



YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS CONSORTIUM

Inspiring young minds for great futures



SNAPSHOTS OF EXCELLENCE FROM A 21ST CENTURY VILLAGE

“Teach me and I’ll remember. Involve me and I’ll learn.”

—Ben Franklin

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STRAIGHT  FUND

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IMPACT

Established in July 2014 through the investment of the Straight A Fund grant from the Ohio Department of Education, the Young Entrepreneurs Consortium (YEC) has captured the best of Ben Franklin's spirit in designing 21st century learning opportunities for students.

The Consortium is a village—comprised of 12 school districts, three career and technical centers, four higher education partners, and business/community partners, serving 26,549 students, equal to the fourth largest school district in Ohio. The Consortium services a 12-county service area that includes Carroll, Guernsey, Holmes, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, Portage, Stark, Summit, Tuscarawas, Washington, and Wayne counties.





The Consortium and its work are grounded in addressing three challenges facing Ohio's economy and educational system:

- ① Ohio's rate at which college graduates leave the state for jobs is higher in Northeast and Southeast Ohio than the national average (State Impact, 2014: Six Surprising Facts about Workforce Development in Ohio). This rate is exacerbated by the fact that college-educated students coming to Ohio for jobs represent an even larger gap. Ohio's degree attainment rate is 25 percent, while foreign-born people coming to Ohio carry a 40 percent attainment rate.
- ② Ten of the 12 counties in the Northeast and Southeast regions have higher unemployment rates than Ohio's average.
- ③ Ohio's degree attainment rate has remained virtually static for 30 years. States with higher proportions of highly-skilled workers grow faster than those with fewer skilled workers (State Impact, 2014).

To address these challenges, the YEC was formed as an innovative model for community engagement to increase the flow of young entrepreneurs in Ohio. The overarching goal of the YEC is to increase student achievement by building a robust education-to-employment model, impacting grades 6–14, exposing students to an array of business and technical pathways, work-based learning experiences, and to leverage problem-based learning prepares students to compete in a 21st century global economy.

The Consortium's approach begins in grades 6–8 by merging career and technical education with college preparation curriculum. In these grades, the Consortium leverages problem-based learning models to expose students to several career and technical pathways in the region, beginning with unique exposure to entrepreneurship, but continuing through the region's most prominent industry employment pathways, including the energy, engineering, and health care sectors. Problem-based learning incorporates real-world scenarios and is a 21st century student-centered approach to education that promotes creative thinking, teamwork, problem solving, and flexibility, which are all important skills for success in college and on the job.



Through the YEC, students have unique opportunities to help them begin to develop pathways for their futures—from dual enrollment course offerings to work-based and experiential learning opportunities through partnerships with Junior Achievement, Believe in Ohio, TomTod, Marietta College, and more.

In grades 9–12, students participate in dual enrollment courses, which allows students to receive high school and college credit. A customized entrepreneurship program through Stark State College is offered where students can complete as many as 68 hours in this pathway and attain an associate degree. The Consortium shares teachers across 15 districts to offer the full entrepreneurship pathway. Districts leverage a heightened technological infrastructure with more bandwidth, better servers, and smarter devices through 21st century curriculum (digital, blended, and online interactive curriculum). As a result, students receive curriculum preparation to ensure more competitive, college-ready scores for their postsecondary educations.

Students also have the opportunity to attend camps in the summer for a week of immersion into entrepreneurship, imagination, and creating, as well as how young people who want to learn the skills needed to start their own business or project can get started.

The YEC seeks to create a more efficient advanced assessment system from grades 6–12 to ensure appropriate academic benchmarking, and to help students see a clear academic and aspirational pathway as early as grade 6.

“Entrepreneurs are Ohio’s best hope for future job creation, and entrepreneurship provides a promising pathway to degree attainment for the students in this Consortium.”

This paper compiles *Snapshots of Excellence* in the second year of implementation, highlighting student experiences and successes in each of the Consortium’s goal areas including: 21st century classrooms and entrepreneurship coursework, problem-based learning, work-based learning, and teacher capacity.

