Lend a Helping Hand

Your guide to careers in HUMAN SERVICES

Great Career Ideas • Creating Your Plan • College Resources
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.
Students entering careers in social work need a strong foundation in the liberal arts. Developing skills and knowledge that help you understand humans as individuals is essential. An appreciation of how humans behave socially underlies all social work practice, be it with an organization, community, or society. Also, the ability to think critically, along with strong communication and problem-solving skills, serve as the basis for social work practice.

Students should develop an appreciation for diversity, social justice, and other values associated with the profession through education and volunteer or paid experience in the social service field. All career paths in social work require education beyond the high school level. Education programs that can prepare you for a career in social work are available at colleges across Alabama.
Human Services

Professionals of the Human Services career cluster work with individuals, families, and organizations to provide a broad range of products and services. And because people are always changing, the number of jobs available in the cluster is constantly growing.

YOU DECIDE

Does the Human Services career cluster fit you, your talents, and your dreams? Take this quick quiz to find out.

1. Do you enjoy helping others?

   WHY IT MATTERS:
   There are plenty of interesting jobs available in the Human Services career cluster, and they all give you a chance to help others.

2. Do you have strong public speaking skills?

   WHY IT MATTERS:
   Jobs in Human Services often require you to speak in front of groups, both large and small.

3. Do you enjoy working on group projects in school?

   WHY IT MATTERS:
   Human Services is all about personal interaction. You’ll need to be comfortable and experienced working in a group.

4. Do you thrive under pressure?

   WHY IT MATTERS:
   Human Services jobs tend to force you to think fast on your feet.

5. Would you describe yourself as “patient” and “compassionate”?

   WHY IT MATTERS:
   When working with people, it is essential that you accept each individual for who they are.

If you answered “yes” to most of these questions, Human Services could be right for you.

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

NAME: Lauren Davis

EDUCATION: Southside High School, Southside; Gadsden State Community College, Gadsden—Cosmetology, Certificate

Lauren Davis attended Southside High School in northeast Alabama and was a member of the Panther Volleyball Team. Her teammates referred to her as “the hair braider” because she shared her talents.

“I have always had a passion for doing hair,” said Davis. She is currently in her third semester of the cosmetology program at Gadsden State Community College. “Gadsden State has helped me develop the skills I need to actually be successful in the cosmetology field.”

After completing over 70 percent of the Gadsden State program, Davis qualified for a cosmetology work permit, which she received earlier this year. Since then, she has worked at Felicia’s at Fourth, a full-service salon and spa located in Gadsden. Davis enjoys putting the skills acquired at Gadsden State to practical use.

“Cosmetology is so rewarding,” said Davis, who hopes to one day own a salon. “I love knowing I helped to make someone feel beautiful and self confident.”

LEARN MORE

Explore Human Services education and career options in Alabama at the Alabama Department of Human Resources web page, www.dhr.state.al.us/list.asp.
MAKE A PLAN

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

Map out an Alabama Education 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.
CAREER IDEAS

Need-to-know facts and figures about real Alabama jobs, salaries, and education options in Human Services.

The 12 careers highlighted on the next page are a sampling of high-demand, well paying occupations in the Human Services 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

Day Spa Owner

WHAT: Create a calm, soothing environment where customers are pampered with experiences such as hot-rock massages, mineral baths, pedicures, and facials.

WHO: Professionals trained to remove people from their complex and stressful days into a relaxing getaway.

Dietitian

WHAT: Promote good health through proper eating habits. Work with individuals, groups, and families seeking to improve eating habits and build general knowledge about health and wellness.

WHO: Professionals trained to monitor the food intake of others in order to improve their overall well being. They become life coaches for a person’s nutritional health.

Art Therapist

WHAT: Use art to help children and adults with developmental, physical, or emotional problems, improve their health and wellness, or recover from illness or injury.

WHO: Caring professionals trained in both art and therapy who work with patients in hospitals, schools, shelters, clinics, art studios, and correctional facilities.
### Property, Real Estate and Community Association Manager
SOC: 11-9141
- Manage rental and for-sale real estate properties and neighborhood community associations.

### Barber
SOC: 39-5011
- Cut men’s hair, and provide shaves and beard trims. Maintain schedule of work that involves regular clientele.

### Counselors (All Other)
SOC: 21-1019
- Provide counseling to a group or individual.

### Social and Human Services Assistant
SOC: 21-1093
- Assist professionals from fields such as psychology, rehabilitation, or social work to provide client services and support for families.

### Social and Community Services Manager
SOC: 11-9151
- Manage budget and operations of a social service program or community outreach organization.

### Child-Care Worker
SOC: 39-9011
- Attend to children at schools, businesses, private households, and child-care institutions.

### Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors
SOC: 21-1011
- Counsel and advise individuals, families, or groups with alcohol, tobacco, drug, or other problems.

### Director of Religious Activities and Education
SOC: 21-2021
- Direct and coordinate activities of a denominational group to meet religious needs of students.

### Clergy Member
SOC: 21-2011
- Conduct religious worship and perform other spiritual functions associated with a religious faith or denomination.

