

Now is the time to start planning those special events to attract students to nontraditional career fields. Trailblazers provides support services to assist you with the planning and preparation of student events.

Here are a few events to consider:

**"Live Wires"** - A club focused on encouraging and supporting students interested in pursuing a nontraditional career track. Contact us to become a coordinator this year!

**Career Fairs** - Let us assist you with improving your event through our materials.

**Career Camps** - It's not too early to start thinking about day-long and week-long activities for next spring and summer.

**Career Expos** - Get your community involved by showcasing your Nontraditional Career Pathways.

Visit our site for step-by-step guides to planning your event  
[www.ctetrailblazers.org](http://www.ctetrailblazers.org).

Email us at [trailblazers@virginia.edu](mailto:trailblazers@virginia.edu) if you would like assistance using a "Best Practice" approach to your event this year.

The new [Administrative Planning Guide](#) is now available ONLINE!

### MEET TRAILBLAZERS STAFF AT THESE UPCOMING CONFERENCES

**Virginia Counselors Association Convention 2009**

Williamsburg, Nov 11-14

**National Association for Partnerships in Equity**

Arlington, April 12-15

### VDOE BUSINESS

The new [Administrative Planning Guide](#) is now available ONLINE from the CTE Resource Center!

[FREE! GIS ArcView Software](#) from the VDOE for Virginia P16 education

[Professional Development Webinars](#) (click "Recorded Sessions") for Virginia CTE professionals. Includes a new introduction to GIS training session from ESRI

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### Keep up with recent research

## Strategies for Increasing Nontraditional Enrollment & Completion: What the Research Shows

[The National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity](#) (NAPE) has released a new edition of their groundbreaking review of research on nontraditional students: [Nontraditional Career Preparation: Root Causes & Strategies](#). In it they list the most significant causes of success and failure in recruiting and retaining nontraditional students and provide detailed strategies based on current research for addressing these.

When you evaluate programs to improve recruitment and retention of nontraditional students, consider each of the following "root causes" and summarized strategies identified by NAPE. Then turn to full document for detailed guidance on implementing strategic change.

### Root Causes of Success and Failure

**Academic Proficiency:** When women are academically proficient, they are more likely to choose nontraditional careers. *Strategy:* support proficiency across the curriculum.

**Participation in STEM** increases the likelihood of women participating in nontraditional careers. *Strategy:* encourage STEM enrollment at all levels, especially when taught in an equitable and "hands-on" manner.

**Curriculum:** can bias students against nontraditional careers. *Strategy:* look for bias-free curricula using [inclusive images and text, and hands-on instructional practice.

**Instructional Strategies:** Females prefer learning experiences that they help to design and that involve them in a community. *Strategy:* provide professional development on learning styles.

**School/Classroom Climate:** Students who experience a school climate that supports gender equity are more likely to participate. *Strategy:* provide support for nontraditional students

**Support Services:** Nontraditional students who receive support services are more likely to succeed. *Strategy:* provide services such as tutoring and child care.

**Materials and Practices:** Using equitable career guidance materials and practices can increase participation. *Strategy:* provide professional development for guidance faculty

**Early Intervention:** Providing information about nontraditional careers in elementary and middle schools increases participation in nontraditional careers. *Strategy:* involve educators at all levels in nontraditional events and training.

**Characteristics of Occupations:** Providing comprehensive information occupations promotes participation. *Strategy:* provide comprehensive guidance about nontraditional careers.

**Family Characteristics:** Family expectations and support have a strong influence on career choice. *Strategy:* Involve parents in career education.

**Self-Efficacy:** The strength of a female's self-efficacy is directly related to entry and persistence in an NTO. *Strategy:* Provide training in self-efficacy.

**Stereotype Threat:** Achievement is positively influenced by the reduction in stereotype threat. *Strategy:* provide professional development.

**Negative Media:** The constant and often gender stereotypical exposure of electronic media solidifies gender stereotyping. *Strategy:* teach critical thinking.

**Positive Media:** positive portrayal of individuals in nontraditional career increases participation. *Strategy:* take advantage of positive media.

**Peers:** The opinions of peers, especially during adolescence, can influence nontraditional career choice. *Strategy:* encourage peer involvement in recruitment and retention activities.

