A message from . . .

Robert Bentley,
Governor of Alabama

The investments we make in our students today will help shape their futures for years to come. Our students are destined to become high-performing professionals in all sectors of the workforce.

Alabama SUCCESS is an initiative designed to help students access valuable information about current careers, postsecondary learning, and financial literacy resources.

Our goal is to give students the opportunities they need to prepare themselves for success. We want our students to be well-equipped for top careers in Alabama’s workforce – which has a growing influence on the global marketplace.

This Alabama SUCCESS guide is a great resource to assist in preparing for a bright and successful future.

Dr. Thomas R. Bice,
Alabama State Superintendent of Education

Alabama SUCCESS is an invaluable resource designed specifically for students. By learning about actual career fields and the education and experience required for specific jobs, you will be better able to figure out what you want to do after high school and what you need to do to achieve your goals.

This guide is part of a series created to help students in Alabama learn more about careers, salaries, and the steps they need to take to reach their goals. By connecting what they learn in the classroom to real jobs that interest them, Alabama students will graduate better prepared for life and work. You can help your child use this guide by:

- Talking to your child about what careers interest him or her—and why
- Sharing your work experiences—pro and con—with your child
- Asking people in your community who work in jobs that interest your child to talk about their careers or to let your child visit their workplace.
Integrity. “You have to make sure that you personally follow the rules and the regulations, not just enforce them,” says Greg Glaze, director of the Northeast Alabama Law Enforcement Academy, a training site for police officers.

Service. Most legal professionals, even those in private firms, are involved in serving the public. Hard work and long hours may be required of lawyers, police officers, judges, and corrections officials.

The ability to deal with stress. Stress is a given in many legal professions. Students preparing for legal careers are subjected to tough questioning from law school professors. Mistakes in corrections work can be dangerous. Law enforcement is physically and psychologically demanding. To succeed, you must learn to roll with the punches and keep working.

The ability to communicate. Legal work is people work. Law enforcement officers interacting with people at a crime scene have to be as good at communication as lawyers making a point in the courtroom.
Do you follow the rules?  
**WHY IT MATTERS:** People in legal careers must know the law and obey it.

Are you a people person?  
**WHY IT MATTERS:** In this work, you must be prepared to deal with all sorts of people, often under difficult conditions.

Are you a good communicator?  
**WHY IT MATTERS:** To make a case in court or deal with people under stress, you have to know what to say.

Do you have an analytical mind?  
**WHY IT MATTERS:** To solve a criminal case or present it in court, you have to be able to reason well.

Do you manage your own stress well?  
**WHY IT MATTERS:** You have to keep a cool head in difficult situations.

If you answered “yes” to most of these questions, Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security could be right for you.

**YOU DECIDE**

**YOUNG PROFESSIONAL PROFILE**

**NAME:** Caroline Drummond  
**EDUCATION:** Mountain Brook High School, Mountain Brook; University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa—Law and Business Administration, Bachelor of Political Science Degree

**EDUCATION GOAL:** “I am getting a joint graduate degree in law and business administration at the University of Alabama. Law school usually lasts three years, but I will finish in four.”

**CAREER GOAL:** Drummond is unsure exactly where her studies will lead her, but she does intend to combine the practice of business and law. “Money is often a driving force in legal actions,” she says. “If lawyers are trying to win damages for their client in a lawsuit, for example, they make the best argument they can to do so.”

**CAREER PASSION:** Drummond, who entered college intending to pursue medical school, changed her mind early on. “I took a lot of philosophy courses, and I got turned on to how the law protects us from ourselves. Government and laws are set up to keep people from violating each other’s rights, to maintain peace and order.”

**LEARN MORE**

Sit down with your parents and counselor and create a plan.

Make a plan (sample at right) based on your interests, strengths, and possible career goals. Your plan outlines the courses and electives you’ll take in high school, plus related clubs and career preparation. Your counselor will work with you to determine the learning experiences needed for you to complete your plan, such as using distance learning or earning college credit from your local community college.

Here’s a sample Alabama Education Plan for you to use as a guide.

ARTICULATION AGREEMENT is a fancy term for a simple education agreement that can streamline your road to a successful career.

Statewide articulation agreements link all high schools and two-year colleges in Alabama. They provide credit at two-year colleges for coursework mastered at the high school level.

Articulation agreements can take you down your career pathway as well. In many cases, students transferring from two-year to four-year colleges and universities can complete four-year general studies core course requirements before they transfer.

