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Western Sussex Chamber of Commerce

Pathways to Success' Work Experience Program connects students, businesses

By Terry Carson- Executive Director
Western Sussex Chamber of Commerce

Pathways to Success is a local non-profit that supports underserved youth graduate from high school. This program is available to qualifying students who attend Cape Henlopen High School, Milford High School, Seaford High School and Sussex Technical High School. The program's goal is to help students become healthy, productive, contributing and responsible citizens.

Mrs. Fay Blake is the founder and executive director of this program. She states, "Pathways to Success, through the Department of Labor funding, has helped 1,000 Sussex County underserved youth graduate from high school with solid employability and work-ready skills. Our graduation rate is 98 percent, with 96 percent of students going to college, entering the military, or finding full-time employment. Our program provides consistent mentoring and tutoring in each of the schools we serve. Students enter the program in the ninth grade and our program is a support for them until the year after they graduate from high school."

Pathways to Sussex is now offering a program called WEX (Work Expe-

rience). This program is part of Delaware's Department of Labor and partnered with the Delaware Workforce Development and Youth Division of Employment. The WEX program provides students with career exploration, skill development, networking opportunities and work-readiness trainings in jobs students have interest in exploring. Employers can secure a student in the program and 520 hours of employment will be paid by Pathways to Success. The categories of work for this program include year-round, after school and summer employment.

These opportunities can include pre-apprenticeship programs, internships, job shadowing and on-site job training. There is no cost to the employer for this 520-hour opportunity and continued support during employment.

Domineque Scott is the WEX Program Coordinator. She said, "The opportunity that the WEX program has given our Pathways to Success students will leave a lasting impact. Our goal is to closely match jobs based off the students work experience, individual interests and skill set. We are also providing a job-readiness workshop which is offered to all students seeking employment training.



Shown are the Pathways to Success WEX students.

The benefits of the WEX program will expose the students to a professional culture, creative planning and confidence building environment.

Recently, we have placed one of our students at ALOFT Aero Architects in Georgetown. This student has the opportunity to work as an account administrative assistant in the finance department. We feel this work experience is a life changing opportunity that allows this student to gain numerous transferable clerical skills in the field of finance and accounting."

Pathways to Success is creating the opportunity to help students transition into adulthood by providing employment opportunities and support that will hopefully lead to long-term employment. This encouragement and support will help students consider and plan for their future. For more

information on the WEX program or Pathways to Success, contact Scott at dscott@pathways-2-success.org or call 302-858-4863 or visit the website at www.pathways-2-success.org.

Upcoming Event

Western Sussex Chamber of Commerce Third Annual Photo Contest- The categories are Pets at Play, Every Picture Tells a Story, Country Roads and We are Western Sussex plus prizes for Fan Favorite, Grand Champion, and Youth Category (14 and under). There will be cash prizes for each category. To submit photos: email the chamber at admin@westernsussexcoc.com or upload them to the Chamber's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/WesternSussexCOC.com. Candidates are allowed one contest entry per category. Entries will be accepted through Nov. 1. Email admin@westernsussexcoc.com with questions.

Send us your news

Readers are invited to send any news that they would like to see featured in the Star. Items can be e-mailed to mmcclure@mpublication.com.

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The **Smith FIRM LLC**
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
Michael R. Smith, Esq.
Blake W. Carey, Esq.
Chad R. Lingenfelder, Esq.
8866 Riverside Dr., Seaford, DE 19973
302.875.5595
www.thsmithfirm.org
Also seeing clients at our Rehoboth Office