Fast Track: Introducing Teens to Non-Traditional Career Paths

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Presentation Focus
Why are we seeing more students choosing vocational programs?
• Part 1: Trade School Trends
What can libraries do to help teens determine the best career path for them?
• Part 2: “I Can” Career Program Series
• Part 3: The Fast Track: Trade School Fair
“Talent is universal but opportunity is not.”

**Brainstorm:**
Think of a specific teen that has a particular skill or talent that sets him or her apart from peers. Please turn to 2-3 other people around you and share a little information about this teen with your group.
Section One:

Trade School Trends
Pop Quiz

All of the careers below have an annual medium income of over $55,000, but which of these careers requires a bachelor’s degree?

A) Electrical Engineering Technician
B) MRI Technician
C) Certified Public Accountant
D) Commercial Pilot
“College and career readiness requires both knowledge and skills. It’s time to abandon the false dichotomy between knowledge and skills. Knowledge is necessary, but not sufficient, for success today. Students need skills to be able to apply their knowledge and continue learning.”

- From *Up to the Challenge: The Role of Career and Technical Education and 21st Century Skills in College and Career Readiness*
Reexamining Trades

• Career Ed. was historically pushed at low-performing students
• Those on the “college prep” track may leave high school and even college with few marketable skills
• Applied learning that is relevant to students’ lives reduces drop-out rates
• Many state curricula are now seeking to include high-quality career pathways that combine academics with work-based opportunities
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Value</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shorter Length</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Certifications</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less Debt</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Flexible Schedule</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acquire Job Skills</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>14</td>
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</tbody>
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Popular Vocational Programs

- Nursing
- Vet Technician
- X-Ray Technician
- Automotive Mechanic
- Welding
- Audio Engineering/Recording
- Business Management
- Massage Therapy
- Landscape Design
- Culinary Arts
- Restaurant Management
- Hospitality
- Cosmetology
- Video Game Design
- Dental Hygienist
Skill Gap or Skill Deficit

- 54% of American companies report having openings for which they cannot find qualified workers (2013 CareerBuilder study).
- By 2020, the gap is projected to grow to exceed 5 million job openings that employers are not able to find candidates to fill (Carnevale, Smith, and Strohl).
- Jobs that require more training than a H.S. diploma, but less than a 4-year degree account for 54% of U.S labor market, but only 44% of the labor market is trained at that level (Carnevale, Smith, and Strohl).
- 42% of job seekers surveyed attribute the problem to a lack of knowledge about potential career opportunities and note a lack of career guidance in their education (CareerBuilder, “The Shocking Truth about the Skills Gap”).
Demand for Middle-Skill Jobs Will Remain Strong

Between 2012-2022, 49 percent of job openings will be middle-skill.

Source: NSC analysis of long-term occupational projections from state labor/employment agency.

A Middle-Skill Gap

Middle-skill jobs account for 54 percent of United States’ labor market, but only 44 percent of the country’s workers are trained to the middle-skill level.

Brainstorm:

How can libraries help teens acquire some of the basic skills needed for these “middle skill” positions (more training than a H.S. diploma, but less than a 4-year degree)?
Section Two:

“I Can” Career Program Series
“Providing all students with a road map and skills for success—and customized support and options for achieving it—will help all students make smarter choices.”

- From *Up to the Challenge: The Role of Career and Technical Education and 21st Century Skills in College and Career Readiness*
Pop Quiz

At what age has the frontal lobe completed development?

A) 16  
B) 18  
C) 21  
D) 25

Follow up: Why is this important in relation to the topic of this presentation?
Workforce Development Programming

• CMLibrary Teen Services seeks to help teens transition successfully to adulthood, however success looks for each teen

• Teens are often not exposed to a variety of career paths in traditional educational institutions

• Library programs are not tied to grades so teens are more open-minded in this setting
Evolution of Career Programming for Teens

• CMLibrary’s Focus Areas established in 2010 - Workforce Development, Educational Success, and Literacy

• Initially Workforce Development programs were thought to be resume, cover letter, Microsoft Office basics, and interview skills programs