### Fitness Trainer and Aerobics Instructor
SOC: 39-9031
- Provide exercise instruction for groups or individuals.

### Medical and Social Health Social Workers
SOC: 21-1022
- Provide persons with the psychological and social support needed to cope with chronic, acute, or terminal illnesses.

### Marriage and Family Therapist
SOC: 21-1013
- Diagnose and treat mental and emotional disorders within the context of marriage and family systems.
Think Again

The Human Services career cluster offers an ever-growing list of career opportunities, many of which you might not be aware.

**MYTH:** Human Services careers only suit “people persons.”

**FACTS:** It is true that most human services careers require employees to work directly with other people. But if you don’t think of yourself as a “people person,” do not fret. There are still plenty of rewarding career experiences to be had in Human Services.

**Reality Check**

What It Costs to Live on Your Own in Alabama


- **Rent and utilities:** $700–$800 (1-bedroom)
- **Groceries:** $200–$250
- **Gasoline:** $124 (1,000 miles @ $3.10 per gallon, 25 MPG)
- **Cell phone:** $70
- **Cable and Internet:** $90
- **Car payment:** $350–$450 (Best 2010/2011 4-door)
- **Car insurance:** $30–$95 (6-month policy)

**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.

Sources:
- Rent: www.rentbits.com/rb/rental-rates/birmingham-al
- Car: www.carsdirect.com
- Groceries: www.wkrg.com/consumer/article/alabamians_paying_more_for_groceries/23889
- Cable and Internet: www.birmingham.mybrighthouse.com
- Car insurance: www.progressive.com
- Gas: www.gasbuddy.com

Subtract 30 percent from the salaries shown on page 5 to get a more accurate take-home amount.
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.

POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS

Check it OUT

Most Alabama schools offer these student organizations related to the Human Services career cluster:

SkillsUSA • www.skillsusa.org
SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, teachers, and industry working to ensure American has a skilled workforce. Programs include student competitions and employer-driven training in all career and technical education areas.

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, Inc • www.fcclainc.org
Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, Inc. (FCCLA) is the only in-school student organization that has the family as its focus. The family and consumer sciences organization, which has some 220,000 student members nationwide, sponsors annual STAR (Students Taking Action with Recognition) events. Each summer, winners of state events advance to compete in the national STAR events.

Take It to the Next Level

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. For Web links to these two- and four-year institutions, visit www.ache.alabama.gov/Colleges&Universities/Directory.htm.

Two-Year Institutions Offering Certificates or Associate’s Degrees

- Alabama Southern Community College, Monroeville
- Bevill State Community College, Sumiton
- Bishop State Community College, Mobile
- Cullman Community College, Decatur
- Central Alabama Community College, Alexander City
- Chattooga Valley Community College, Phenix City
- Enterprise-Szarak 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
- Shelby State Community College, Tuscumbia
- 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
- Athens State University, Athens
- Auburn University, Auburn
- Auburn University at Montgomery, Montgomery
- Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville
- Troy University, Troy
- Troy University Dothan, Dothan
- 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

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**FRESHMAN YEAR**

- Continue building the strongest possible academic record.
- Consider taking the PLAN (pre-ACT) if you plan to apply to a two-year college or university in the future.
- Apply for summer jobs, internships, or volunteer activities related to your career cluster.

- Research your career options based on your interests, talents, and goals.
- Choose a career cluster.
- Create an Alabama Education Plan (see page 3).
- Do your best work in all your classes. Course selection and grades really do count, so do your best work in all your classes.

- Keep a folder or portfolio of your activities, awards, accomplishments, and work experience, and add to it during your high school career.

**GRADE 9 SOPHOMORE YEAR**

- Do your best work in all your classes. Course selection and grades really do count when you are applying to colleges and training programs.

- Apply for summer jobs, internships, and volunteer activities related to your career cluster.

**GRADE 10 JUNIOR YEAR**

- Continue doing your best work. Most students report that registration deadlines are approximately four weeks before each testing date.

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- Take the PSAT/NMSQT. Use resources available at your school (books, online tools, college fairs, etc.) to research postsecondary education options related to your career goals.

- Register to take either the ACT or the SAT I and SAT II Subject Tests. There are testing dates every month from January through June. Registration deadlines are approximately four weeks before each testing date.

- Apply for scholarships online, sign up for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after January 1 of the year you'll be applying to college. FAFSA forms and retake any standardized college admissions tests if you would like to improve your score.

- Beginning in November, complete college financial aid forms. Deadlines and required data differ from school to school, so read the instructions carefully.

- In the spring, choose your postsecondary program on the basis of where you have been accepted, costs, etc.

- Continue doing your best work. Most schools require a final transcript before making your acceptance official.

**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.

**PAYING YOUR WAY: 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 college 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 every 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.
Tool Box

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
www.ache.alabama.gov
Click on “Colleges & Universities” within this website for a list of four-year institutions in Alabama.

The Alabama Community College System • www.accc.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.

U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Outlook Handbook
www.bls.gov/oco
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.