

Spring Break: Make It Work!

Local businesses urged to help students learn about careers

By Patrick Finneran

In today's fast-paced, competitive world, learning never stops. It's true for those in business and for those working hard to prepare for the career of their choice. That's why Newport News Public Schools (NNPS) is once again encouraging students to use spring break, April 2-9, to learn about careers. As part of the Career Pathways initiative, the school division has established the "Spring Break: Make It Work!" program, which helps match students in grades 9-12 with companies offering internships and job-shadowing opportunities during Spring Break.

"Students can use part of their spring break to gain valuable experience about career skills and opportunities," says Dr. Ashby Kilgore, superintendent of Newport News Public Schools. "It's a great way for students to develop contacts in the business world and for

businesses to help shape their future workforce."

Last April, more than 50 students went to "work" for the following businesses and organizations during spring break:

- Newport News Shipbuilding
- Ferguson
- Virginia Educators Credit Union
- Riverside Health System
- Virginia Peninsula Boys & Girls Clubs
- Thomas Nelson Community College
- Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center
- ECPI

During the week, students worked with organizations in a variety of occupations and were provided guidance on career-readiness skills including speaking and listening, problem solving, work ethic, positive attitude, independence and initiative, self-presentation, attendance and teamwork.

Start planning now to participate

NNPS Career Pathways supervisor Ann Ifekwunigwe says now is the time for company executives to learn more about "Spring Break: Make It Work!" so that they can participate in April.

"We are inviting businesses and organizations to offer spring break internships for our students. We will help ensure that this is a positive experience for students and participating employers," says Ifekwunigwe.

Ifekwunigwe says participating in the "Spring Break: Make It Work!" program as a student or business is easy with advance preparation. Businesses will be provided with information to help set up a meaningful and productive experience for students. Students will be provided with guidelines for



behavior and must, along with their parent or guardian, complete an application and permission form.

In addition to having the satisfaction of helping young people and getting enthusiastic students to lend a hand during spring break, participating businesses will also be featured on the NNPS Career Pathways web site and receive a certificate of appreciation from the school division.

For more information, contact Ifekwunigwe at 757-881-5461, ext. 12226, by email at ann.ifekwunigwe@nn.k12.va.us or visit the NNPS Career Pathways web site at www.nnschools.org/careerpathways. ◀



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