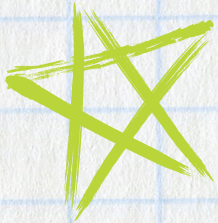
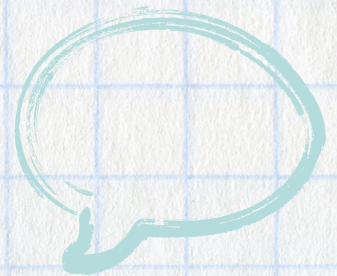


Design - Your - Future

VISION BOARD



*Class of 2027's guide to
creating the life you want.*





Welcome to your vision board!

This workbook is your space to explore possibilities and start creating a plan that's uniquely yours.

Think of it less like homework and more like a place to sketch out what's next: your goals, your interests, the future you're actually excited about.

This is your board — make it yours.

Whether you're thinking about college, career training, an apprenticeship or something else, this workbook is here to help you explore your options and build a plan that fits you.



Fill it out. Add inspo photos, quotes or anything that helps you picture your life after high school.

Grab a pen. Let's build your vision at your pace!

You don't have to figure everything out today. Use these activities, planning tools and resources throughout senior year to help you find the path that's right for you.

Throughout these pages, you'll:

Discover what motivates you

- Explore careers that match your interests
 - Learn about education and training options (and how to pay for them!)
 - Build a plan for life after graduation
- 



IMAGINE YOUR FUTURE



Start by picturing
the life you want.

add notes here!



VISION BOARD

Before you choose a college, career training program or another path, imagine the life you want to live — the career, the lifestyle, the *feeling* you're working toward.

Picture What's Possible



Answer these questions to picture what a career you love would look like for you.

What motivates me most? (*Money, flexibility, a set schedule, work-life balance, feeling like I'm making a difference, a career that excites me?*)

Do I see myself at a desk, in a classroom, on a jobsite or somewhere else?

Where do I see myself living or working? (*Close to home or somewhere new across the state? Big-city energy or a slower pace? Indoors, outdoors or on the road?*)

Do I want a set schedule or something more flexible?

(*9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day, or a schedule that changes each month?*)

What do I want to be able to afford?

(*A car? My own place? Travel? Taking care of my family?*)



How to Use

You've started imagining your future. Now it's time to explore careers that could help bring that vision to life. Review the example pathways below, notice how roles level up with experience and training and then build your own.

Healthcare Path (Nursing) *Care for patients and support their health and recovery.*

LEVEL	ROLE	SALARY*	EDUCATION
Getting Started	Nursing Assistant	\$28K	Certificate
Building Skills	Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)	\$46K	Advanced Certificate/ Associate Degree
Growing Your Career	Registered Nurse (RN)	\$67K	Bachelor's Degree
Leading the Way	Nurse Practitioner	\$97K	Master's Degree

Manufacturing Path *Work with machines and technology to build and maintain products.*

LEVEL	ROLE	SALARY	EDUCATION
Getting Started	Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Machinist	\$40K	Certificate/ On-the-Job Training
Building Skills	CNC Programmer	\$49K	Certificate
Growing Your Career	Mechanical Engineer	\$86K	Bachelor's Degree



Computer Specialist Path *Support technology and help people fix computer and system issues.*

LEVEL	ROLE	SALARY	EDUCATION
Getting Started	Computer Programmer	\$75K	Certificate
Building Skills	Information Security Analyst	\$91K	Advanced Certificate
Growing Your Career	Computer Systems Manager	\$128K	Advanced Certificate/ Bachelor's Degree

Professional Trades Path *Use specialized skills to build, repair and maintain critical systems.*

LEVEL	ROLE	SALARY	EDUCATION
Getting Started	Apprenticeship Electrician	\$31K	Apprenticeship/ On-the-Job Training
Building Skills	Journeyman Electrician	\$52K	Certificate
Growing Your Career	Master Electrician	\$64K	Advanced Certificate
Leading the Way	Construction Foreman	\$85K	Bachelor's Degree



Build Your Own Path *Career that matches my vibe:*

LEVEL	ROLE	SALARY	EDUCATION
Getting Started			
Building Skills			
Growing Your Career			
Leading the Way			

*Salaries are estimates and may vary by employer, degree type and other factors.

DTMB, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives Marshall Plan for Talent, Career Ladders by Sector

MAP YOUR CAREER PATH

You've started exploring careers that could bring your vision to life. Now it's time to take a closer look.