• We had to think of ways to get teens excited about career workshops
We focused on:

• Current careers that teens might not have considered
• Careers with strong teen appeal
• Hands-on activities so teens can “test out” options
• The presenter provides the hands-on, we provide the follow up for career path options
“I Can” Be a DJ
“I Can” Be a Chef
“I Can” Be a Make-up Artist
“I Can”
Be a Coder or 3D Designer
"I Can"
Be a Professional Skateboarder
“I Can” Be a Pharmacy Tech
“I Can” Be a Photographer
Possible Presenters

- Tattoo artist
- Yoga or fitness instructor
- Salon owner or stylist
- Journalist
- Photographer
- Artist (all mediums)
- Dancer
- Poet
- Recording artist
- Fashion designer
- Business owner
- App or website designer
- Engineer
- Vet tech
- Restaurant Owner
- Baker
Outline for “I Can” Workshop Series

- Introduction
- Overview of career
- Journey to this career path
- Education required
- Challenges involved
- Rewards of the career field
- Related careers in this field
- What teens can do now if they are interested in this field
- Questions from teens
Lessons Learned

• Vet your professionals
• Invite new professionals each time
• Ask your teens about their career interests
• Partner with local guidance counselors, teachers, and other non-profits that serve teens to market the programs
• Regularly scheduled series
Pop Quiz

Which of these statements are myths? Explain why?

A) jobs that require a 4-year degree pay higher salaries
B) trade school graduates usually go back to school eventually so they should finish their schooling while they are young and don’t have a family
C) employers look for a bachelor’s degree because it means an employee is a well-rounded professional
D) trade school programs are mostly for low performers without the academic skills to pursue a 4-year degree
Friendly Competition

Napkin folding

Volunteers?
Section Two:

The Fast Track: Trade School Fair
Overview of Fast Track: Trade School Fair

• Teens and new adults have the opportunity to explore the programs offered at the various trade schools in the Charlotte area. This annual event is perfect for anyone thinking about taking that next step to acquire job-specific
• Planning for the 3rd annual event in March 2017
• Attendance each year was approximately 150-200
Before Fast Track: College 101 Series

• A series of programs at CMLibrary to help teens and their parents prepare for the path to college

• Workshops in this series include: writing a college application essay, getting into your top choice school, searching for scholarships, and SAT or ACT practice exams
Teens! Want to go to college, but not sure how? College 101 is an annual series of FREE workshops designed to provide you with the information you need about your future beyond high school.

**College 101: SAT Practice Exam**  
October 4, 2014 at Independence Regional Library, 2-4pm, 704-416-4800  
Prepare for college and kick off your SAT prep with a free practice exam. After the test, the Princeton Review will email you a detailed performance report and tips on how to improve your score. Please visit our website or call 704-416-4800 to register.

**College 101: Tips for College Bound Middle and High School Students**  
November 5, 2014 at Independence Regional Library, 2:30-3:30pm, 704-416-4800  
**Accepted—Getting Into Your Top Choice School**  
February 11, 2015 at Independence Regional Library, 2:30-3:30pm, 704-416-4800
Origins of Fast Track

• We found that teens at ImaginOn were not interested in the College 101 series because they didn’t see traditional college as the right fit
• We noticed a large number of teens had dropped out of school but did not have jobs
• When asked, many of our regular teens had no goals after high school
• Fast Track was meant to fill a gap in educational resources for teens in Charlotte
• Central Piedmont Community College
• Brightwood College
- Aveda Institute
- Charlotte Star Room
- The Arts Institute
• Carolina School of Broadcasting
• Job Corps
• College of Health and Sciences
Full List of Schools

- Central Piedmont Community College
- Carolina School of Broadcasting
- Empire Beauty School
- ITTech
- Universal Technical Institute
- Aveda
- Carolinas College of Health and Sciences
- Job Corps
- Art Institute of Charlotte
- Paul Mitchell
- Park West Barber School
- Southwestern Massage School
- ECPI
- Charlotte Star Room
- Brightwood College (formally Kaplan)
- Iron Yard