

## 2019 End of Year Project Summary

Henderson High School's Career Day was held on April 10, 2019. It was a school-wide event in which all 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students had the opportunity to meaningfully engage in career exploration and college/career readiness activities. Leading up to the event, the Career Day Committee secured 45 presenters (representing 42 career fields) from the community to come and share their career paths to our 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grade students. An additional 9 presenters were secured from West Chester University and Delaware County Community College to discuss college and career readiness with our twelfth grade students. This presentation highlighted how to successfully transition to any post-high school plan and the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that are necessary in the workplace. In total, fifty-four community presenters engaged with our students during Career Day.

On the day of the event, presenters were escorted by student ambassadors to Henderson's Auxiliary Gym for a luncheon. This provided an opportunity for community presenters to learn more about what Career Day means to our students directly from them. Our student ambassadors provided a warm welcome to our presenters while also strengthening the school-community relationship. Presenters enjoyed a hot meal provided by the culinary arts students, listened to music performed by a student-led string quartet, and were inspired by students' visual art projects on display in the gymnasium. During the luncheon, presenters had the opportunity to network with one another and with our many WCASD students and staff who were present. These informal conversations were paramount in helping our community members understand that preparing students for a successful future requires a strong school-community partnership.

All luncheon attendees then heard presentations from Dr. Scanlon, Dr. Sherlock, and our Career Day chairperson to learn about the key role that local businesses play in career exploration activities for our students. Two eleventh grade students spoke to attendees about the valuable internship and job shadowing experiences that they had had during their time at Henderson. Each of these presentations during the luncheon was aimed at strengthening the critical partnership between the school and the surrounding community.

Following the luncheon, presenters were escorted to their designated classrooms by student ambassadors. Each career presenter gave two presentations that were approximately 35 minutes in length. For each presentation, 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grade students were assigned to their classroom based on their interest survey. Community presenters shared about topics such as their educational background, the various roles that they have held in their career path, the daily activities of their job, and coursework that students could pursue in high school that correlates to their career field, among others. They also provided students with an opportunity to ask questions. This interaction between our students and the career presenters provided firsthand information that will help students make educated decisions about their prospective career paths.

All 12<sup>th</sup> grade students reported to the Auditorium for their Career Day presentations. Since most seniors had already determined their post-high school plan by that point in the year, we wanted to provide an opportunity for them to learn about how to transition into the workforce and higher education settings smoothly. They heard a presentation from a team of West Chester University's student orientation guides. This team focused on topics that related to all 12<sup>th</sup> grade students regardless of the specifics of their post-high school plan. They discussed themes such as decision-making, managing finances, living on your own, and utilizing good time management. The 12<sup>th</sup> grade

students also heard a presentation from a Delaware County Community College representative to learn about the benefits of community college and how it can prepare them with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that are needed in the workplace. This speaker also provided information about how to apply to DCCC if the student does not currently have a plan for after graduation. At the conclusion of the presentations, students were broken into small groups with the WCU orientation guides so they could ask questions in a more comfortable setting about making a successful transition out of high school.

At the conclusion of the day, all presenters were asked to complete a survey so we could receive feedback. Evaluation forms were submitted by 34 presenters. One of the outcomes that we sought through the Career Day event and the grant was to increase the number of companies/institutions offering job shadowing opportunities. Of the 34 presenters who completed the survey, 10 indicated that they would like to offer job shadowing to our students and 6 indicated that they were potentially interested. All of the names and contact information of those presenters who were interested or potentially interested were provided to our WCASD Career Exploration Counselor for follow-up. Many presenters indicated on their evaluation form that due to the nature of their job or company policy, they were not permitted to offer job shadowing.

Another outcome that Career Day sought to achieve was to increase student awareness of and participation in job shadowing experiences. During individual junior conferences, students were surveyed about their interest in pursuing a job shadowing or internship experience while in high school. Of the 279 juniors who were surveyed, 171 responded that they would like to participate in these programs in the future. Our career exploration counselor will utilize this data to follow up with students next year to connect them with meaningful, real-world career exposure.

Henderson's Career Day proved to be a successful collaboration between the school and the surrounding business community. Thank you to the West Chester Area Education Foundation for its support of this meaningful program for students!