Strong college- and career-based coursework solidifies district-level curriculum in grades 6–12 using problem-based learning, work-based learning, model pathways, and career advising and counseling. Offered through Stark State College, the Entrepreneurship Pathway is a tiered pathway aligned to all 16 of Ohio's career fields (agricultural and environmental services; arts and communication; business and administrative services; engineering and science technologies; health science; and manufacturing technologies). Students participate in the Entrepreneurship Pathway by choosing the compacted curriculum in middle school and partake in work-based learning models and problem-based learning at all levels of their education.

The Pathway includes multiple certifications including a 12-hour, a 15-hour, a 32-hour, and a 64-hour pathway certification option. The Career Enhancement Certificate (12-hour pathway and 15-hour pathway) and the One-Year Entrepreneurship Certificate (32 hours) each focus on developing qualities and habits that characterize effective entrepreneurs, as well as enhancing soft skills, such as communication, critical thinking, innovation, and creativity. Upon full completion of the 64-hour pathway, students earn an associate degree (64 hours) simultaneously with a high school diploma.



SPOTLIGHT ON HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP



STARK STATE COLLEGE

The Young Entrepreneurs Consortium provides endless opportunities for students in the 12-partner districts and three career and technical centers to take concepts of entrepreneurship and make them a reality.

“There are several pathways available to students, so they can determine the amount of time they would like to devote to dual credit during their high school years.”

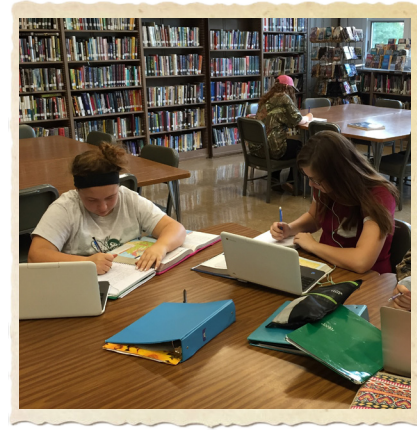
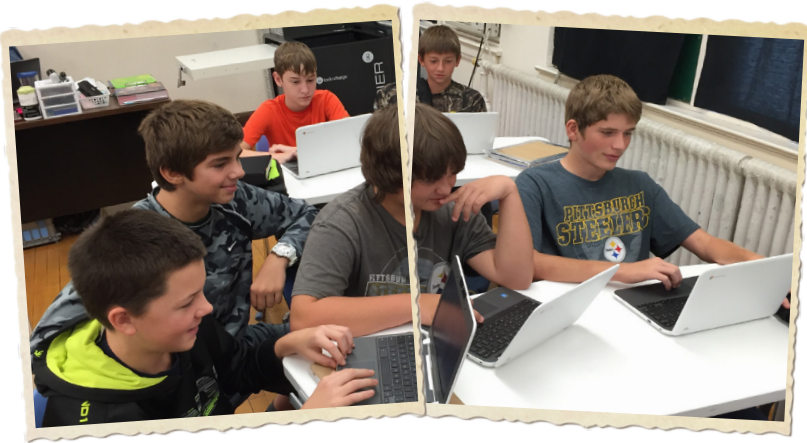
—Para Jones, Ph.D., president Stark State College

Stark State College's goal is to provide the students the soft skills, qualities, habits, and academic skills that characterize effective entrepreneurs. Additionally, the courses offered are providing students with a head start on their college education and future career.

Certificates offered through Stark State's Entrepreneurship Pathway signify to future employers that students possess entrepreneurial skills important to success in the workplace—important skills like communication, resiliency, problem-solving, critical thinking, and, creativity. Regardless of the pathway selected by students, Stark State College is proud to be part of an innovative Consortium providing students with opportunities, possibilities and the foundation for their dreams to lead to exploration, discovery, and their future plans.

ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT CONTRIBUTOR

Para M. Jones, Ph.D., is president of Stark State College, one of the largest of Ohio's 23 community colleges. She also served as President of Spartanburg Community College in South Carolina and has been a community college leader for 28 years. Dr. Jones holds a Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska, an MBA with honors from Ashland University, and a bachelor's degree magna cum laude from the University of Mount Union.



