

CTE Showcase: High school students learn about Clark's programs



More than 250 high school juniors and seniors explored degrees and programs offered at a career pathways event at Gaiser Hall on April 18. Funded by Guided Pathways and Career Connect Washington, 14 high schools in six Clark County school districts participated in this Career and Technical Programs Showcase.

“To have that much interest was astounding,” said Ellie Phillips, CTE Transitions Navigator who organized the event. Trout Lake High School in Klickitat County traveled the farthest, taking a 90-minute bus ride through snow to reach Clark’s campus. Hayes Freedom High School in Camas brought 40 students, more than any other school.

Each student chose two workshops to attend from a list of 18 offerings, including observing CTE classes in action, from Automotive Technology, Welding Technology, Phlebotomy, Surveying and Geomatics, Engineering, Cybersecurity and more.

Other workshops offered included Admissions and Financial Aid, Running Start and Career Exploration.

After a lunch catered by Big Town Hero, students gathered in Gaiser Hall to hear a panel of Clark College alumni talk about how their education at Clark led to rewarding careers.

“This event works!” Phillips said. “Students chose their workshops, experienced the programs and made active decisions about their future.”



Students Skyla Crenshaw and Ava Schuman, both from Vancouver School of Arts and Academics, had observed a Professional Baking & Pastry Arts class working in the kitchen, and then stood at the counter of Clark’s retail bakery to look at pastries and talk with a student baker. Both students said they were impressed with the collaborative teamwork of baking students and are considering enrolling in the program.

A high school counselor told Phillips that he saw immediate, positive results from his students during the financial aid workshop. One student began filling out Clark's financial aid form. Another student, who had not planned to go to college, asked his counselor, "Will you call my mom? I want to start filling out my FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)."

"Hearing those stories was the highlight of my day," Phillips said. "College can be daunting. Some students see it as unattainable, but this event brings high school students to Clark's campus so they can get excited about Clark and their future. That's why we're here."

Photos: Clark College/Susan Parrish