Michigan Career Pathfinder is a free tool that lets you build your custom career road map by exploring fields of study, education requirements, salaries and more — all in one place. Save your favorites to compare side by side as you find the path that's right for you.

Ready to map your future?

Pick your starting point. Pathfinder lets you start wherever makes sense for you:

- A school you're interested in
- A career you're curious about
- A subject you want to study
- A place you'd love to end up living

Tip: Use the careers you explored on the previous page to help you decide where to start.

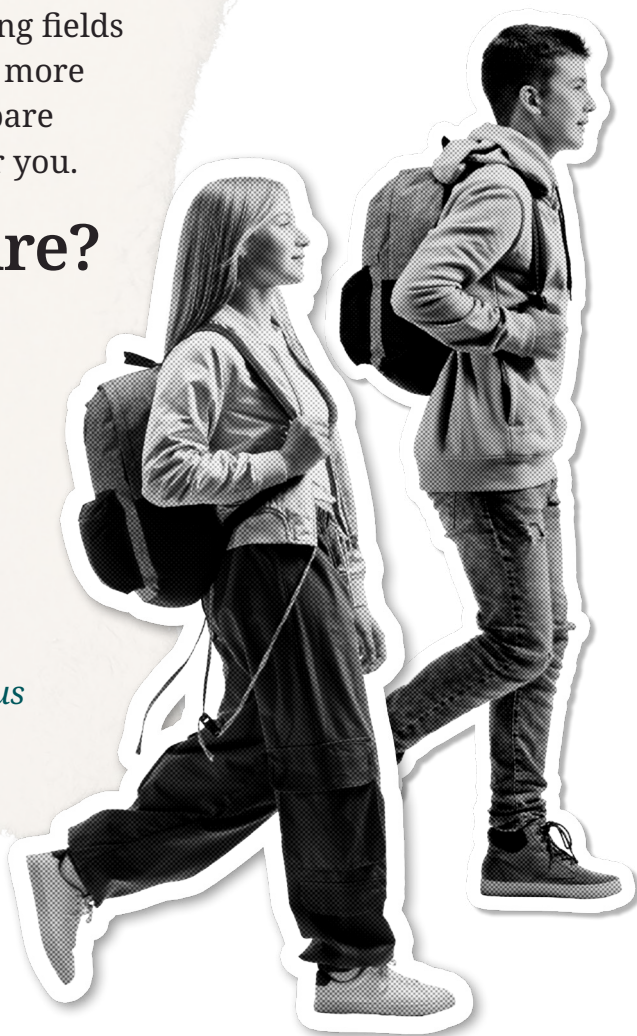
Found a career that feels like a fit?

Use **Michigan Career Pathfinder** to learn what schools and programs can get you there.

Career	
Typical time from completion to employment	
School/Program	
Application deadline	

Scan to get started!

Go to pathfinder.mitalent.org



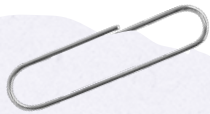
EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS

Discover the paths
that can bring your
vision to life.



PIN YOUR PATH

Is community college or a four-year university a better fit for you?



COMMUNITY COLLEGE

4-YEAR UNIVERSITY

<i>Great for:</i>	Flexibility, affordability, starting strong in a career, preparing for a four-year college	A traditional college experience, careers requiring a bachelor's degree (or higher)
<i>You'll earn:</i>	An associate degree or skills certificate	A bachelor's degree
<i>The vibe:</i>	Smaller classes, lower (or free!) tuition, flexible schedules, transfer opportunities, commuting to campus	Campus life, specialized majors, higher tuition costs
<i>Can lead to:</i>	Beginning a career in as little as two years, or transferring to a university	Careers that require advanced education, such as teaching or engineering

Turn to page 19 to learn how you could go to community college tuition-free!

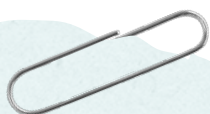
Not sure where to start?

Scan to search for colleges by location, cost or degree type.

Go to collegescorecard.ed.gov



Is hands-on training the right fit for you?



CAREER TRAINING

APPRENTICESHIP

<i>Great for:</i>	Getting on the fast track to a high-paying career	Earning a paycheck while you learn
<i>You'll earn:</i>	An industry-recognized certificate from a career training program or trade school	A respected credential or certification in your field
<i>The vibe:</i>	Skills-focused programs, often a few months to two years	Paid on-the-job training with some classroom instruction
<i>Can lead to:</i>	A high-demand career in fields like healthcare, IT and skilled trades	Building a career from day one in an in-demand industry, including construction, manufacturing and healthcare



THE BIG PICTURE

Use this page to see which pathways align with what matters most to you!

