



## 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 seeks career in Business

Senior Outstanding Scholar Samuel LaPlante is looking forward to a career in Business, and he is thankful Avenue Scholars has helped him find his career path.

"Avenue Scholars has been a great support for me to lean on and explore my future. Avenue Scholars has given me the opportunity to direct my future career plans," Samuel says. "My Career Coach has constantly showed positivity and has a very proactive approach. I am excited to get a post-secondary internship in my career aligned industry so that I can make money and develop revenue. I am also excited that I was accepted to be a part of the savings program. I will now have reliable transportation. It's not just monetary for me. It helps me build confidence and gives me certainty in life."

Career Coach Marquita Lambert admires Sam's ability to learn and apply those lessons to meeting his goals.

"Sam has been an amazing addition to the Avenue Scholars Program. He has utilized the many resources that the program provides to him," Mrs. Lambert said. "Sam has landed an internship, he is a part of the Savings Program, and he participates in The Men of Standard meetings. Sam was able to obtain an internship through Intern Omaha with Concord Mediation. After high school Sam will attend Metro Community College where he will study for a Business Degree. Samuel is crushing all of his goals and I see major success for him in his career field."



## Junior focuses on health services

Wilfrido Vargas, an Outstanding Junior Scholar at Millard South would like to pursue a degree in Health Services.

Wilfrido is motivated to use the skills he has learned in the Avenue Scholars program to ensure a successful career in the Omaha community.

"I am thankful that I have been gifted with such an opportunity. The Avenue Scholars program will provide me with a great foundation for my future and I feel determined and motivated to complete the program to its entirety," he says. "I am motivated with the desire of having not only a stable career but the ability to provide for my future wife and kids. That is why I am so thankful for the opportunity."

Career Coach Marquita Lambert has been impressed with Wilfrido's determination and resolve.

"Wilfrido has been exceeding all expectations in the Avenue Scholars Program. He is motivated and driven to use the tools given to him to provide a solid foundation for his future," Mrs. Lambert says. "Wilfrido will be attending a career exploration at Quality Living Rehabilitation Center to see first-hand what it will be like to work in the Health Services industry. I know with his determination he will accomplish all of the goals he set out for himself this year."



## UPDATE

The Avenue Scholar students at Millard South have been hard at work for the 2021-2022 school year.



There are 49 active juniors and seniors. These students are hard at work and committed to finding a career that is good for them. Students are gaining plenty of experience and applying their work ready skills with a part-time job. With many of the students already employed the goal is to get a 100% employment rate for students before or during their senior year.

Our juniors have been in class exploring the many industries that we offer. They have been provided the opportunity to meet with post-secondary coaches in the classroom to gain more information about the career field that they are interested in. They also had a chance to sign up for career explorations and visit different businesses in order to solidify their futures. We will wrap up the semester by discussing the best ways to prepare for a professional interview, including drafting a resume, and developing thorough answers to interview questions which they will get a chance to use when they apply for internships with Intern Omaha starting Nov. 22.

The seniors are taking EXPL 1000 through MCC. It is a required course for all students seeking degrees with Metro. Seniors have also been able to meet with a MCC navigator to gather more information about attending MCC and to start with the process of student planning. The year has been off to a great start. We are excited to continue to accomplish the goals that the students have set out for themselves and we look forward to what the next semester has to bring.

**Marquita Lambert**  
High School Coach  
(402) 779-9818  
mlambert@avescholars.org