

Career Connected Learning program ‘connects’ students to businesses

Canton Repository

In partnership with The Repository, every Monday, Stark Community Foundation highlights positive happenings in our community. Here's to Good News Mondays!

More than ever, Stark County students are actively engaging with professionals from various sectors this school year through exciting speaker sessions, tours of local colleges and companies, shadowing experiences and mini-internships — all as part of Stark Education Partnership's Career Connected Learning program.

Since launching in 2023, the program has partnered students from districts across Stark County with local businesses to help them find their ideal career path and thrive in our community's workforce. Individualized for each student, this approach uses the national career guidance program YouScience and combines students' interest areas with their aptitudes.

The curriculum pairs students with local employers to provide various career-connected experiences and provides information about secondary education and local opportunities in those specific career fields.

This school year, a new initiative has

been added that implements a student advisory board. Three students from each partner high school participate, providing valuable feedback to help continuously improve the program. In addition, advisory participants act as student ambassadors by promoting career learning opportunities to their peers.

The advisory board's first session included a discussion about YouScience followed by a hands-on activity in Stark State's advanced robotics lab. In November, students discussed Career Connected Learning initiatives and then participated in an interactive leadership activity provided by Leadership Stark County.

The upcoming spring event will focus on “Why Stark?” and will engage students and a panel of community leaders in a discussion of the benefits of Stark County as a place to work, stay and play.

Other Career Connected Learning events held this past fall included Manufacturing Day, where students toured manufacturing sites throughout Stark County, and Akron Canton Builds, where students engaged in hands-on activities as they learned about numerous careers in the skilled trades. As students return to school from winter break, they will prepare to participate in

many more opportunities made available during the coming months.

Recent highlights from local districts include:

- Speakers from First Commonwealth Bank shared a variety of careers in banking with **Alliance High School** students, and some students toured Powell Electric to hear about job opportunities.

- Biomed students from **Canton South High School** traveled to Aultman College for the “Aultman Experience,” which includes a tour, escape room and simulation.

- **Canton McKinley High School** is preparing to feature six weeks of career spotlight sessions, with a different focus each week. Last year, 2,500 students visited during the event.

- **East Canton High School** students heard from speakers from Hendrickson, Spectrum and Marathon Oil. One group of students involved in an “experience-ship” is traveling to different companies throughout the year to shadow and learn more about Stark County career opportunities.

- **Louisville High School** students have been engaging with professionals in accounting, radiology and ultrasound, welding and electrical fields.

- **Sandy Valley High School** speak-

ers have included a NASA aerospace engineer, along with representatives from Deerfield Agriculture, Stark Regional Planning Commission, Marathon Oil and Kee Technologies.

- At **Tuslaw High School**, shadowing experiences took place in radiation technology, optometry and occupational therapy.

“Over the course of the past two years, the Perry Local School District has really focused on the need to incorporate career connected learning into our everyday teaching and learning,” said Nathan Stutz, superintendent of Perry Local Schools. “Collaboration with Stark Education Partnership is driving and supporting those initiatives.”

Learn more about the Career Connected Learning program at www.ed-partner.org.

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