<i>Paths</i>	COMMUNITY COLLEGE	FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITY	CAREER TRAINING	APPRENTICESHIP
Typical Length	1-2 years	4+ years	A few months-2 years	Varies by program
Credential Earned	Associate degree /certificate	Bachelor's degree	Certificate/ industry credential	Industry credential /journeyworker status
Learning Style	Classroom & hands-on learning	Classroom-focused with some hands-on learning	Hands-on, skills-focused	Learn by doing
Real-World Experience	Sometimes available	Sometimes available	Often included	Built into the program
Earn While You Learn	Sometimes	Rarely	Sometimes	Yes
Best for Students Who ...	Want flexibility, a lower-cost start or the opportunity to transfer to a four-year university	Want a traditional college experience or a career requiring a bachelor's degree	Want to develop career-specific skills quickly	Want paid training

What Matters Most to You?

- ☐ Cost
- ☐ Earning money while learning
- ☐ Hands-on learning
- ☐ Campus experience
- ☐ Career-specific training
- ☐ Flexibility
- ☐ Starting your career ASAP

My Top 3 Paths Right Now:

1.
2.
3.

FIND YOUR FIT

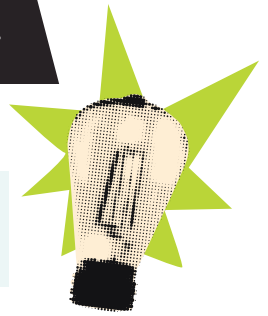
The best path is the one that's right for YOU!

Take a moment to explore your top pathways from the previous page.

PATHWAY	WHY I'M INTERESTED	MY NEXT STEP

Still thinking it through? Ask yourself:

Which path interests me most right now, and why?



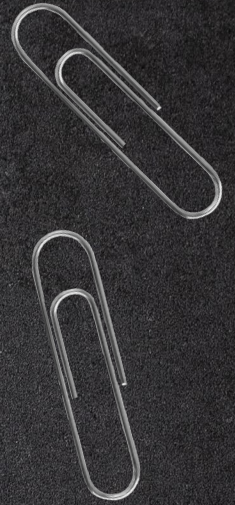
How does this pathway line up with the vision board I started on page 4?

What questions do I still have?

Who's one person I could talk to about this path?

(teacher, counselor, family member, someone in the field)

BRING YOUR VISION TO LIFE



Make a plan that
fits your future.



Senior Year

CHECKLIST

September

- ☐ Narrow down your options (college, trade school, apprenticeship).
- ☐ Start applications (research deadlines and begin personal essays).
- ☐ Create your **MiSSG Student Portal account**.
- ☐ Meet with your school counselor about graduation requirements and postgraduation plans.
- ☐ Explore dual enrollment or college credit opportunities for spring semester if available.

October

- ☐ It's College Applications Month! Keep working on yours and request applications from your top schools if you haven't yet.
- ☐ **File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as it opens.**
- ☐ Begin applying for additional scholarships (local, state and national).
- ☐ Ask for letters of recommendation from teachers, coaches or mentors.
- ☐ Take/retake SAT, ACT or placement tests if needed.

November

- ☐ Apply for apprenticeships, internships or career training programs with early openings.
- ☐ Work on a basic resume highlighting academics, extracurriculars and work experience.

December

- ☐ **Submit all college and program applications due before January.**
- ☐ Continue applying for scholarships (many have winter/spring deadlines).
- ☐ Research housing options (on campus, off campus or alternatives).

January

- ☐ **Confirm your FAFSA was processed and fix any errors.**
- ☐ Submit any remaining program or college applications with spring deadlines.

February

- ☐ Continue submitting scholarship applications (apply monthly).
- ☐ Attend workshops on budgeting, financial aid and independent living.

March

- ☐ **Keep an eye out for acceptance letters and financial aid offers.**
- ☐ Compare award letters from schools/programs.
- ☐ Visit or revisit top-choice schools/programs.

April

- ☐ Finalize your postgraduation plans.
- ☐ Submit housing deposits and intent-to-enroll forms if attending college.