SPOTLIGHT ON 1:1 INITIATIVE

The Malvern Hornets of Brown Local School District are “buzzing” about the many wonderful opportunities provided as a part of the Young Entrepreneurs Consortium. A few examples of these opportunities include teachers becoming dual credentialed, the development and implementation of problem-based learning units, and the involvement with Believe in Ohio.

These opportunities impact student learning greatly, but one of the biggest boosts from the grant was the technology purchases, which had an immediate impact on students. Brown Local had a goal of providing students with the access to a device anytime, anywhere in the district. This goal was accomplished by using the grant to purchase 330 Chromebooks in 11 portable storage carts and 120 tablets in four portable storage carts that were distributed throughout our district. Brown Local was also able to upgrade its infrastructure to support this new initiative.

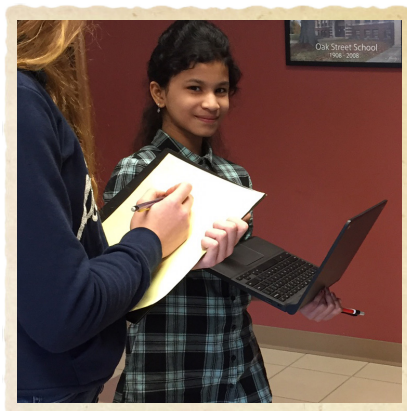
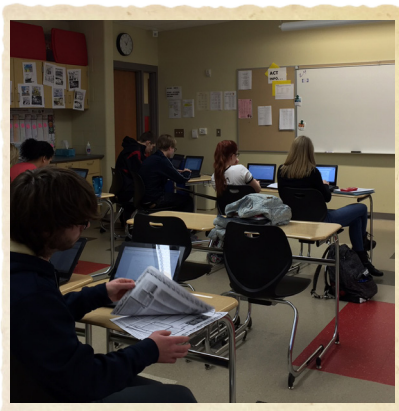
One of the greatest feelings felt among the staff occurred when educators began rolling carts out to the classrooms. A high school student saw it and said, “Are these computers really for us?” He was smiling from ear to ear because he could not believe he would be doing schoolwork on a computer.

Teachers and students began using the technology immediately. It is now hard to walk down the hall or pass the library without seeing the use of technology. Everyone is “buzzing” about the new purchases—even community members are talking about the new computers at sporting events, social functions, and at local businesses.

The infusion of technology has also helped change the thought process in terms of collaboration, communication, and moving toward paperless classrooms. There has been a change in the way educators purchase materials and make curriculum decisions. Brown Local has been able to pursue programs to help gather valuable diagnostic data on students, which allows teachers to make data-driven decisions to help students grow academically. Technology additions are helping change the way students gather, explore, and learn information, while developing 21st century skills.

ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT CONTRIBUTOR

Tom Nunziato, Curriculum Director, Brown Local Schools is in his 18th year at Brown Local Schools, and serving his second year as the Curriculum Director. Most of his 18 years were spent teaching in grades 4–8 math in Malvern Middle and Malvern Elementary Schools. Tom holds a 1–8 Lead Professional Teacher License, 4–12 Principal License, and is Nationally Board Certified Teacher in mathematics.



SPOTLIGHT ON 1:1 INITIATIVE

Orrville City was able to achieve full implementation of 1:1 Chromebooks for grades 7–12 this school year, and students and teachers alike are finding new ways to use the technology to enhance learning and teaching. Students at Orrville Middle School use Chromebooks on a daily check-in/check-out system, meaning students use them during the day, but do not take them home. Students at Orrville High School have constant access to their device. Along with finding ways to keep the campus open earlier and later in the day to provide students with Wi-Fi access, the Orrville Public Library has also continued to increase the number of hot spots they have for students and families.



SPOTLIGHT ON BLENDED LEARNING

In addition to the Chromebooks, students at Orrville have been taking advantage of interactive distance learning opportunities (IDL). This year, in partnership with four other IDL sites and Stark State College, Orrville was able to offer eight business/entrepreneurship courses. Next year, the district will add six more courses. Having these courses available means that, with careful planning over four years, a high school student at Orrville can almost earn an associate's degree without ever leaving the high school.