Get Career Credentials

If you’re a student in a career and technical education (CTE) program, you may have the option of earning a Career Readiness Certificate along with your high school diploma. The nationally recognized certificate shows you’re proficient in applied math, reading for information, and locating information—skills employers highly value. Ask your school counselor about the statewide program; if it’s not in your high school now, it will be implemented soon.
The 12 careers highlighted on the next page are a sampling of occupations in the Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security cluster in Alabama. The charts include occupation name, description, plus wages for workers just starting out in the profession, average wages for those in the occupation, and the wages earned by experienced workers in the job (see “How to Read Job Charts”). The bar below the occupation’s name contains the Standard Occupational Code (SOC); use the SOC to look up more information about the career in online databases such as O*NET (see below). The bars are also color-coded to indicate the minimum level of education required for each profession.

For further information on occupations in all career clusters, go to the O*NET database at www.online.onetcenter.org.

Check Out These Three COOL CAREERS

**Emergency Management Specialist**

**WHAT:** Emergency management specialists coordinate disaster response or crisis management activities, provide disaster preparedness training, and prepare emergency plans and procedures for natural disasters or hostage situations.

**WHO:** Emergency management specialists have a very challenging but very rewarding job. These experts in worst-case scenarios help communities plan for out-of-the-ordinary events that could cause serious property damage or loss of life. Everyone knows these things happen; emergency management specialists do everything they can to ensure that when disasters strike, the harm to the community is minimized.

**Forensic Science Technician**

**WHAT:** Forensic science technicians collect, identify, classify, and analyze physical evidence related to criminal investigations. They perform tests on weapons or substances such as fiber, hair, and tissue to determine their significance to an investigation.

**WHO:** There’s more to a crime scene than meets the eye, and these technicians are trained to find the clues that are not immediately apparent to other investigators. They do it by collecting physical samples at the scene and applying scientific tests to them. When a case comes to court and the truth is on the line, their testimony may decide the outcome of the case.

**Fire Investigator**

**WHAT:** Fires can be set by criminals who want to wipe out all evidence of the crime by burning it to cinders. Fire investigators are trained to collect and examine the cinders—as well as the glass, metal fragments, charred wood, and other physical remains of a fire or explosion—to determine what really happened at the scene.

**WHO:** Fire investigators also interview witnesses, property owners, and people who lived or worked in the destroyed building to get sworn testimony. After putting together a solid case, they can swear out a warrant, arrest suspects, and appear as witnesses in court to make sure justice is done.
Probation Officer
Provide social services to help rehabilitate criminals in custody or on probation or parole.

Judge
Administer justice in a court of law. May sentence defendants in criminal cases and determine liability in lawsuits.

Private Investigator
Seek, examine, and compile information for private clients.

Lawyer
Represent clients in criminal and civil litigation and other legal actions.

Supervisor of Police and Detectives
Manage the activities of members of a police force.

Law Clerk
Assist lawyers or judges by researching or preparing legal documents. May meet with clients or assist lawyers and judges in court.

Paralegal
Assist lawyers by researching past cases, investigating facts, or preparing legal document.

Supervisor of Correctional Officers
Manage the activities of correctional officers and jailers.

Correctional Officer
Guard inmates in prisons, following established rules and procedures.

Firefighter
Control and put out fires or respond to emergency situations where life, property, or the environment is at risk.

Police Patrol Officer
Patrol assigned areas to enforce laws, direct traffic, control crowds, prevent crime, and arrest suspects.

Supervisor of Correctional Officers
Manage the activities of correctional officers and jailers.

Correctional Officer
Guard inmates in prisons, following established rules and procedures.
MYTH: The law is what you see on TV.

FACTS: “Everything that you see on television,” says University of Alabama law student Caroline Drummond, “as far as what you might think a lawyer does, is wrong. To be a lawyer does not necessarily mean to be in a courtroom. You never have to see a courtroom if you don’t want to. There are lawyers who litigate and lawyers who do a lot of the behind-the-scenes work.”

Lawyers can advise large corporations, write and manage contracts, or specialize in labor law or real estate. Even courtroom lawyers’ lives are less dramatic than what you see on TV.

Greg Glaze, director of the Northeast Alabama Law Enforcement Academy in Anniston, says the same thing is true of police work. “It’s a lot more work mentally, and definitely physically, than is ever demonstrated in any kind of media outlet,” Glaze explains. For example, he says, officers must spend a lot of time and effort preparing written reports of their activities that will stand up in court.

