



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 aims for career in automotive field

Senior Heraldo Ochoa, an intern at Beardmore Auto, is demonstrating his Outstanding Scholar talents this semester. Heraldo works as a lube tech and is part of Ralston High School's Auto Academy-Year 2.

He plans to study Automotive Technology at Metropolitan Community College next year. Heraldo obtained his starter toolkit as part of Avenue Scholars. He has worked incredibly hard to ensure his success and he was recently given a raise and now earns \$15 per hour.

He is a leader in the automotive academy as well as in MCC's Explore 1000 course. Heraldo is always willing to help others and recently spent his fall break earning service hours by helping with Mrs. Leach and Avenue Scholars.



Junior Scholar plans to study HVAC

Junior Joseph Sandoval is an Outstanding Scholar is busy exploring career options this semester, in addition to working 20 to 25 hours per week at the 90th and Center HyVee store.

He is a valuable member of their staff and has worked in multiple departments filling in, if needed. Joseph's career goal is to study HVAC at Metropolitan Community College and has a goal of becoming a residential HVAC technician.

Joseph always comes to class prepared and ready to learn. He asks questions and makes good decisions for himself and his future. Joseph, currently enrolled in a construction trades class, plans to attend Avenue Scholars Trades Bootcamp next summer and hopes to obtain his OSHA Certificate.



UPDATE

Avenue Scholars is well into the 2021-2022 school year here at Ralston High School.



With 57 active students this year, the Avenue Scholars program is growing and thriving. This year's students have already proven themselves to be an excellent group of hard working, committed students inside and outside of the classroom.

Many Scholars brought with them a wealth of part-time job experience, and others have worked to secure employment this fall. Our goal is that ALL students have some sort of work experience by graduation, as we know this is the best way for students to gain work-ready skills.

We have 12 seniors who are in Intern Omaha Internships and 4 others in Ralston internships. Our seniors are currently taking Metro's EXPL 1000 course, a required course for all degree-seeking students.

Juniors completed their Avenue Scholars course during Term 1 and will resume with class Term 3. We have 5 juniors who are currently obtaining their CNA. All juniors are busy with their career exploration opportunities to help determine their career goals.

It has been a great start to the year and we are looking forward to continuing the work to ensure everyone is meeting the goals they have set for themselves.

Beth Leach

High School Career Coach
(402) 430-1717
bleach@avescholars.org