The Young Entrepreneurs Consortium unequivocally decided that a transformation in teaching and learning needed to take place beginning in middle school and continue through high school. However, “adopting a different approach to teaching and learning involves considerable risk ... [educators must] be aware of challenges and provide support to their colleagues who pursue new directions (White, n.d.).”

There is a need to make school look like real life; to help students identify what they already know, what they need to know, and how to get there, with educators supporting and guiding the learning process. Problem-based learning is an instructional approach designed to encourage students to conduct research and apply knowledge and skills to solve a problem. This student-centered approach to learning promotes creative thinking, teamwork, problem-solving, and flexibility, which are all important life skills for success in college and on the job.

Problem-based learning (PBL) is a major goal of the grant, creating great excitement with students and teachers, and other staff. Sixty Consortium teachers were trained by the Akron STEM Hub, part of the Ohio STEM Learning Network, in a comprehensive PBL workshop. This training included examination of Ohio’s Learning Standards, as well as development of hands-on, problem-based units to include materials, lessons, and assessments. Participants also explored PBL strategies and discussed how the strategies increased student collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking.

A problem-based learning resource library was established and houses more than 100 innovative PBL units for grades 6–12 in English language arts, STEM (science, technology, and math), social studies, and career tech--all aligned to Ohio’s Learning Standards.



SPOTLIGHT ON PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING

While learning about the 2004 Thailand tsunami and studying the devastation it caused, students in Mrs. Foutz’s classroom, in the Minerva Local School District, were given a challenge about the reconstruction and rebuilding that often happens after natural disasters:

“How can we, as volunteers, utilize what is left behind from destruction, to construct toys in such a way that we consider the:

- Interest of children?
- Durability of toys?
- Creativity of the toys?



Mrs. Foutz used problem-based learning project to address math and science standards. She and the students brought in bags of toys from home that would normally be thrown away, and the 7th grade students got to work, building toys from the “trash.” Once the toys were built, 2nd grade students in Ms. Syverson’s class used a rubric to select a favorite.

This example showcases how problem-based learning encourages students to conduct research and apply knowledge to solve problems.

ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT CONTRIBUTOR

Christine Foutz is in her 16th year teaching, and currently a 7th grade science teacher at Minerva Middle School, where the mission is “every child, every minute, every day.” To learn more about the great things happening at Minerva Local School District, visit www.mlsd.sparcc.org.



SPOTLIGHT ON PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING

Carrollton High School's 9th grade students were greeted by fog, cobwebs, dancing lasers, and creepy music when they entered the inaugural Spooky Science Lab at Carrollton's POWER Training Center. Almost unrecognizable, teachers in costume gravely pointed students toward the door to the school garden where they were jolted by the flames and popping eyes of the Blast-o-Lantern—an explosive chemistry lesson that students want to learn over and over again!

Next, students rotated around five stations where gourds, pumpkins, mirrors, and other seasonally-themed props helped them learn scientific lessons, such as Bernoulli's Principle, The Law of Conservation of Energy, motion aftereffects, and the concepts behind optical illusions. Sound waves and vibrations were explored as students watched reflected lasers dance to the bass tones of scary movie soundtracks, and, as a souvenir, each student made a cup-and-string apparatus to take "ghost laughter" with them for the rest of the day. Most mysterious of all was Frankenstein's Laboratory station where students stuck their hands into dark boxes to feel "worms," "eyeballs," "a dead lady's hand," "monster boogers," and other ooey, gooey things while trying to guess what those objects really were.

Finally, the students got to enjoy a seasonal favorite fruit and participate in a real scientific study. The Midwest Apple Improvement Association provided four new, unnamed apple varieties for students to try. They voted for their favorites, and their feedback will be used to help the organization select varieties to patent and release to market.

The Spooky Science Lab is a true embodiment of STEM education: teaching science through hands-on activities, incorporating a variety of technologies, and providing real-world connections to scientific research.

ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT CONTRIBUTOR

Amy Miller is the Grants and Community Services Coordinator at Carrollton Exempted Village School District. She manages the POWER Training Center and Outdoor Learning Campus, a new STEM program funded by the first two rounds of Straight A Grant funding. The POWER campus offers hands-on learning opportunities for students of all ages and for all subjects at Carrollton Schools.



SPOTLIGHT ON STEM EDUCATION

Middle and high school students from Minerva Local and East Canton attended the Tech Savvy Girls workshop in 2015 at Stark State College. Tech Savvy prepares girls to be scientists, engineers, or technology experts. A special session for parents and families demonstrated how to encourage young women on their path to college and a career. This experience enriched the middle school curriculum and problem-based learning (PBL) at both districts.

The event was funded by the Aluminum Company of America Foundation and presented by American Association for University Women (AAUW). Stark State College, a partner with both schools through the Young Entrepreneurs Consortium, sponsored the event.

ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT CONTRIBUTOR

Becky Miller is a Stark County Educational Service Center employee serving Minerva and Osnaburg Local School Districts as Title I Coordinator and Curriculum Team Leader. She has worked in Carroll and Stark Counties as an educator and administrator for over 20 years.

WHAT STUDENTS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT PBL



PBL is fun because you get to work with groups, be social, and try what you've learned. It's not just worksheets. It's more hands on and you get to make important decisions.

*Kelsey Miller
Southeast Local*



I like that you get to try different ideas, and there were not a lot of guidelines so people can be as creative as they want.

*Piper Cannon
Southeast Local*



I like that you get to work in groups. It's more hands on then sitting in class.

*Hannah Mast
Southeast Local*



In one PBL unit, I liked that we actually physically carried out our plan. We helped paint, and make it better for Mrs. Utt.

*Corbin Matter
Southeast Local*

Work-based learning is a strategy to complement academic, technical, and social skills through educational opportunities that provide students with a hands-on approach and collaborative activities with the workforce. Partnerships with local businesses allow students to connect what they are learning in the classroom to practical problems; develop important skills they will need on the job and in their careers; explore career options; and equip students with skills for in-demand occupations and emerging career fields.

YEC students participate in a number of opportunities including internships, apprenticeships, camps, and classes—all that inspire their thinking and pave the way to pursue personal and professional aspirations. In addition, the Consortium developed a Work-Based Learning Toolkit in 2016 as a way to help educators and students make the connections between current curriculum and workforce opportunities—to help students gain important life readiness skills so they are employable and skilled for jobs that exist.



SPOTLIGHT ON WORK-BASED LEARNING

Students at R. G. Drage Career Technical Center have benefited from new technology purchased by the YEC grant in the academic and career technical lab areas. Providing new and innovative technology allows students to see beyond traditional coursework and pathways. Students in the metal fabrication program are experiencing this as they become creative artists in manufacturing, which is often viewed as unimaginative.

Under the leadership of Scott Burdge, R. G. Drage's veteran metal fabrication instructor, the students are not only gaining experience in providing customer service for business and industry, but are connecting the art of welding, and its impact on our community. The new technology in metal fabrication is changing the face of the industry.

The look of the Fairless Local Schools mascot, the falcon, was updated by the metal fabrication class, who created the image; and the auto collision class who gave it a shiny new look! The finished product is now proudly on display at Fairless High School.

R.G. Drage is finding innovative ways to connect education with the world of work, and is committed to offering all students opportunities for challenging, meaningful work-based experiences and relevant academics. The mission is to promote education that prepares students for careers, college, and life-long learning. Technology plays an essential role in facilitating quality education and R.G. Drage is committed to keeping pace with business and industry and strives to be on the cutting edge of technology.

ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT CONTRIBUTOR

Kim Bartholomew is a School Counselor for R.G. Drage Career Technical Center. R.G. Drage began operation in 1977 with six member school districts and is approved and accredited by the Ohio Department of Education as a two-year public joint vocational school to provide secondary preparation through classroom and lab offerings.