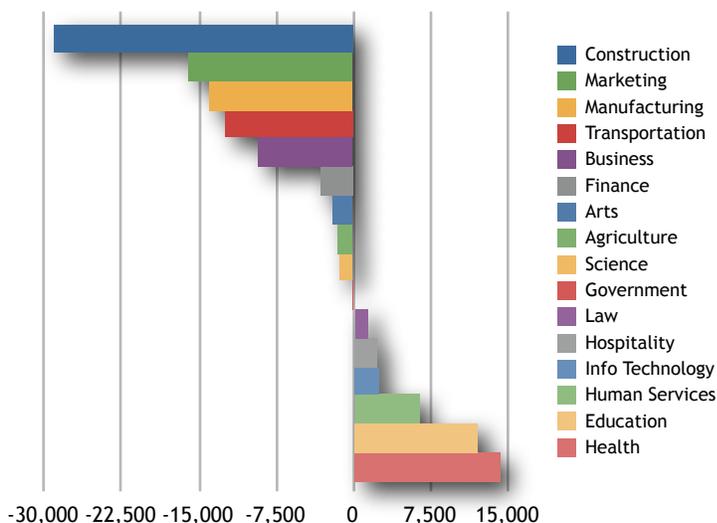
**Role Models:** Nontraditional role models are a significant factor in a student's decision to pursue a nontraditional career. *Strategy:* develop mentoring and role model programs.

**Collaboration** between schools and community-based organizations or business impacts the pipeline for nontraditional careers. *Strategy:* build school-business-community partnerships.

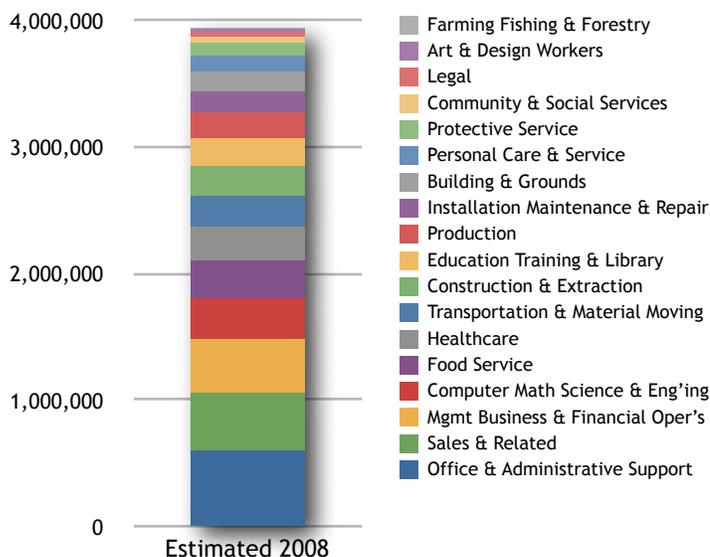
*How the recession is affecting employment: Estimates & projections from the Virginia Employment Commission*  
**Career Clusters: How Employment Is Expected To Change**

- The recession is having an impact on employment in many career clusters. Architecture & construction is expected to lose a significant number of jobs through 2010 (as it does in every recession) as are other clusters such as Marketing, Manufacturing, Transportation, distribution, and logistics, and Business management and administration.
- The Health science, Education and training, and Human Services clusters are expected to grow, boosted by government spending on which they largely depend.
- The employment situation has worsened since the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) collected the data that went into these projections. It is possible that career clusters will lose more jobs by the end of 2010 than the graph indicates.
- The graphs below show the relative size of career clusters and the VEC's occupational groupings.

**Projected Change in Career Cluster Employment, 2008-2010**

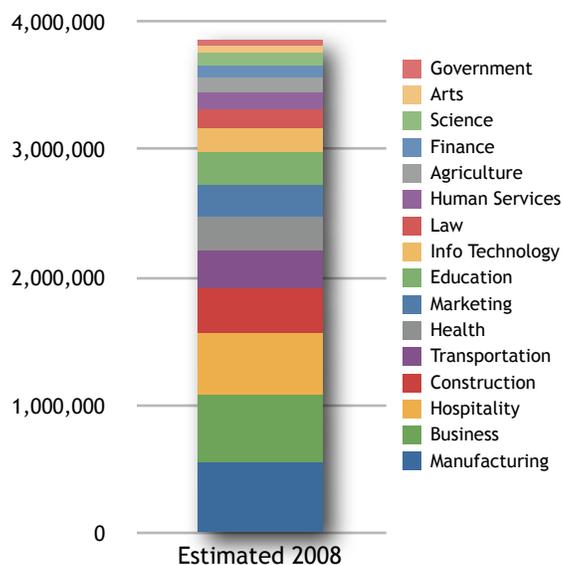


**Employment in VEC/BLS Occupational Groupings, Virginia 2008**



Source: Virginia Workforce Connection

**Employment in Career Clusters, Virginia 2008**



These charts were created using 2008 occupational employment estimates and 2010 projections from the Labor Market information section of the Virginia Employment Commission's [Virginia Workforce Connection](http://www.virginiaworkforceconnection.com) website. These occupation data were matched to career clusters using a US-DOE Perkins IV crosswalk that matches each occupation to a single cluster. This method of representing employment looks very different from the representation created using the occupational employment groupings used by the VEC and the US Bureau of Labor Statistics. This method also produces a number of anomalies, for example the Government cluster appears to be the smallest of the thirteen because only those occupations that appear exclusively in government (such as post office workers) are included in it. Despite these anomalies, this method gives users an idea of the relative size of employment in the officially defined career clusters.