

# 10. Education

Updated 10/30/04

A variety of opportunities for continuing education exists in Westchester. Literacy programs help adults learn to read, while Adult Basic Education courses encompass reading, writing and math, starting at a 6th- or 7th-grade reading level. GED programs offer preparation for the High School Equivalency Exam. Vocational Training prepares students for entry level occupations in a number of different fields. There are College, level programs in which you can enroll, either as a part-time or a full-time student. For those who wish to master English as a second language, there is ESL, or English as a Second Language instruction. Finally, courses at Adult Education Centers provide for both practically oriented and leisure-oriented study at relatively low cost.

## Legal Restrictions on Education <sup>1</sup>

### A. Financial Assistance for Higher Education

The US Department of Education has the following major financial assistance programs that can be accessed by contacting the financial aid office at the college or university:

- Federal Pell Grants
- Stafford Loans
- PLUS Loans
- Consolidation Loans
- Federal Supplemental Educational grants . Federal Work Study
- Federal Perkins Loans

<sup>1</sup> On Your Own, Information and Resources for Persons formerly incarcerated, the Convicted and their Families in the [New York State] Capital District," produced by the Center for Law and Justice, Albany, NY.

### 1. Conviction of a Drug Offense

The law does suspend financial aid eligibility for students convicted under federal or state law of the sale or possession of drugs.

#### a. Conviction for Drug Possession

If you have been *convicted of drug possession*, you will be ineligible for the following time periods:

- One year from the date of a first conviction; .
- Two years after a second conviction;
- Indefinitely after a third conviction.

#### b. Conviction for Sale of Drugs

If you have been *convicted for selling drugs*, you will be ineligible for the following time periods:

- Two years from the date of a first conviction; .
- Indefinitely after a second conviction.

#### c. Regaining Eligibility

If you lose your eligibility, you can regain eligibility early by successfully completing an acceptable drug rehabilitation program.

Even if you are ineligible for federal aid, you may be eligible for nonfederal aid from states and private institutions.

## Literacy

It is estimated that approximately 50 million American adults are unable to read or write English at a level necessary to participate fully in the everyday demands of job, home, and community. In New York City alone, the number of such adults is close to one million, and their backgrounds cut across all economic, racial, and class boundaries. To help address this problem, a number of free literacy programs operate, where adults, usually defined as persons 16 year's of age or older, are taught the basic skills of reading and writing. Teaching is accomplished on a one to one or small

group basis, and both day and evening classes are usually offered. Waiting lists do exist, but most programs will be able to refer you to others where the waiting period is shorter. The confidentiality of students is at all times respected.

Note: There are many reasons why adults in our society may never have learned to read or write well. They vary from not having had the opportunity to finish school to having finished school but not having been taught well. Being unable to read, however, should never be a source of shame for anyone. Indeed, the creativity and resourcefulness with which many adults have hidden their inability and been able to function so well in our society as non-readers is quite admirable. Learning to read, however, will add an important new dimension to their lives, and translate possibly into better job opportunities, the ability to more effectively shop, bank, and fill out tax forms, etc. It is never too late to begin learning to read.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Literacy Volunteers of Westchester**

85 Executive Boulevard  
Elmsford, NY 10523

**Phone:** 592-2656

<http://www.wln.org/english/detail.cfm?ID=115>

**Eligibility:** 16 years of age or older and out of school. Enrollment follows initial assessment and interview

**Fees:** Free

**Description:** Basic literacy and English language instruction for adults is conducted at public libraries and other sites throughout Westchester County. One-to-one, small group, and class instruction by volunteer tutors are held at convenient times, including daytime, evenings and weekends

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<sup>2</sup> "Connections," A guide for ex-inmates to information sources in New York City, by Correctional Library Services, The New York Public Library, New York City.