May

- ☐ **Lock in your choice — confirm enrollment by National Decision Day (May 1).**
- ☐ Apply for summer transition programs or orientation sessions.
- ☐ Make sure final transcript requests are submitted to your chosen school.
- ☐ Register for placement testing if required by your college or program.

June & July

- ☐ Graduate high school!
- ☐ Attend college orientation and finalize class schedules.
- ☐ Buy necessary supplies or tools for college or career training.
- ☐ Complete any required health forms, vaccinations or background checks.
- ☐ Learn basic adulting skills: budgeting, meal prep, laundry.
- ☐ **Celebrate — you did it!**



Come back to this!

TOP PICK TRACKER

Keep track of every school, career training program or path you're considering — all in one spot.

SCHOOL/ PROGRAM	PATHWAY TYPE	VISITED?	APPLIED?	DEADLINE	NOTES
Sample School	Community College	☒	☒	01/01/27	I really liked their XYZ program.
		☐	☐		
		☐	☐		
		☐	☐		
		☐	☐		
		☐	☐		
		☐	☐		

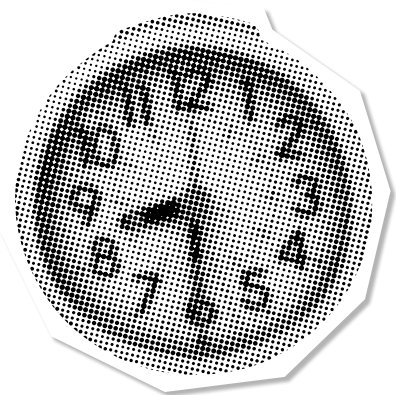
PICTURE YOURSELF THERE

Plan your campus visit.

Photos and websites can only tell you so much. School visits (in person or virtual) can help you see if a program really fits the picture you're building. Use this page to prep for and reflect on your visit.

Questions to Ask

- What activities and services are available to help students transition during their first year?
- What programs or training opportunities are available?
- Are lectures taught by professors or teacher assistants?
- How easy is it to switch majors?
- What careers do graduates pursue most?
- What makes this program unique?
- What is the cost of attending this school?
- What type of grants and scholarships are offered through the school and how do I apply for them?



Need another copy of this worksheet?

Scan here to download! Go to mi.gov/achievement



CAMPUS VISIT

Before Your Visit

School/Program Name

Date of Visit

Why am I interested in this option?

Notes

After Your Visit

What stood out to me most?

What did I like?

What concerns or questions do I still have?

Would I like to learn more about this option?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe



FUND YOUR FUTURE

Unlock money that
helps bring your
vision to life.



DREAM BIGGER

Free Money for College or Career Training

MI Student Aid programs help you take on tuition (no matter your GPA!)

Big dreams deserve the money to make them happen. Whether you're headed to community college, university, a career training program or another path (or you're still figuring it out), Michigan offers financial aid programs that can help make your next step more affordable.



- **Community College Guarantee** — Picture TUITION-FREE community college!
- **The Michigan Achievement Scholarship** — Bring your college plans to life with up to \$27,500 at a public or private university.
- **The Michigan Achievement Skills Scholarship** — Get a head start with up to \$2,000 for career training.
- **Tuition Incentive Program (TIP)** — If you've received Medicaid, you could get even more to cover an associate degree, skills certificate or bachelor's degree.



Which program(s) might fit my plans?

What questions do I still have about paying for school?

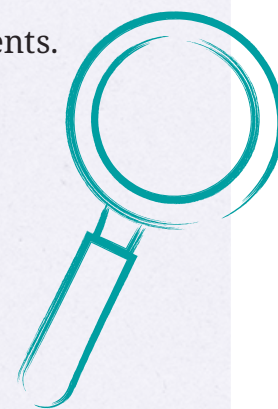
SCHOLARSHIPS

Find Scholarships That Fit Your Future

There are more scholarships out there than you might think — including those from colleges, employers, local groups and more. And they aren't just for straight-A students or star athletes. The more you search — and the more you apply — the better your chances of getting money you don't have to pay back.

Scholarship Search Tips

- **Start early.** Don't wait until spring. New scholarships open throughout senior year.
- **Search often.** Spend a little time every month looking for new opportunities.
- **Apply for more than one.** Every application increases your chances of getting free money for college or career training.
- **Stay organized.** Keep track of deadlines, essays and application requirements.
- **Don't skip the smaller scholarships.** Every award adds up. Apply for everything you qualify for, even if the amount seems small.
- **Read the details.** Double-check eligibility requirements before you apply.
- **Watch out for scams.** Legitimate scholarships don't charge application fees or promise guaranteed money.



