2006 Exemplary Worksite Learning Award Winners

EWSLA competition sponsored by
The Process Technology and Collegiate High School for Petrochemical Careers is a true example of industry involvement in implementing, developing, and improving a Career Pathway/Tech Prep education program. In anticipation of an employment and experience gap in the Texas Gulf Coast petrochemical industry, employers partnered with local education agencies to address an impending 60 percent retirement rate of experienced workers. Stakeholders identified a common goal of replacing the experienced retiring workers with students who had enough real-time work experience to make the transition smooth.

Seven petrochemical companies partnered to plan, implement and support activities for the College of the Mainland’s (COM) process technology AAS program. The Petrochemical Partnership began 15 years ago as a continuing education program and has evolved to an AAS program which includes a Tech Prep high school on a college campus. Because of tightened security restrictions regarding access to petroleum processing plants since the September 11 attacks, petrochemical industry leaders invested in a fully operational (non-volatile) Glycol Separation Unit and labs that create hands-on, real-world situations at COM for petrochemical technology (PTEC) students.

At COM’s Collegiate High School, students complete their full school day on the COM campus. Students also use college courses to satisfy as many of their high school graduation requirements as possible. A project-based course is designed for all students to integrate academic and leadership skills with geology, exploration, transportation, safety, environmental issues, security, government, and/or economic policy as it relates to the petrochemical industry. The course also includes career development, peer mentoring, industry mentoring, and service-learning projects.

Process technology is one of the most popular majors at COM. Also PTEC student retention rates are 11 percent higher than that of other majors. Additionally, ninety-eight percent of students that graduate with a two-year associate degree in process technology find a job in their field within six months. The training and “learning curve” of new hires has decreased significantly as industry partners have indicated a 40 percent decrease in training time among COM PTEC graduates.

Want to know more about this Exemplary Worksite Learning Award winner? Program representatives will be presenting at the 2006 NTPN Dallas conference in State Room 3 on Fri., Nov. 3, from 8:20-9:20 a.m. For more information, contact Renea Campbell at rcampbell@com.edu.
This exemplary Career Pathways/Tech Prep program shows how regional education and business partners can work successfully to fill a localized need for skilled workers in a particular industry. In 1997, printing giant, Quad Graphics, started a plant in Martinsburg, W.V. Soon after opening, Quad Graphics company leaders approached education leaders at the Blue Ridge Community and Technical College (formerly The Community and Technical College of Shepherd) and James Rumsey Technical Institute to develop and deliver training; hence the Regional Print Institute (RPI) was born in 1999. RPI has a tri-fold mission: create an awareness of the print industry, encourage high school students to take advantage of graphic communications training, and provide industry training for area printers.

When several printing industries located to the area, a need for highly-skilled and trained workers became necessary to fill technical jobs. In response, James Rumsey Technical Institute reopened their Graphic Communications/Printing program. Major courses within the high school program include: fundamentals of graphic design and production, basic darkroom procedures, image assembly and plate making, and offset press and bindery operations. A graphic design program is also available for training graphic artists/designers.

In West Virginia, a program called EDGE, Earn a Degree Graduate Early, was developed and instituted by the state Tech Prep coordinator and the Higher Education Policy Commission. This approach is similar to articulation agreements in other states. Students have the opportunity to save up to $3,300 in tuition, fees, and books for program-specific courses. With the awarding of a possible 27 credits through the EDGE initiative, students are almost halfway through an associate’s degree at the time they take their first college class.

At Quad Graphics, a school-to-work program has been developed in which students learn the prepress process in a production environment and practice their skills with professional software such as PhotoShop® and InDesign®. In the press area, students work with professional print technology with closed-loop color control systems and wide web presses. In finishing, students work with electronic and automated machinery and learn about advanced demographic mailing capabilities. In distribution, students learn how materials are received, inventoried, retrieved, transported to production areas for printing, and shipped to their final destination.

Want to know more about this Exemplary Worksite Learning Award winner? Program representatives will be presenting at the 2006 NTPN Dallas conference in Houston Ballroom B on Thurs, Nov. 2, from 8:20-9:20 a.m. For more information, contact Peggy Talley at ptalley@blueridgetctc.edu.
Four Cities Educational Compact-Barberton High School
Akron Area College Tech Prep Consortium
Barberton Citizens Hospital
The University of Akron
Advancement to Nursing, Barberton, Ohio

As a first-of-its-kind program in Ohio, the Advancement to Nursing Program offers high school students real-life experience in learning advanced pre-nursing skills, weekly clinical hospital experiences, college prep academics and a direct link—including five guaranteed seats—to a bachelor’s degree program in nursing at The University of Akron. This partnership was initiated by the CEO of Barberton Citizens Hospital and was designed to encourage local students to obtain a bachelor’s degree in nursing. And, as part of the hospital’s “Grow Your Own” philosophy, students could be offered future employment upon completion of their degree.

Program curriculum prepares students to enter a four-year, BSN program and was developed by stakeholders in each partner institution. Clinical rotations and on-site learning experiences at Barberton Citizens Hospital and with other partners are also vital components of the Advancement to Nursing curriculum.

Level I students spend two hours per week at Barberton Citizens Hospital, in addition to time at other medical worksites and The University of Akron. Worksite experiences are designed to expand the students’ exposure to multiple nursing experiences beyond the classroom walls, while helping to validate the students’ career interest in the nursing field. Level II students spend three days a week, two hours a day, in clinical rotations for a total of six hours each week.

Students must have a 3.0 GPA to be accepted into the two-year program. In addition to rigorous pre-nursing curriculum, students must take electives in college prep science and math courses. Each week, students and teachers debrief about clinical experiences which are scheduled to connect directly with the academic curriculum. At the hospital, students are divided into small groups, which are supervised by the teacher, who is an RN and has a BSN degree, as well as the part-time teacher assistant who is an RN, MSN, and recently retired as Chief Nursing Officer at Barberton Citizens Hospital after 43 years of service.

Want to know more about this Exemplary Worksite Learning Award winner? Program representatives will be presenting at the 2006 NTPN Dallas conference in State Room 4 on Sat., Nov. 4, from 8:30-9:45 a.m. For more information, contact Sally Porter at sporter@wadsworth.k12.oh.us.