## Academic Education in Westchester

#### **WEBS Career and Educational Counseling Service**

410 Saw Mill River Road  
Ardsley, NY 10502

**Phone:** 914 674-3612

[www.westchesterlibraries.org/webs](http://www.westchesterlibraries.org/webs)

**Eligibility:** Adults 18 or older

**Fees:** Free

**Description:** Offers 8-Week Career Seminars (testing- print and online career information- educational planning- career planning- job search advisement) Individual Counseling, Outplacement Counseling, Workshops on Career-Related Topics, Résumé Assistance

#### **JobSTAR<sup>3</sup>**

Westchester Community College  
75 Grasslands Road  
Valhalla NY 10595

**Eligibility:** TANF and TANF eligible individuals

**Description:** JobSTAR is a joint Westchester Community College, and Westchester County Department of Social Services program that provides educational programs, training programs, case management, job placement and other related services to TANF and TANF eligible individuals. The program is conducted on Saturdays on the campus of Westchester Community College.

Specific JobSTAR programs offered include: Academic Skill Enhancement Training (To assist parents with children to improve their math and writing skills so they can qualify for admission to the college, and earn college credits), Computer Skills Enhancement Training (To master basic computer skills and office procedures, necessary for success in today's work environment), and a Food Preparation/Sanitation Certification Program (To prepare students for entry-level jobs in the foodservice industry). There is also a program for the children of students in the adult training programs.

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<sup>3</sup> Westchester County Department of Corrections, Directory of Inmate Services, July 12, 2004

**Educational Opportunity Center of Westchester (EOC)**

26 South Broadway

Yonkers, NY 10701

**Phone:** (914) 966-6810<http://www.wlln.org/english/detail.cfm?ID=111>**Eligibility:** Applicants must be low income, at least 16 years of age or older and out of school, and a resident of New York State for at least year.**Description:** EOC is a non-traditional adult education facility that provides tuition-free, non-credit academic, remedial and vocational skills training and supportive services to educationally and economically disadvantaged individuals and dislocated workers. Specific training include programs include Adult Basic Education (specialized for health and business career development), GED Preparation, Certified Nurses Aide/Home Health Aide, Child Care, Computer Applications, Computer Service Technician, Home Health Aide/Personal Care Aide, Microsoft Office Assistant and Microsoft Office Specialist, Medical Billing and Coding Clerk, Emergency Medical Technician, and English as a Second Language (ESL).**BOCES – Southern Westchester  
Center for Adult and Community Services**

65 Grasslands Road, Building D

Valhalla, NY 10595

**Phone:** (914) 761-3400 (Valhalla);  
(914) 345-8500 (Elmsford)<http://www.wlla.org/swboces.html>**Eligibility:** Westchester residents**Fees:** Vary according to program; call for specifics.**Services:** Offers comprehensive program of adult literacy and ESOL services at multiple sites throughout Westchester County. Adult Literacy Program instruction includes: ABE (Adult Basic Education) classes; ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) instruction, GED preparation classes taught in both English and Spanish; and citizenship and basic computer literacy classes.

|      | Bronxville | Mamaroneck | Port<br>Chester | Sleepy<br>Hollow | New<br>Rochelle | White<br>Plains | Valhalla |
|------|------------|------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|
| ABE  | X          | X          | X               | X                |                 |                 |          |
| ESOL | X          | X          | X               | X                | X               | X               | X        |
| GED  | X          | X          | X               | X                |                 |                 | X        |

**BOCES – Putnam.Northern Westchester**

200 BOCES Drive

Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

**Phone:** (914) 248-2430<http://www.pnwboces.org/adulted/adult.htm>**Eligibility:** Northern Westchester and Putnam residents**Fees:** Most services are free; call for specifics.**Services:** Adult and continuing education, including Academic Skills/GED Preparation, English for Speakers of Other Languages, Driving, and Family.**White Plains Adult and Continuing Education**

Rochambeau School

228 Fisher Avenue

White Plains, NY 10606

**Phone:** (914) 422-2357<http://www.wlln.org/english/detail.cfm?ID=126>**Fees:** No fee for literacy or ESL. Sliding scale for other courses**Description:** Beginning to Advanced conversational ESOL. Provides basic reading, Pre-GED, and GED group instruction and individual tutoring. Offers computer, business skills, and career preparation programs.**Parolee Vocational Rehabilitation Service<sup>4</sup>**

PVRS is a joint effort by the New York State Department of Labor and the New York State Division of Parole. Provides prevocational skills and job search skills, as well as referrals to jobs, all levels of continuing education and vocational training. Operates in Yonkers, Mount Vernon and White Plains. Must be referred by your New York State Parole Officer.

