



AVENUE SCHOLARS
Your Foundation for Success



the **PATHWAY**

Newsletter Issue 1 Vol. 8 October 2019



Steve Wild, Charles E Lakin Foundation President (center), smiles as Cara Cool-Trede, Career EdVantage Executive Director, cuts the ceremonial ribbon at the Career EdVantage Press Conference and Open House Tuesday, Sept. 24 at CEV headquarters in Council Bluffs.

Career EdVantage SWI

Iowa program mirrors Avenue Scholars

The Avenue Scholars model of “ensuring careers for committed students of hope and need through education, training, and supportive relationships” has crossed the river into four Iowa school districts.

Career EdVantage (CEV) SWI officially launched its education and training program during an announcement ceremony and open house, held in Council Bluffs on Tuesday, Sept. 24.

School districts involved during the 2019-2020 school year are Shenandoah, AHSTW (Avoca-Hancock-Shelby-Tennant-Walnut), Tri-Center, and Riverside.

“The schools we are working with have been informed and are what I consider partners already,” says Cara Cool-Trede, CEV Executive Director. “We are taking a phase-in approach to help ensure success in lifting the program off the ground with each school.”

Beginning fall of 2020, CEV will work in the Lewis Central School District. In the fall of 2021, CEV will add Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson High Schools in the Council Bluffs School district.

“CEV will have High School Career Coaches embedded into the high schools, similar to the Avenue Scholars model. The High School Career Coach will recruit students during their sophomore year. The students will need to apply, meet eligibility requirements, and then, if selected, they will need to meet requirements to maintain status in the CEV program — again, similar to the AS model,” Cool-Trede said. “The mission, goals, and instruction of CEV predominately mirror the AS

program in Omaha, and that is because AS has proven to be successful throughout their work. There will be some differences in CEV as CEV will need to be adaptable to the communities it serves, which can differ in demographics, population, and even economically when compared to Omaha.”

According to the literature describing the organization’s overall mission and structure, “the goal at CEV is to prepare students for a successful career in a variety of fields.”

CEV, according to its overview, will (a) mentor low income students through the “intrusive support” of High School Career Coaches for high school students during their junior and senior years and through the “on-the-ground” support of Post-Secondary Career Coaches after students have graduated from high school; (b) provide high school classes for juniors and seniors focused on developing job skills and financial literacy skills; and (c) develop business and industry partners to obtain part-time jobs, internships, and pipelines to well-paid full-time jobs.

CEV is supported by the Lakin Foundation, Avenue Scholars, Iowa West Foundation, Iowa Western Community College, and school districts in Southwest Iowa.

“The CEV program is fortunate to be developing a strong partnership with Iowa Western Community College, similar to the AS program’s relationship with MCC (Metropolitan Community College),” Cool-Trede said. “The first group of CEV students to enter post-secondary education will be in the fall of 2021 and until then, at CEV we will work alongside Iowa Western to develop the supports necessary for students at the post-secondary level.”



Cara Cool-Trede

AS STAFF UPDATE for 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR



ANTHONY TATE
Postsecondary Coach

Duties: Assist college students in preparing for the world of work; Mentor high school students preparing for a career in the Trades career path; Seek business partners to build pipelines to career opportunities; Assist students with accessing resources in the community; Arrange job shadow experiences; Assist with Independent Living and provide support and resources; Assist with the Career Exploration experiences for high school students
Education: Omaha Central High School; BA in General Studies, UNO
Work Experience: Youth Facilitator with Owens Educational Services; Workforce Investment Opportunities Act Employment Specialist for Youth Program & Adults/Dislocated worker programs for State of Nebraska; Career Specialist for Maximus Employment First Program; Training Specialist for Maximus Employment First Program, Case Management Supervisor for Rescare Workforce Services.
On Working at AS: "It is an absolute pleasure to work for a company with the mission of Avenue Scholars. The people are so amazing to work with, all in an effort to build young people to the best they can be while building pipelines to career opportunities."



LINDSAY DECKER

Business Outreach Coordinator

Duties: To assist high school and college students in preparing for the world of work; seek business partners to build pipelines to career opportunities
Education: Westside High School; B.A. in PR & Advertising, UNO
Work Experience: Lotus Yoga; Legal Assistant, General Liability Law Firm; Project Manager of Digital Advertising Campaigns, Woodmen Life Marketing Division
On Working at AS: "I love it. Avenue Scholars is a place where I can truly see how each person adds to the greater whole."



KAMINA LEMONS
Omaha Bryan Career Coach

Duties: Provide academic support to juniors and seniors; Assist Avenue Scholars with Accuplacer test preparation, college admission process, career exploration, study skills and life lessons; Assist with job seeking and conducting employer feedback
Education: Master's of Science Education, UNO
Work Experience: Omaha Public Schools, Family Consumer Sciences Teacher
On Working at AS: "I am excited to be a Career Coach for Avenue Scholars. I am hopeful that I will make a difference and vow to make sure each student is knowledgeable of what AS has to offer and takes full advantage."



CINDY SIADEK

Internship Coordinator

Duties: To work with high school seniors in their Youth, Business, Community (YBC) internships, and connecting with the YBC business partners to facilitate internships
Education: B.A. & Master's Degrees in Counseling, UNO
Work Experience: Recruiter, First Data Resources; MCC Advisor; Advisor in UNO-TRIO program
On Working at AS: "The chance to work with students and businesses in such an innovative internship program is an absolute delight and wonderful application of my work experiences."



ERIK SERVELLON

Business Outreach Coordinator

Duties: Forge relationships with business and community partners to build internships and career experiences for Avenue Scholars
Education: Omaha Central High School; B.A. in Political Science and International Studies, UNO; Master's of Public Administration, UNO
Work Experience: Medic, Nebraska Army National Guard; Administrative Aide, Nebraska Legislature; Election Board Coordinator, Douglas County Election Commission
On Working at AS: "AS has allowed me to help the communities I care for most. I am incredibly proud to have helped make an internship idea turn into a real life-changing opportunity for a Scholar."