Reality Check

What It Costs to Live on Your Own in Alabama
Estimated 2009-2010 monthly expenses for a 22-year-old living in Birmingham.

- Monthly total: $1,310–$1,654
- Yearly total: $15,742–$19,851

Note: Keep in mind that your paycheck will be reduced by about 30 percent to cover taxes, retirement, and insurance. What’s left is known as your “take-home pay.” Subtract 30 percent from the salaries shown on page 5 to get a more accurate take-home amount.
In Alabama, the learning doesn’t stop with high school graduation. Here is a list of public postsecondary (after high school) institutions that may offer programs related to this cluster.

**Two-Year Institutions Offering Certificates or Associate’s Degrees**
- Alabama Southern Community College, Monroeville
- Bevill State Community College, Sumiton
- Bishop State Community College, Mobile
- Calhoun Community College, Decatur
- Central Alabama Community College, Alexander City
- Chattahoochee Valley Community College, Phenix City
- Enterprise-Szark Community College, Enterprise
- Faulkner State Community College, Bay Minette
- Gadsden State Community College, Gadsden
- H. Councill Trenholm State Technical College, Montgomery
- Jefferson Davis Community College, Brewton
- Jefferson State Community College, Birmingham
- J.F. Drake State Community College, Huntsville
- J.F. Ingram State Technical College, Deatsville
- Lawson State Community College, Birmingham
- Lurleen B. Wallace Community College, Andalusia
- Marion Military Institute, Marion
- Northeast Alabama Community College, Rainsville
- Northwest-Shoals Community College, Muscle Shoals
- Reid State Technical College, Evergreen
- Shelton State Community College, Tuscaloosa
- Snead State Community College, Boaz
- Southern Union State Community College, Wadley
- Wallace Community College (Selma), Selma
- Wallace State Community College (Dothan), Dothan
- Wallace State Community College (Hanceville), Hanceville

**Four-Year Institutions Offering Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral, or First Professional Degrees**
- Alabama A&M University, Normal
- Alabama State University, Montgomery
- Auburn University, Auburn
- Auburn University at Montgomery, Montgomery
- Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville
- Troy University, Troy
- Troy University (Montgomery), Montgomery
- University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham
- University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville
- The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa
- University of Montevallo, Montevallo
- University of North Alabama, Florence
- University of South Alabama, Mobile
- University of West Alabama, Livingston

**Certifications**

While attending high school and postsecondary institutions, all Alabama students should consider getting certifications related to their career cluster of interest. These certifications can improve a student’s skill set, as well as increase the student’s overall chance of gaining employment in the field.
COLLEGE PREP: Getting Accepted

The college admissions process can be stressful and a bit scary, especially if you are the first in your family to apply. Give yourself the best shot at getting into a college program that matches your goals by following these five steps:

1. Make the Grade
   Your grade point average really does count, so do your best work on every assignment, pay attention in class, and participate in group discussions.

2. Get Involved
   Build teamwork and leadership skills by joining clubs and teams at your school, volunteering for service projects, and participating in church or community activities.

3. Make a List
   Before you can apply to college, you have to figure out what you would like to study and what matters most to you (like location, size, or religious affiliation). Use the college guides in your local library, school library, or counselor’s office to start making a list of colleges that interest you. Use online tools like www.collegeboard.com and www.accs.cc to learn more about each school and take virtual campus tours.

4. Plan for Tests
   Most colleges want scores from the ACT, SAT, or SAT II tests. See what tests the schools on your list require, sign up to take them in time to include the scores on your application, and then practice the free SAT sample questions at www.collegeboard.com or sample ACT tests at www.actstudent.org.

5. Be Neat and Complete
   Before you send in a college application, double-check your spelling, make sure nothing is missing, and save a copy just in case you have to submit it again.

FINANCIAL AID

Every Alabama student can afford to go to college. It just takes a little planning. Put your college dreams within financial reach by taking these five steps:

1. Consider a Community College
   Alabama’s public and private two-year colleges offer an affordable way to earn an associate’s degree or complete enough credits to transfer into a four-year school as a junior. Learn more at www.accs.cc.

2. Weigh Your Options
   Attending one of Alabama’s four-year public or private schools cuts travel costs and other living expenses, as compared to attending schools out of state. In addition, public schools offer reduced in-state tuition, and, if there’s a college nearby, you can save even more by living at home.

3. Rise to the Top
   Apply to a couple of schools at which your grades and accomplishments put you near the top of the typical applicant pool. Since your application will stand out, you’ll be more likely to qualify for scholarships and other merit aid.