**Vocational Training in Westchester****BOCES-Southern Westchester  
Center for Adult and Community Services**

65 Grasslands Road, Building D

Valhalla, NY 10595

<sup>4</sup> "Connections," A guide for ex-inmates to information sources in New York City, by Correctional Library Services, The New York Public Library, New York City.

**Phone:** 914-761-3400 Ext. 361  
<http://www.swbocesadulted.org/>

**Eligibility:** Westchester residents

**Fees:** Vary according to the program; call for specifics

**Description:** Available Courses such as: Automotive Technology, Business & Real Estate, Computer Repair & Networking, Computer Software Applications, Construction & Technology, Mechanical Trades, NY State Teach Assistant Test Prep, Nursing and Allied Health.

**BOCES – Putnam.Northern Westchester**  
200 BOCES Drive  
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598  
**Phone:** (914) 248-2430  
<http://www.pnwboces.org/adulted/adult.htm>

**Eligibility:** Northern Westchester and Putnam residents

**Fees:** Most services are free; call for specifics.

**Services:** A variety of occupational education courses, such as certificate programs in Trade-Based Business Management, Maintenance Mechanic, Automotive, Construction/Trades and Culinary Arts. Also occupational courses in Business/Computer Technology, Nurse Aide, Cosmetology, Medical Office Assistant, Nail Care Technician and Practical Nursing.

**Vocational and Educational Services  
for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID)**  
75 South Broadway  
White Plains, NY 10601  
Phone: (914) 946-1313; (800) 258-3743  
<http://www.nysed.gov/pro1999/vesid1.htm>

**Services:** Counseling, guidance, educational training and assessment to those whose disability is a barrier to employment. VESID promotes educational equity and excellence for students with disabilities while ensuring that they receive the rights and protection to which they are entitled; and provides vocational rehabilitation and independent living services to eligible persons to enable them to work and live independent, self-directed lives.

**Eligibility:** Westchester residents with disabilities who are able to work.

Since substance abusers are considered to be disabled by VSID, it helps if the substance abuse problem is validated by the applicant having

completed a substance abuse treatment program. Once in the program, substance abusers must:

- Be monitored and subjected to random drug tests. Such monitoring may be conducted by the parole officer or an aftercare program.
- Ex-offenders who are not substance abusers and who do not have physical or mental disabilities that limit their ability to work independently are not considered to be disabled.

## College Help

### College Careers Fund of Westchester <sup>5</sup>

|                                                                       |                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 60 Mitchell Place<br>White Plains, NY 10601<br><b>Phone:</b> 428-3435 | Mailing Address:<br>P.O. Box 1530<br>White Plains, NY 10602 |
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**Eligibility:** Low income Westchester residents, ages 14 and up.

**Fees:** Free

**Description:** College Careers is a private, not for profit corporation organized for the purpose of helping educationally and economically underprivileged individuals out of poverty by offering them the opportunity for higher education.

## Other Education Resources <sup>6</sup>

<http://www.finaid.org>

A comprehensive list of all sorts of student financial aid, including scholarships, fellowships, and exchange programs. Among the special groups included are: disabled students, older students, female students, minority students, veterans, and those outstanding in sports/athletics.

<sup>5</sup> Westchester County Department of Corrections, Directory of Inmate Services, July 12, 2004

<sup>6</sup> "Connections," A guide for ex-inmates to information sources in New York City, by Correctional Library Services, The New York Public Library, New York City.

<http://www.saludos.com>

Includes job listings, a resume posting site, information on careers, scholarship opportunities, and resume writing.

[www.nypl.org/branch](http://www.nypl.org/branch)

A guide to Internet education resources. Click on 'Best of the Web.' And then scroll down and click on 'Education.'

[www.uncf.org](http://www.uncf.org)

Website of the United Negro College Fund. Information on precollege, summer and graduate programs, as well as on scholarships.

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**For more information on Education and Educational Counseling, see Chapter 4, *General Service Organizations*.**