

## Post-Secondary Education: What's it Worth?

Do you remember the Robert Fulghum book “All I really need to know, I learned in kindergarten”? Catchy title and some good practical advice such as “play fair, clean up your own mess and say sorry when you hurt somebody”. But is this really all that you need to know to be happy and successful in the real world? Will a certificate confirming graduation from kindergarten land you a job as an Accountant, Police Officer or Aircraft Maintenance Engineer? No, no and no, and neither will a high school graduation diploma.

These days, nearly any career that will allow you to live above the poverty line requires some kind of post-secondary education. Of course there are a few exceptions to the rule such as “super star singer” or “NHL player” (hats off to Avril Lavigne and Sidney Crosby), but for the most part if you want a personally and financially rewarding career, you will need to continue your schooling beyond high school graduation.

You may be thinking “How will I ever be able to afford going to college or university”. “Tuition has skyrocketed and the career I’m aiming for requires a minimum of four years education”. Financing post-secondary education can indeed be a barrier to many people. Tuition has risen sharply and many careers do require several years of study. Nevertheless, another question which is perhaps even more important to ask is “*How can I afford not to go to college or university*”? When you crunch the numbers, in the long run you will find that a post-secondary education is an investment in your future. The money and time you spend now toward your education will enable you to earn a great deal more compared to a lifetime of low to minimum wage jobs.

Furthermore, there are many careers that do not require a lengthy time in school. Apprenticeships in Trades for the most part can be accessed after a 6 to 12 month training program. Careers in Technology, require approximately 2 years in school and most programs include a cooperative component where some semesters you work in the field and earn money at the same time. Money aside, consider also the personal satisfaction of having a job you enjoy versus one you have to go to every day.

Okanagan College’s Kalamalka Campus is still accepting applications for a number of academic programs which you can start this January: Arts, Science, and Business. If you don’t have the necessary prerequisites, you can get them through our Adult Academic & Career Preparation (AACP) upgrading program. Additionally, look for our 16 page Continuing Studies insert appearing in the Morning Star on Sunday December 11 and Friday January 6. To find out more about the Kalamalka Campus, please contact 545-7291 or visit [www.okanagan.bc.ca](http://www.okanagan.bc.ca). For more information about post-secondary education in general, check out the following two web sites: [www.trainyourbrain.ca](http://www.trainyourbrain.ca) & [www.educationplanner.bc.ca](http://www.educationplanner.bc.ca).