4. Do a Little Digging
   More than one million local, national, and college-specific scholarships are available each year. Ask your school librarian and counselor for help finding printed scholarship resource guides. To find and apply for scholarships online, sign up for the free college scholarship search source FastWeb at www.fastweb.com.

5. Apply for Aid
   Fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after January 1 of the year you’ll be starting college. FAFSA forms and instruction booklets are available in your guidance counselor’s office and online at www.fafsa.gov. Some schools also require the CSS/Financial Aid Profile form (profileonline.collegeboard.com), and others have their own financial aid forms. Carefully read each college’s application to figure out what forms you need to submit and when.
Glossary

Articulation agreements: formal agreements between or among educational organizations (high schools, community colleges, and universities) that allow students to receive college credit for courses taken in high school.

Associate’s degree: a two-year degree awarded by a community college.

Bachelor’s degree: a four-year degree awarded by a college or university.

Career and technical student organizations (CTSOs): co-curricular organizations for students that offer activities and competitions related to particular careers.

Career Clusters: identifies pathways from high schools to two- and four-year colleges, technical schools, graduate schools, apprenticeship programs, and workplace so that learners can recognize the relationship between what they learn in school and what they can do in the future.

Career Pathways: pathways are sub-groupings of occupations/career specialties. Occupations/Career specialties are grouped into Pathways based on the fact that they require a set of common knowledge and skills for career success.

Doctoral degree: a degree awarded by universities for study beyond a master’s degree. May also be called a Ph.D. or a first professional degree.

Dual enrollment: a program between Alabama public colleges and universities and local boards of education that allows high school students to enroll in certain approved college-level courses to receive both high school and college credit.

ECEP (Early College Enrollment Program): a program that allows juniors and seniors to have full-time enrollment at an Alabama public college or university while still graduating with their class and staying involved with high school activities.

Extended learning experiences: participation in career and technical student organizations, co-curricular activities, job shadowing, internships, or community service.

Internship: an extended learning experience that gives students an opportunity to work temporarily at an entry-level job in a career that interests them.

Job shadowing: an extended learning experience in which students observe professionals in particular careers as they go through a day on the job.

Master’s degree: a degree awarded by universities for study beyond a bachelor’s degree.

Postsecondary education: education beyond high school. Middle and high school are referred to as secondary education, so postsecondary means after high school.

STARS (State Transfer & Articulation Reporting System): STARS System allows public two-year students in Alabama to obtain a Transfer Guide/Agreement for the major of their choice. This guide/agreement, if used correctly, guides the student through their first two years of coursework and prevents loss of credit hours upon transfer to the appropriate public four-year university in Alabama.

Resource Shelf

Use these websites and other resources available from your school counselor to learn more about careers, career clusters, and educational and job opportunities in high school and beyond.

ACCESS • www.accessdl.state.al.us
ACCESS (Alabama Connecting Classrooms, Educators, and Students Statewide) Distance Learning provides opportunities and options for Alabama public high school students to engage in advanced placement (AP), elective, and other courses to which they may not otherwise have access.

Alabama Career Information Network • www.alcareerinfo.org
This new Web portal increases Alabama students’ and families’ access to valuable career exploration activities and college financial aid information.

Alabama Commission on Higher Education
Click on “Colleges & Universities” within this website for a list of four-year institutions in Alabama.

The Alabama Community College System • www.accs.cc
Learn all about the public and private two-year colleges in Alabama. Connect directly to each school’s website to see the courses, majors, degrees, and scholarships it offers to Alabama students.

Alabama Tech Prep • www.altechprep.org
This booklet is sponsored by Alabama Tech Prep. The goal of Tech Prep is to create a smooth transition from high school to college and to a career.

Alabama Virtual Library • www.avl.lib.al.us
This Alabama Legislature–funded site provides all students, teachers, and citizens of the State of Alabama with online access to essential library and information resources.

America’s Career InfoNet • www.acinet.org/acinet
Use this site to search for occupational information, industry information, and state-specific labor market information.

Career Voyages • www.careervoyages.gov
This career planning resource helps students, parents, career changers, and career advisors.

O*NET (Occupational Information Network) • www.online.onetcenter.org
O*NET provides full information on occupations, including state-by-state salary data, employment prospects, and skill matching for students.

A valuable resource for both counselors and students, this federal website offers updated information on careers, job responsibilities and working conditions, salaries, and what jobs will be available in the future.