" you, have considered the many options within that career that you could modify to meet your that career goal, and determined that you are not satisfied with your decision, you will decide to reassess your choices and make a new decision. It is important to remember, however, that just because you aren't entirely comfortable with the decision you made, doesn't mean it wasn't the best option for you. Most people are a bit

uncomfortable with new options even when they are positive.

So how can you make such a difficult decision with any certainty? Well, the best way is to base the decision on the research you have done in the career exploration process we discussed last month. If you have compiled and kept a list of information about each career you have explored (see last month's *CareerAbilities* newsletter for more on this topic), then you can compare the different careers based on that objective information filtered through your subjective (or "gut") feelings about the careers. One method of doing this is to create a simple graph. Across the top of the page make a column for each type of information you want to compare, such as educational requirements, salary, essential functions of the job, etc. Place the information that you consider most important to you in the first column and continue across the page until you have listed the least important in the last column. Along the left side of the graph list the name of each career you are considering. Then fill in the graph with the information you have gathered. When you have completed the graph you will be able to easily compare your choices. Whether you use this method or prefer a method of your own, it is important to remember that making a decision is imperative before you can set goals.

Once you have made a career decision there are two types of goals you will want to keep in mind. The first is short term—these are usually broad career category goals like "I want to pursue a degree in business." These may also include interim jobs or degrees. The second type of goal is your long term goals. These are usually specific occupations, such as "Human Relations Director". Your short term goals will determine the initial steps you take in planning for your career. The long term goals can (and usually are) reevaluated over time. Next month we will discuss how to use these different goals to create a career plan.

A final word about decision making: Some people make decisions impulsively, some leave decisions up to fate or agonize and delay making decisions until it is too late and the decision cannot be made or has been made by someone else. Going through an organized decision making process and taking the time to set goals will help alleviate the anxiety sometimes associated with making career plans, give you more control over your future, and increase your chances of finding a satisfying career.

# UPCOMING EVENTS



## Workforce Recruitment Summer Internship Program for Students with Disabilities

### Orientations

December 6, 12:30 pm

December 7, 9:00 am

January 7, 3:00 pm

RCF-302 (Classroom)

**STOP IN AND LEARN ABOUT THIS GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN VALUABLE WORK EXPERIENCE.**

The Workforce Recruitment Program, sponsored by U.S. Department of Labor, is a nationwide program to help students with disabilities find summer internships with Federal government agencies throughout the Washington, D.C. and Baltimore metro areas. Representatives from the Department of Labor will be conducting interviews with HCC students in February of 2008 for summer

placements. The internships are a great opportunity to earn money and get excellent job experience to add to your resume! Students who participate in the Workforce Recruitment Program will also be informed about other local summer internships and jobs for students with disabilities. To be eligible for the Workforce Recruitment Program you must:

- Have a documented disability. Disabilities include physical, emotional and/or learning disabilities;
- Be enrolled as a degree seeking student at an accredited institution of higher learning, or have graduated from such an institution within the past 7 months;
- Be a United States citizen;
- Be in good academic standing and be carrying at least 6 or more credit hours. (Please see Ann for a complete explanation of this criteria.)

**DON'T FORGET! DO IT SOON!!**

Advising is going on **NOW** for Winter and Spring 2008 classes at HCC. Make an appointment to meet with your advisor or Disability Support Services counselor **soon** to register. The earlier you register for your classes, the more likely it is that you will have a schedule that best meets your needs.

### Answers:

1. **True** Career goals provide us with a vision of what we are working toward, give us a basis to evaluate our progress and provide motivation to keep us moving in the direction we have chosen.
2. **False** Career decisions are flexible and can be modified so waiting for a "perfect" career choice is not necessary or desirable. If you have done a good job with your career exploration, you will have the knowledge to set a realistic goal.
3. **False** Many career goals are compatible and pursuing more than one goal can often provide you with flexibility to pursue more career opportunities.
4. **False** Short term goals **may** be attained in less than a year, however are usually considered to be those goals which can be attained in less than 3 years.
5. **True** You must believe you can reach a career goal and have the ability to do whatever it takes to reach it. Achieving your goal may take a different or longer path than others, but as long as you have the determination, ability and flexibility to accomplish it, it is a realistic goal.

## Co-op & Internship Information Sessions

*To sign up for an Information Session call 410.772.4840 or visit Counseling and Career Services in Room RCF-302*

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
6:30 pm-7:30 pm	12:30 pm-1:30 pm	10:30 am-11:30 am
December 4	December 12	December 7

