

Soon after our Sophomore class meeting last week to discuss upcoming opportunities to learn more about Great Oaks, two students came to my office with a question. "I can't believe I'm saying this," one of them said, "but I think going to the Oaks might be the best thing for me to do. Can you tell me what kind of students go to the Oaks?"

These two students had never considered any plan other than the conventional path - 4 years at Anderson before heading off to college or a job. But as they thought and learned more about the career and technical options available through Great Oaks, their perspective had widened. Now, they needed assurance that the Oaks could be a quality option. Their question made me think about what kind of students actually *do* go to the Oaks. Our answer is that *all* kinds of students go to the Oaks. Here are six examples:

1. Students who know that they will not be going to college, and who want to be trained and workforce-ready when they graduate high school - This is the "traditional" model, and it is still used by many kids who plan to be finished with formal schooling at the end of 12th grade, and who want to be ready to get a solid job after they graduate.
2. Students who want to get a head start on the field they'll study in college - Students in numerous program at the Oaks can gain experience in the area that they plan to pursue in college, and determine if that career field really is for them BEFORE they spend 4 years paying for a college degree in that area.
3. Students who want to earn money to pay for college - Some college-bound students go to the Oaks so they can work a higher paying job before or during college, to open more college opportunities and to be in less debt after college.
4. Students who plan to have their own business - We have seen numerous students study a trade at the Oaks and then major in Business or a related field in college, in preparation for owning or running a trade-oriented business.
5. Students who want to keep their options open - Many Sophomores just aren't certain if they want to go to college or not. Getting trained at the Oaks gives students more (and often higher paying) options if they elect to not attend college.
6. Students who need a change of scenery - Some students feel as though they just need a fresh start and a different rhythm for 11th and 12th grade. The Oaks can be a great option for students who are looking for a reset for the second half of their high school careers.

If you or your student have an interest in learning more about the possibilities available with a career and technical education from Great Oaks, please contact your student's AHS counselor. We will be happy to provide resources, opportunities, and additional information to inform decisions about possible placement at the Oaks in 11th and 12th grade. The Oaks has a [fantastic website](#) with virtual tours, videos, and written information about all 30 career programs offered.

Anderson Proud,

Chris DeLotell
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