ITXpress Program Orientation

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Q. What is the ITXpress Program?
   A. It's a scholarship and employment support program funded by a TechHire grant from the U.S. Dept. of Labor, specifically for young adults interested in Information Technology training and employment.

2. Q. What do we mean by the Information Technology field?
   A. Almost any occupation within the following U.S. Dept. of Labor "career pathways".
   - Information Support and Services
   - Interactive Media
   - Network Systems
   - Programming and Software Development

3. Q. How much scholarship funding is available?
   A. Scholarships for classroom and online training can total $3,710. In addition, funds are available for paid internships and on the job training.

4. Q. Who makes the decision about scholarship funding and program admissions?
   A. The Career Navigator and Project Manager at the regional workforce board. Training providers, such as C.I.T.I. in Stamford and DCI in Waterbury, provide assistance with recruitment, outreach, and orientation, but have no control over who is admitted to the program.

5. Q. Will all applicants be accepted into the program?
   A. No. Not everybody who applies will be accepted into the program. The I.T. subject material is hard work and challenging. Only a limited number of scholarships are available. An applicant must be both eligible and suitable. The first cut is eligibility. An applicant must:
   - Be between 17 and 29 years of age
   - Be out of school - with at least a high school diploma or G.E.D.
   - There is no limit on educational level. People with an associate's or bachelor's degree are eligible.
   - Be a U.S. citizen, or if not a citizen, able to work legally in the U.S.
   - Have some barrier to employment, such as lack of experience
   - Be able to pass a basic reading and math exam
   - Have no serious criminal conviction history
• Be unemployed or underemployed

The second cut is suitability: An applicant must:
• Have sufficient aptitude
• Have sufficient interest
• Have sufficient commitment
• Be available
• Be someone who appears likely to complete the program
For details, see questions #14 and #15.

6. Q. **What do program participants receive?**
   A. Participants will receive the following services:
   • Career counseling to determine which target occupation is the best fit.
   • Customized training to fit your circumstances: it might be on-line instruction; or a classroom option in Waterbury, Stamford or New Haven.
   • Help overcoming obstacles to employment: help such as bus passes, gas money, help with childcare
   • Help getting a paid internship or on the job training.
   • Help getting a job in the Information Technology field, probably a job with one of our employer partners: IBM, Cigna, Frontier, and the various companies that are members of the Connecticut Technology Council.

7. Q. **Do the ITXpress Program Career Navigators teach the I.T. courses?**
   A. No. The staff here at the job center arrange for the training; we don't provide the training. Training will be provided by Independent Software; UConn Stamford CITI Program; regional community colleges and other schools. I.T. training does not take place here at the job center.

8. Q. **Does the I.T. instruction take place at the American Job Center?**
   A. No.

9. Q. **Are there student loans involved with this program?**
   A. No.

10. Q. **Does this program lead to college credits or to a college degree?**
    A. The program is mainly non-credit and non-academic.

11. Q. **Does this program guarantee employment?**
    A. No

12. Q. **What's the purpose of the courses funded by the program?**
A. The various courses available are designed to prepare participants to take a professional examination that leads to an Information Technology credential. The training leads to credentials. Credentials increase the chances you will get an interview for an I.T. job. Industry credentials include such skills certifications as:
- CompTIA A+, Network+ and Security+
- SQL, Python, C#, C++ or
- certification as an Ethical Hacker or Information Security Officer.

There's a wide range of various credentials - many are proprietary, such as IBM, Cisco, Citrix, Microsoft, and Oracle credentials.

13. Q. **What's a credential?**
A. A credential is proof and verification that you have a set of skills, and a body of specific knowledge. A credential is industry-recognized, portable and stackable.

14. Q. **How long does training usually take in order to obtain a set of occupational credentials?**
A. Usually between three and six months.

15. Q. **What are the eligibility factors?**
In order to be considered for admission, you must:
- Be between 17 and 29 years of age.-- your age at the time of enrollment.
- Be out of school - with at least a high school diploma or G.E.D. --- it's o.k. if you have some college credits, even o.k. if you have a college degree.
- Be a U.S. citizen, or if not a citizen, able to work legally in the U.S. --- we will need a copy of your birth certificate or green card to verify this.
- Have some barrier to employment-- the barrier might be lack of money for education, or a disability, or lack of transportation.
- Be unemployed or underemployed--- by the way, it's o.k. for you to work while in the ITXpress program, as long as work does not interfere with training.

16. Q. **What are the suitability factors?**
A. The suitability factors are more subjective than eligibility. In order to be admitted to the program, the applicant must:
- Have sufficient aptitude -- that is, the ability to learn I.T. skills quickly.
- Have sufficient interest -- you need to really love computer work and have a burning desire to learn more about I.T.
- Have sufficient commitment -- be willing and able to devote your time, energy and concentration to about five months of hard work, intense training and preparation.
- Be available -- you must be able to set aside three to six months of uninterrupted time -- available for case management sessions, available for training, available for internship, available for full time employment.
- Be someone who appears likely to complete the program -- we don't want to set anyone up for failure. The ITXpress program is not suited for everyone. We want participants who are: very likely to attend all training, to participate fully, to complete training, to get their credentials, and to obtain full time employment in an I.T. career.

17. Q. I just submitted my application. Is there anything I could be doing right now to increase my chances of acceptance into the program, and chances for success in training and job search?
A. Yes. Register with the Department of Labor by going to www.cthires.com. Complete the 'background' section (your education and work history). Update your resume. Sign up for a workshop at the job center, such as resume building, interviewing skills, job search strategies. Ask your Career Navigator for other suggestions.