

## **Military Advanced Education**

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### **Research Suggests That The Acquisition Of Relevant Skills May Be More Important For A Career Than The Number Of Years Spent In School.**

Choosing a major and core program of study is often a difficult decision. Some may still entertain dreams from childhood about how cool it would be to be an astronaut or doctor or lawyer or teacher— the list could go on and on. The harder reality, however, is that there is a big difference between the image of a given occupation and what it takes to get there. Ultimately, what the work really involves may be nothing like the romantic notion first imagined.

#### ***EXCERPT from Larger Article***

#### **Career Links**

According to the Department of Education, employers are increasingly seeking workers with “pocket-protector” skills, practical problem solvers fluent in today’s technology and workers who have a strong foundation in science and math. Higher level skills, especially hightech skills based on robust proficiencies in math and science, are expected to generate 46 percent of all job growth through 2014.

“Unfortunately the large numbers of the nation’s adults 16 years of age and older do not demonstrate the numeracy skills needed to fully participate in the increasingly competitive technologically

driven global environment," Mark McGuire, a behavioral science professor at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces National Defense University, recognized recently during a panel discussion on global competitiveness. "As a result, the U.S. innovation engine, fueled by the mastery of math and science, is quickly losing ground to

Probing into the connection between higher education degrees and current job needs, Irwin Kirsch, the director of the Educational Testing Service's Center for Global Assessment, underscored the importance of relevant learning and acquiring essential skills for the workplace. "The data we have suggests that skills turnout to be much more important than people thought," he said recently at a summit hosted by the College Savings Foundation (CSF). "That is, while educational attainment is a really important indicator for where we are in society, skills [also] have a big impact. Skills actually help explain more of the outcome than educational attainment alone. So it's not just how many years you spend in school, but it's the skills you acquire while you are there that can make an important difference."

### **Degree Completion**

President Obama's vision for restoring U.S. leadership in higher education degree attainment by 2020 is a bold one, but some small steps have already been made. Last year, the House passed the Student Aid and Financial Responsibility Act (HR 3221), which includes the College Access and Completion Innovation Fund (CACIF) and the American Graduation Initiative (AGI).

CACIF's goal is not just to improve access to college, retention and completion, the fund also aims to raise post-completion employment levels. It would invest \$600 million annually for five

years to initiate programs that would enhance or reform remedial education, as well as advance dual enrollment, early college and bridge programs. It would also establish student support activities, especially cohort programs and early warning systems, and provide incentives for faculty and institutions to increase student persistence.

"The people who don't have any post-secondary education are the ones who are half of the unemployed, currently and for some time," Anthony Carnevale, director of Georgetown University's National Center on Education and the Workforce, recognized recently at the CSF summit. "They are the long-term unemployed, people who have gone for more than six months without jobs. And if our work with others is any guide and the past is any guide, when we come out of this recession many of the jobs for these folks will have disappeared."

AGI, which would invest \$630 million annually for 10 years in matching state grants, aims to realize five million additional community college graduates by 2020, including students who earn certificates, associates degrees, or continue on to four-year degree programs.

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