



Career Awareness Program benefits students

High school juniors in the Avenue Scholars program have benefitted from a busy fall of exploring careers. This year, Avenue Scholars, through its Career Awareness program, has partnered with 19 different businesses/organizations to offer a total of 26 events.

Businesses/organizations new to Career Awareness were Munroe-Meyer's Autism Care for Toddlers Clinic, AIM Institute, Werner Technology, Steamfitters Union, Sheppard's Business Interiors (SBI), Elman Print, Scott Data Center, Cornhusker International, No More Empty Pots, Hilton Garden, Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo, ACCESS-Bank, and McGill Gotsdiner Workman & Lepp.

Returning partners: Woodhouse Auto, Baxter Auto, CarStar, Fulton Homes, Quality Career Pathways, and QLI.

"Businesses truly understand the value of Career Awareness experiences. Thankfully, our business partners have been willing to partner with us to offer in-person experiences this year," said Lindsay Decker, Career Exploration Coordinator.

Although the continuing Coronavirus Pandemic has limited the number of students who can attend each event, Avenue Scholars has been creative in providing ample opportunities for every student who wishes to participate.

"In an effort to honor business health guidelines and to keep our students as safe as possible, we've collaborated with businesses to offer multiple sessions of their event so that we can serve as many students as possible who might have an interest in their particular industry,"

Decker said.

The overall goal of the Career Awareness program is to enable students to be better informed of their potential career pathways and what steps they will need to take in pursuing those careers. The program has made a difference in students' success in finding careers that fit their interests.

"Our business partners are truly skilled in understanding how to expose students to their industry — it's really an exciting thing to witness; business and education merging together," Decker said. "For example, I loved watching our culinary students cook a meal and learn various culinary techniques with No More Empty Pots. It's funny because I typically spend months planning these events, so it's always special to watch a students' faces light up when they're having fun and connecting with a business partner—that's how you know a seed was planted in a student's mind."

Decker sees every event as a successful experience for students.

"Career Awareness gives students a chance to experience an industry through their senses. A student can take in what they've learned and see if they can imagine themselves in a similar role," she says. "I always joke that whatever the outcome with a Career Awareness event, it's always a win to me. If a student didn't like the event, that's a win. If they *did* like the event, that's a win, too! Regardless of the outcome, they're getting close to discovering what's important to them when it comes to imagining themselves at work."

Senior scholar pursues his dreams

Outstanding Senior Scholar David Casper has been busy with his part-time Internship job at Millard Lumber and preparing for postsecondary education at Metropolitan Community College, where he plans to study accounting.

David has enjoyed the opportunities Avenue Scholars has provided in finding a career path.

"Avenue Scholars has been a way to meet friends and learn more about my career of interest and prepare for college," he said.

Career Coach Allison Goff admires David's work ethic.

"David is focused and always comes prepared," Mrs. Goff said. "David is a wonderful example of working hard to pursue your dreams."



Junior works hard to achieve goals

Junior Fabiola Garcia-Ramos, an Outstanding Scholar at Millard North, has her own nail business and advertises on social media. She also helps with the family business Montclair Lawn Care.

Fabiola, who plans to attend Metro Community College and utilize the Avenue Scholars grant to study Business, credits Avenue Scholars with helping her find a focus on the future.

"Although opportunities don't come every day, always work hard to achieve your goals cause it will all pay off later," she says. "Avenue Scholars has helped me learn my priorities and showed me that getting extra help and guidance can make all the difference."

Career Coach Allison Goff admires Fabiola's maturity and her confidence.

"Fabi is wise beyond her years," Mrs. Goff says. "She has a gift with social intelligence that I admire. I love having Fabi in class. Fabi is helpful and kind; I know wherever she decides to work in the future, they will be very lucky to have her on their team!"



UPDATE

The 2021-2022 school year is off and running with 50 active juniors and seniors this year, the Avenue Scholars program is growing and thriving. The students are actively reflecting on past job and classroom performance, and setting goals for the future.



All Avenue Scholars students started the semester by enrolling in our Avenue Scholars class. Avenue Scholars is a two year program. The content of this course allows students opportunities to learn about a variety of topics related to improving personal, job, & career effectiveness, including stress management, goal setting, ethics & diversity in the workplace, preparing for a professional interview, etc. The senior Avenue Scholars students are gaining exposure to the demands and expectations of a college class taking Explorer 1000, a Metro dual enrolment course, while still in the comfort of their home school with their Career Coach as their instructor.

This year's group of students has already proven themselves to be an excellent group of hard working, committed students. Many of these students brought with them a wealth of part-time job experience, and several others have worked to secure employment this fall. The Juniors will go to the Intern Omaha Career Expo on November 18th, and have the opportunity to apply to Intern Omaha positions. Our goal is that ALL students have work experience by graduation, as we know this is the best way for students to gain work-ready skills.

In the classroom, the juniors have learned about their individual Gallup Strengths, and have researched their careers of interest. The seniors are working hard to complete the Explorer 1000 class, we are halfway done! Juniors will round out the semester by discussing the best ways to prepare for a professional interview.

Allison Goff

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