Michigan Scholarship Search Tool

Not sure where to begin?

The Michigan Scholarship Search Tool helps you discover scholarships that match your goals and interests.



Scan to start searching!

Go to michigan.gov/mistudentaid/students-families/mi-scholarship-search

SEE WHAT'S POSSIBLE

Filling out the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** is your first step to qualifying for grants, scholarships, loans and more!

FAFSA Myths Busted

Myth #1: Only students with good grades get financial aid.

Fact: The FAFSA isn't only for top GPAs. Most of the funding it unlocks doesn't depend on academic achievements.

Myth #2: It's just for loans.

Fact: The FAFSA is the only way to access certain grants and scholarships (like the Michigan Achievement Scholarship). That's money you don't have to repay!

Myth #3: My family makes too much to qualify for any money.

Fact: You might be eligible for more than you expect. The FAFSA is the key to unlocking scholarships that aren't as income-based as you might think.

Myth #4: It's too hard to do and takes forever to fill out.

Fact: Completing the FAFSA takes most families just 30 minutes or less and the form is only 36 questions!

3 Steps to Completing the FAFSA:

- Gather Social Security numbers, income and tax info (like bank account balances and tax returns) for student and parents.
- Create StudentAid.gov accounts for student and parents.
- Fill out the FAFSA with your parents at [FAFSA.gov](https://fafsa.gov).



Scan to get started!

Go to [FAFSA.gov](https://fafsa.gov)

FAFSA CHECKLIST

Gather This Info Before You Begin



Required Student & Parent/Contributor Information

Additional contributors may include the student's adoptive parents, stepparents or spouse.

☐ StudentAid.gov accounts and passwords	Create StudentAid.gov accounts (both student and parent).
☐ Email addresses	Student: _____ Parent: _____ Additional Contributor: _____
☐ Social Security numbers	Personal records or call the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213
☐ Dates of birth	Student: _____ Parent: _____ Additional Contributor: _____
☐ Checking and savings account balances	Student: \$ _____ Parent: \$ _____ Additional Contributor: \$ _____
☐ 2025 federal income tax forms and W-2s* <i>*You may need 2025 federal income tax forms and W-2s if you changed your marital status since you filed your 2024 taxes or have unique tax circumstances.</i>	Personal records or visit irs.gov/transcript
☐ Investments <i>Excluding home and retirement (e.g., stocks, bonds, mutual funds, 529 plans, rental properties)</i>	Student: \$ _____ Parent: \$ _____ Additional Contributor: \$ _____
☐ Current net worth of businesses and farms* <i>*Do not include a family business with 100 or fewer full-time employees, farms where the family resides or a commercial fishing business and related expenses.</i>	\$ _____ or contact your accountant
☐ Child support received from the last complete calendar year	\$ _____ or contact MiChildSupport at 877-543-2660 or micase.state.mi.us
☐ Alien Registration Number/USCIS Number of eligible noncitizens* <i>*Student only</i>	Contact U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services at uscis.gov .

MAKE IT HAPPEN

Take the next steps to
building your best life
after high school.



YOUR NEXT MOVE

Create Your MiSSG Account



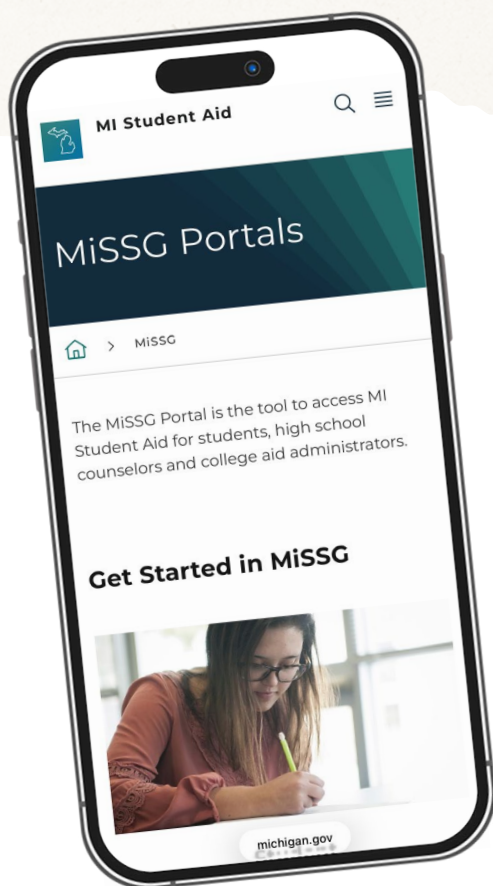
All your financial aid info in one place.

