Massachusetts Advanced Pathways Program (MAPP)
Boston, Massachusetts (with programs in Brockton, Marlborough, and West Springfield)

Program Model: Grades 9 – 12

Industry Focus: Advanced Manufacturing, Health Care, and Information Technology

Overview of the Massachusetts Advanced Pathways Program YCC Program
MAPP has boosted the skills of over 700 students over four years in information technology, advanced manufacturing, and health care and is propelling youth to high school graduation with meaningful work experience, 12 college credits toward a postsecondary credential, and intensive college and career counseling. MAPP students achieve college and career readiness through an integrated academic and career-focused program of study, progressing to more specialized and career-related coursework in the 11th and 12th grades. With the deep involvement of industry partners, each MAPP student participates in a progressive sequence of career awareness and work-based learning experiences, including career mentoring in the 10th or 11th grades and a structured, intensive internship in the 12th grade.

MAPP builds upon significant investment in the national Pathways to Prosperity initiative to design and implement comprehensive career pathways in high-growth H-1B industries for students in grades 9-12. Pathways to Prosperity, an initiative led by Jobs for the Future (JFF) in partnership with the Harvard Graduate School of Education, unites state and local employers, educators, and government and nonprofit leaders in fourteen states to develop grades 9-14+ STEM career pathways aligned with labor market demand that link rigorous academics with career-focused learning. JFF was awarded $4.9 million to expand career pathways that prepare more low-income high schoolers in Marlborough, Brockton, and West Springfield for high-wage, high-demand jobs and further education.

Program Highlight
Integrating academic and career-focused learning through project-based learning (PBL) has been a major priority from the outset for all three Youth CareerConnect (YCC) sites and an area of growing strength. Teachers and instructional coaches at Brockton and West Springfield have undergone extensive training to learn how to partner with employers to craft, oversee, and assess real-world projects aligned to core academic standards.

PBL projects in all three places give students an opportunity to apply their learning in practical ways and routinely culminate in expos attended by employers and other members of the community who often serve
as judges. Sample projects include designing outdoor learning spaces, futuristic playgrounds, and apps; designing synthetic organisms that help detect, treat, or cure human diseases; and re-creating tools and materials historically used in manufacturing.

Due to the success of PBL in Marlborough’s YCC program, the principal is planning to scale it schoolwide this upcoming school year, starting with freshmen.

**Success Story**

Sustaining the programs and ensuring impact beyond the life cycle of the grant has been an area of success in all three communities. In February 2018, JFF convened teams from Brockton, Marlborough, and West Springfield for sustainability planning. The convening allowed each to discuss key questions and learn from one another about strategies for sustaining core elements of their programs. As a result of their planning efforts:

- Marlborough was able to secure $40,000 per year for the next two years from the Local Education Agency to dedicate to their YCC work;
- Brockton committed to integrating virtually all of their program elements into existing infrastructure at the high school and, to do so, will leverage existing resources in the district and at the local Workforce Investment Board;
- and West Springfield will sustain its dual enrollment programming through state Perkins funds as well as scale work-based learning program offerings so that other students can take advantage of the opportunities, beyond those involved in the program.

**Community Impact**

YCC has catalyzed substantive impact across local schools, communities, postsecondary institutions, and employers. This year West Springfield celebrated its first cohort of YCC students entering the mechanical engineering technology program at Springfield Technical Community College and the first full-time job offer in advanced manufacturing for one of its recent high school graduates.

Marlborough has leveraged the success of its YCC program and the strength of its partnerships to:

- build and pilot a hybrid Information Technology program with the local community college that allows students to earn an associate’s degree by high school graduation; and
- negotiate with employers for a direct pipeline from high school to the workforce for students who want to enter employment immediately after graduation.

Building bridges across traditionally-siloed K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, workforce investment boards, and employers has led to more innovative strategies for preparing youth for college and the world of work and is changing the way employers think about strengthening their talent pipeline.

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