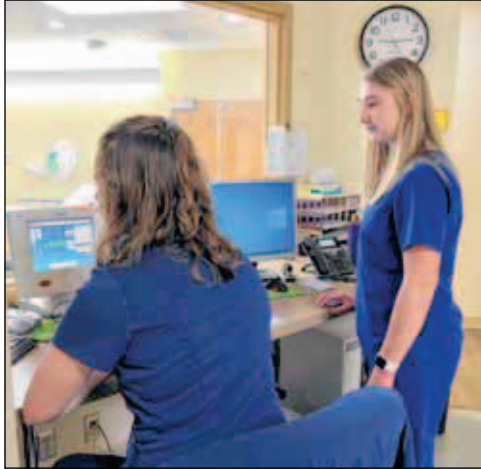


Hundreds of students job shadow across Darke County



Dawn Hatfield|The Daily Advocate
Kylee Freeman (Arcanum HS) watches through the window as a patient undergoes a CT scan at Wayne Hospital.

By Dawn Hatfield
 DailyAdvocate.com

DARKE COUNTY — Last week Darke County students from seven different area high schools participated in 220 half-day job shadows across 70 different career positions offered by more than 40 local employers.

Darke County Job Shadow Week, coordinated by Darke County Economic Development (DCED), was an even bigger success than in previous years and is one of several opportunities for students

to learn about local careers. Eligible students included juniors and seniors who attend school in Darke County and who pre-registered for the opportunity.

Workforce Specialist Tamala Marley explained the goals of job shadowing are threefold:

1. Give students firsthand experience, allowing for them to make informed decisions about their futures.

2. Provide opportunity to receive good advice from

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adults in their fields of interest as well as practice professional communication skills.

3. Expand students' knowledge of the wide variety of local careers available so they might stay or return to live and work in Darke County as adults.

Featuring opportunities from healthcare to manufacturing and public safety to business, Marley said of this special week, "It is so important to get students out there sooner—the earlier, the better! Only then can they determine what really fits for them."

Several students were welcomed at Wayne HealthCare to work hand-in-hand with experts in the healthcare and business fields. Vice-President of Business Development and Marketing Terri Flood, MHA, said job shadowing is "valuable for both the staff and students, providing skills and information about potential career fields." The opportunity to get an insider's view of local employers can expose students to ideas and connections they may not think of, such as viewing the hospital as the business it is. Flood explained, "The hope is that students come back and decide to work here, even those who are looking for something non-clinical, such as in business fields like finance, accounting, payroll." Flood said in this, Wayne HealthCare's centennial year, staff are "proud of the past and still building the future." Darke County is the "best place to live, work, play, and raise a family," Flood concluded.

In Wayne HealthCare's Imaging Department, Kylee Freeman (Arcanum HS) had the opportunity to explore a position in radiology. Freeman's experiences included observing CT scans and MRIs as well as assisting with patient transport.

She credits her mother's position in healthcare management with the sprouting of her own interest in healthcare. Unlike her mother, however, Freeman wants to deliver "hands-on patient care." Freeman said the job shadow opportunity was very meaningful to her because she "might be an employee [at Wayne] someday."

Samantha Yerick (Versailles HS) and Larissa Foureman (Greenville HS) were posted in the Surgical Center at Wayne and had the opportunity to watch procedures, such as a colonoscopy. The first-hand experience gave students a chance to test their tolerance and both students reported being unfazed by the potentially graphic nature of the surgical experience. Yerick said, "I was not affected by it at all," and Foureman agreed that she "really didn't mind it."

Sierra Brumbaugh and Josie Madden (both from Greenville HS) shadowed respiratory therapists in Wayne's Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Department. Although the experience of learning about medical technology, such as ventilators that can literally breathe for patients until their lungs gradually heal, was impressive, both students said it was something else that really resonated with them. Brumbaugh said, "The staff are very friendly!" Madden added, "Everybody really seems to like their jobs!" All three respiratory therapists working with the students agreed that they love what they do.

Deanna, a respiratory therapist with more than 30 years experience, spoke to the variety in her work days, saying, "We treat everybody—from newborn to 107!" Her colleague, Katelyn, agreed that she loves experiencing "both ends of life" in her job. Stephanie, a fellow therapist, said her days are never the same. The trio shared that people who like working with their hands, are able to "think on the



Photos by Dawn Hatfield | The Daily Advocate
Samantha Yerick (Versailles HS) and Larissa Foureman (Greenville HS) learn pre- and post-op patient care in the surgery center.

fly," and who enjoy "gadgets" would likely enjoy working as respiratory therapists.

The next stop was across town at the Darke County Health District where students interested in Environmental Health spent the morning learning about Sewage Operations and Maintenance. Chris Suggs, Justin Finkbine, Logan Call, Seth Cook, and Kasen Hale (all from Tri-Village HS) had been invited into the field to participate in home inspections with sanitarians Zachary Perry and Cody Snider, checking the integrity of sanitation systems to ensure environment pollution would not occur.

Students learned the need for a science and mathematics background in becoming a registered environmental health specialist (REHS), which requires a bachelor's degree, state registration, and two years of training to then become an REHS.

Environmental Director Ginger Magoto, RS, MPH, MS, explained Darke County currently has a heavy need for soil scientists as there are only two in the local area. Students who have an interest in the sciences, and especially the environmental side of science, will be very much in demand locally.

Jordan Francis, MPH, who will be taking over as health commissioner Jan. 1, said, "Environmental Health is truly the bedrock of public health." Francis spoke to

the department's ability to use "applied science to identify health risks and mitigate those risks."

Francis shared his excitement regarding the health district's first time hosting job shadow students. Reflecting back on his own youth, Francis said he "didn't really know what he wanted to do with [his] future when [he] was 18" and believes it's important for young people to figure out what opportunities are out there.

In completing the morning's job shadow shifts, Marley concluded,



Sierra Brumbaugh and Josie Madden (Greenville HS) watch as veteran respiratory therapists explain the settings and functions of one of the hospital's three ventilators.



Tri-Village seniors Chris Suggs, Justin Finkbine, Logan Call, Seth Cook, and Kasen Hale (not pictured) assisted Zachary Perry and Cody Snider with home sanitation inspections through the Environmental Health department in Darke County.

"This event would not be possible without all the help from the great job coordinators at each location, which can include an HR representative or a plant/operations manager to the business owner him- or herself. DCED is

privileged to have excellent connections and support from many area businesses."

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