AMANDA LONERGAN

Industry Career Coach

Duties: Assist in helping the IT students at MCC find and maintain employment
Education: B.S. in Criminology, Minors in Psychology/Sociology at Maryville University; Master of Science in Youth & Family Services at Bellevue University
Work Experience: 10.5 years at Boys Town, Family Home Program
On Working at AS: "I love working with students in the program. I enjoy helping them set goals for themselves and seeing them reach those goals."



LAURIE MERTEN

Office & Staff Assistant

Duties: General office administration; Support both the Post Secondary Career Team and the High School Career Team, with a little Administrative support mixed in
Education: Westside High School graduate; MCC credits
Work Experience: Facilities Manager at Microsoft; Sales Administration at H&H Automotive
On Working at AS: "I absolutely love being a part of the AS team. We work hard and we play hard — all for the greater good of our students."

AS resources lead Scholar to job she ‘loves’

“I did not know much about Avenue Scholars. I was just wanting to get out of class at the time.”

Despite that inauspicious beginning, 2018 Omaha Northwest graduate Kyrra Johnson soon learned she was involved in a program that would enable her to realize career goals of which she had not even dreamed.

“Avenue Scholars has helped me a lot because of all the resources they have,” Johnson said. “Terrence Gillian [Postsecondary Career Coach] is always sending me applications for job openings.”

One year into pursuit of an associates degree in business at Metropolitan Community College, Johnson is balancing her classroom schedule with a full-time paid internship position at Mutual of Omaha.

“I love it,” Johnson says of her job at Mutual of Omaha. “I have been really surprised how

much I love it there. I work with really good people.”

Johnson works in the Customer Care department, taking payments for insurance policies and updating customer information.

Once Johnson obtains her associate’s degree, she plans to take some time off from school to “figure out” her long-term plans.

Looking back, Johnson feels lucky to be immersed in the Avenue Scholars program.

“I’m so glad I did sign up,” she says. “They have done so much for me. They helped me move into my first apartment and helped me get a new car.”

Johnson is proud of her post-secondary accomplishments. So is her family.

“I’m an only child,” Johnson said. “My mom is beyond proud. I’m the first to go to college. My family is very supportive. Avenue Scholars makes it a lot easier.”



‘SUCCESS in the WORKS’

Allison Goff (left), Omaha South Career Coach, hosted the Avenue Scholars information table during the Omaha South High School Open House in September. She is pictured with Guadalupe Perez-Aguilar, a translator for Avenue Scholars. AS recruits students to enroll in the program during their sophomore year, then provides mentoring, training, and counseling during their junior and senior years of high school.

AVENUE SCHOLARS

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Chief Financial Officer
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- JANAE DONALDSON**
Student Support Coordinator
- DOUG PIERSON**
Special Projects Coordinator

Postsecondary Coaches:

TERRY FISCHER,
Director of Career Programs;
Catie Dagle, Tonya Fairgood,
Terrence Gillian, Carnetta Har-
din, Michael Hughes, Amanda
Loneragan, Anthony Tate

High School Coaches:

JAMAR DORSEY
Director of High School Programs;
Jason Boyd, Taleya Broadway,
Kayla Gillian, Allison Goff,
Ashley Knott, Beth Leach,
Fred Starks, Kamina Lemons

Business Outreach Program:

ANA LOPEZ SHALLA,
Program Director;
Lindsay Decker, Coordinator;
Erik Servellon, Coordinator;
Cindy Siadek, YBC Internship
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“Our mission is to ensure careers for committed students of hope and need through education/ training and supportive relationships.”



LEFT. Hsa Twa, Tyler Walsh, Dillon Leuschen, and Tre'on Fairgood-Jones participate in a friendly tie-tying competition.

'Suit Up, Show Up' Scholars learn leadership skills at seminar

At a "Suit Up, Show Up" leadership seminar at Avenue Scholars in June, Scholars enrolled in the automotive program learned skills "to succeed in the business environment," according to Scholar Emmanuel Kate.

Students enrolled in other industry programs were also invited to attend.

Kate said speakers focused on skills such as networking, getting the most out of one's "return on investments (ROI)," tying a tie, proper business attire to wear to an interview, confidence, proper handshake, and how social media can impact one's quest to obtain a job.

Carnetta Hardin, Post-Secondary Career Coach organized the event. Hardin said guest facilitator Jermaine Jones, Vice-President, Community and Scholarship Outreach, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Midlands, "perfectly executed a professional and engaging day that educated Scholars on how to use their skills and assets to win over their employers presently and in the future."

"The event went very well," Jones said. "The young people were very engaged and asked great questions. The event was all about providing helpful tools and resources on becoming a true professional."

Kate's advice to current Scholars: "Networking is all about the people you know. It's important to utilize your connections. Through ASF, you have access to career coaches, study hall, laptops, supplies, etc. — whatever you need to succeed."



Carnetta Hardin, Post-Secondary Career Coach, congratulates Scholar Eduardo Gutierrez for completing the "Suit Up, Show Up" program.



Mike Alvano, Avenue Scholars COO/CFO, talks to Scholars about maximizing one's return on investments (ROI).



Jermaine Jones, Vice-President, Community and Scholarship Outreach, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Midlands, talks to Scholars about the positive and negative uses of social media, and how communication decisions can impact one's success in the workplace.



Michael Hughes, Postsecondary Career Coach, (third from left) and Jamar Dorsey, Director of High School Programs (second from right) served as coaches in the professional tie-tying competition.