Overview of the Pathways to Prosperity YCC Program

Our first Youth CareerConnect (YCC) goal was to grow our Precision Machining Programs and Advanced Electronics Program to mirror Toledo Technology Academy and create a Supply Chain Program in the district. We accomplished this through the work of the Student Liaisons and Career Coaches, who put a plan in place to recruit, counsel, and mentor the students. This counseling continues quarterly and now includes not only the students in the grant but all students in career programs.

The second goal was to create strong partnerships with industry. To that end, we developed Business Advisories along with job shadowing and internship opportunities. The model used for these advisories is now being replicated by other career programs, not only in Toledo Public but by other districts in the United States as well.

The concept of educators listening instead of teaching is a new, and somewhat daunting, strategy. But our educators have learned from listening to our business partners that preparation for life is not always found in a book, but often in hands-on experiences. These advisories and partnerships have led to valuable internships and work experiences for our students.

Program Highlight

One highly successful element of our program has been our Business Advisory Meetings. This grant forced our teachers to look critically at our Business Advisory Committees to explore how they could make more of a difference in our programs and further benefit our students.

The first need we identified was to meet quarterly and to solicit program design input from both teachers and industry partners. Our educators listened and learned a great deal from our business partners’ suggestions. Students were also invited to the meetings; the adults convened for the first 30 minutes and the students for the next hour and a half. During this time, our industry partners led the discussion, asking questions and teaching soft skills and workplace skills. With an agenda suggested by the teacher, the subject matter might range from industry job descriptions to resume writing and interviewing skills.

This partnership created a strong bond between local industry and our students and laid the foundation for creating internships.
**Success Story**

Our success story grew out of our close industry partnerships, a major part of which involves businesses talking to students. One young woman, who was committed to achieving her career goals, took one such dialogue to heart.

When the time came for students to take part in mock interviews, led by our industry partners, she was fully prepared: she had completed her resume, dressed in appropriate business attire, and was able to respond to the questions asked. When the process was completed, and the students were given feedback, this student ranked number one in interviews, giving her first priority to receive an internship with the company.

Following her internship, she was not only offered a job but was also offered a scholarship to continue her studies while working. She now attends Bowling Green State University majoring in Supply Chain.

This is just one of many success stories that resulted from the opportunities afforded by this grant.

**Community Impact**

This grant has brought about a greater awareness of the career tech programs in all our high schools. With the grant focusing on only a few programs, those outside the scope of the grant have aspired to the same benefits, such as support with recruiting, mentoring, and creating strong industry partners. The steps put in place intentionally as part of our program became the approach used by the entire district. The career coach worked with teachers and industry partners, organized meetings, and then turned the meetings over to the classroom teachers to be sustained.

A partnership was also created with Lucas County Workforce Development. This partnership has blossomed into a number of community projects, the largest being a career fair in January 2019. Businesses will join our career tech teachers to educate eighth graders and recruit seniors in all career pathways. Also taking part, will be university personnel along with representatives from the military.

**Pathways to Prosperity**

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