Once you've completed the FAFSA, your MiSSG account helps you stay in the know and moving toward your goals.

It's a free tool that helps you:

- See what state financial aid you qualify for
- Apply for scholarships and grants
- Track your next steps

It takes only a few minutes to get started!



My MiSSG Account

Username:

Password hint:

Date account created:



Scan to create your account!

Go to michigan.gov/mistudentaid/missg

GRADUATION CHECKLIST

Graduation Essentials

- ☐ Pick up your cap and gown.
- ☐ Confirm graduation date, time and location.
- ☐ Get tickets (if needed).
- ☐ Attend rehearsal.
- ☐ Take care of any outstanding school fees.
- ☐ Return any school items (books, devices, uniforms).
- ☐ Plan your outfit.

Your Next Chapter

Financial Aid

- ☐ Complete your FAFSA if you haven't yet.
- ☐ Check your FAFSA status and submit verification.
- ☐ Review and accept financial aid offers.
- ☐ Apply for scholarships. (Applying for the Michigan Achievement Scholarship is as simple as submitting your FAFSA!)

School / Training

- ☐ Send your final transcript.
- ☐ Confirm enrollment.
- ☐ Pay housing deposit (if needed).
- ☐ Register for orientation and classes.



Life Prep

- ☐ Plan housing (on or off campus).
- ☐ Start your summer job search.
- ☐ Update your resume.
- ☐ Open a bank account.
- ☐ Create a simple budget for student life.

TIPS & RESOURCES

Tips to Building the Life You've Envisioned

Success doesn't happen all at once. It's built one step, one habit and one decision at a time. Here are five tips for making your post-high school plans a reality:

- **Stay organized.** Use a planner, calendar or phone reminders to keep track of deadlines and appointments.
- **Ask questions.** No one expects you to know everything. Advisers, instructors and financial aid offices are there to help.
- **Build your support team.** Stay connected with family, friends, teachers and mentors who encourage you to meet your goals.
- **Manage your money.** Create a simple budget and keep track of spending so you're prepared for unexpected expenses.
- **Give yourself grace.** Every journey has challenges. Progress matters more than perfection.



Playlist for the Journey

Need a study session soundtrack? Scan for a focus playlist while you plan your future.

Future Me Will Thank Me For:

- ☐ Checking my email regularly so I don't miss important deadlines
- ☐ Asking for help when I need it
- ☐ Celebrating small wins along the way





YOUR VISION IN ACTION

You've done a lot of thinking, researching and planning throughout this vision board workbook. Now it's time to turn it into action.

My Top Path Option(s):

My Biggest Priorities Right Now:

Questions I Still Need Answered:

My Next Three Action Steps:

What's one thing I can do this week?

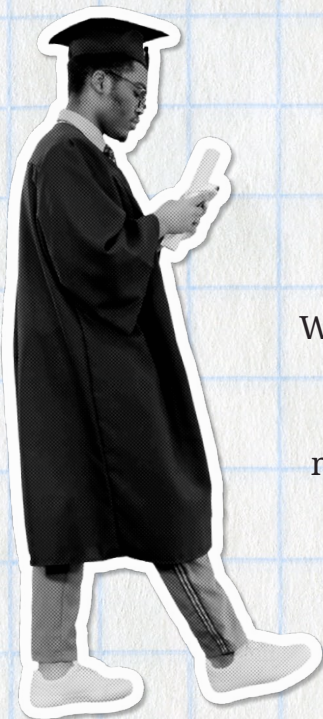
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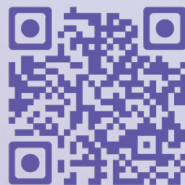
Looking Ahead

By this time next year, I hope to be ...



Keep Building Your Vision.

Whether your path leads to college, career training, an apprenticeship or somewhere entirely your own, you're on your way to creating a life that matches who YOU are. Keep the momentum going by taking the next step in designing your future!



Scan for more planning tools!

Go to [MI.gov/MISStudentAid](https://mi.gov/MISStudentAid)



Individuals with disabilities may contact the MiLEAP ADA Coordinator to request an alternative format to these materials. Please visit www.Michigan.gov/ADA for a list of state ADA Coordinators.