

## Work-Based Learning Opportunities in Bedford County Public Schools

Because of our strong relationships with businesses and other community partners, Bedford County Public Schools (BCPS) has been able to facilitate numerous individual student placements in work settings for experiential learning. These work-based opportunities allow students to visit work sites in a variety of locations off campus and are appropriate for students with goals of attending college, joining the workforce, and/or military enlistment. Work-based learning bridges the gap between the academic environment and future work environments. With the assistance of school counselors and teachers, experiences are customized to each student's needs to allow for a "right fit." Customarily, work-based learning experiences include opportunities to observe the work of others (job shadowing) and opportunities to perform some duties within the work environment (interning). All such experiences build on students' academic, technical, and workplace readiness skills, teaching students responsibility and accountability.

When students have completed substantial related coursework, such as the coursework available at Bedford Science and Technology Center (BSTC), work-based learning opportunities can include hands-on assistance at business sites that allow students to experience practical application and skill development in a professional setting. For example, these experiences may include providing patient care in the case of health sciences students and working on vehicle repairs in the case of automotive technology students. Students seeking to explore a particular career will benefit from the division's Career Internship class offered to seniors at each high school. Similarly, students wishing to build their workplace readiness skills more intensely and learn more about the variety of careers available will benefit from BSTC's Leadership through Career Exploration course, a class that "contains" an internship for qualified students as a course activity.

Work-based learning experiences support our community and our students by allowing students to consider career paths and network while employers help train the future workforce. Those interested in more information should contact one of the following individuals:

- \* Your child's base high school school counselor,
- \* Your child's base high school Career Internship teacher, and/or
- \* BSTC school counselor Mr. Trevor Hoss.

All of these individuals work together to help ensure students select work-based learning options that meet their individual needs.

### **Student Internship Quotes:**

(Note: We initially suggested these might be at the top of the page to catch interest. We can get more. It has been somewhat challenging to reach recent grads, so we may need to look at current students who interned last year.)

"I enjoyed my internship because It put me ahead and it made me more prepared to enter the workforce. If it wasn't for my internship, I wouldn't be where I am today." -- Student from salon internship

"I enjoyed my time at Berglund Ford because of the people and the real life work experience. My internship supervisor was a phenomenal tech who was knowledgeable about everything and more than willing to help me with anything. We always had something to do and we were never standing around. We had freedom to make mistakes and everyone was patient with us. I felt like I was grown." -- Student from automotive technology internship

"It was cool because not many people get to do this in high school. It was good to get the opportunity to do it and it was rewarding to work with the patients. We took vital signs and did activities with the patients." -- Student from nurse aide program now successfully in nursing school