SPOTLIGHT ON WORK-BASED LEARNING

Have you ever wondered what it takes to start your own business? In November 2015, approximately 40 students enrolled in Intro to Business, Human Relations, and Career Search I courses at Marietta High School for the opportunity to discover what it means to start your own business. Four local entrepreneurs took time out of their day to discuss their journey during a panel discussion: Ryan Smith from Marietta Adventure Company; Alice Chapman from Ely Chapman Education Foundation; Geoff Schenkel from REsolve Studios; and Michelle Waters from Michelle Waters Photography. The panel was facilitated by Pamela Lankford, Director of the Small Business Development Center in Marietta.

Whether a student is interested in the arts, education, medicine, or an adventure-seeker, starting your own business is an option. Students learned that all four entrepreneurs have a passion for what they do. The discussion kicked off with each entrepreneur telling the story of how they got started and why. Emerging themes from the discussion, including common skills necessary and actions taken, were captured. The discussion ended as an advice-giving session addressing many different areas of life. Colin Schaad, a senior at Marietta High School, enjoyed hearing the life stories of the entrepreneurs. He had never heard of the Small Business Development Center, and didn't realize that there was, "a business designed to help other businesses."

Entrepreneur Alice Chapman (Ely Chapman Education Foundation) is an example of a social entrepreneur who wanted to solve the problem of students slipping through the cracks in school. This is not an area of entrepreneurialism that the students had previously encountered.

The interactive day of learning concluded with a final piece of advice from the panel given to the whole student audience, "time to explore the multiple options that are out there."

ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT CONTRIBUTOR

Tasha Werry is the Director of Career Resources and Outreach for Marietta City Schools. Her role is to make connections necessary for providing real-world career experiences for students. Previously, she taught for 12 years in the Marietta City School system and was the district grants coordinator—a position designed to bridge a disconnect between education and employment.



SPOTLIGHT ON WORK-BASED LEARNING

Five Carrollton VEX IQ Robotics teams competed in the 2015–2016 VEX IQ Challenge Competition—Bank Shot. Bank Shot is played on a 4'x8' rectangular field. Two robots compete in the teamwork challenge as an alliance in 60-second teamwork matches, working collaboratively to score points. Teams also compete in two additional challenges—the Robot Skills Challenge where one robot takes the field to score as many points as possible under driver control and the Programming Skills Challenge where one robot scores as many points as possible autonomously, without any driver inputs. The object of the game is to attain the highest score by emptying cutouts, scoring balls into the scoring zone and goals, and by parking robots on the ramp.

Three teams from Carrollton Schools qualified for the 2016 VEX State Championship. One team qualified with the teamwork challenge and two teams qualified in the Programming Skills Challenge.

In the VEX Competitions, presented by the Robotics Education & Competition Foundation, teams of students are tasked with designing and building a robot to play against other teams from around the world in a game-based engineering challenge. Classroom STEM concepts are put to the test on the playing field as students learn lifelong skills in teamwork, leadership, communications, and more. Tournaments are held year-round at the regional, state, and national levels; local champions go on to compete against the best in the world at VEX Worlds each April.

Thirty elementary and middle school-level teams from all over the state competed against one another at the VEX State Qualifying Competition for five main awards. Three Carrollton teams placed 1st, 3rd, and 4th in Programming Skills Challenge and are now ranked 1st, 4th, and 6th in the state of Ohio and 159th in the World.

Braxton Swearingen and John Paul Birong earned a state record of 32 points in the Programming Skills and advanced to the VEX World Championship. One team, Collyn Grove, Kodi Wells, and Ruth Davis, advanced to the final round in the Teamwork Challenge and ended the competition ranked 7th overall.



SPOTLIGHT ON WORK-BASED LEARNING

Creative young innovators participated in a week of immersion into a world of entrepreneurial thinking and creative business development during the D.R.I.V.E. Summer Camp at historic Marietta College. The camp, offered through the Young Entrepreneurs Consortium is designed for rising 7–12th graders.

Building on collaborative work among Marietta College, Marietta City Schools, Building Bridges to Careers, TomTod Ideas, and many businesses, nonprofits, and entrepreneurs, the week included community exploration, networking with a variety of local and regional business owners and entrepreneurs, workshops in entrepreneurial mindset, business planning, social media marketing, and pitch development, creative problem-solving challenges, and plenty of fun and networking. One camper explained the impact of the network-building activities, "There's way more entrepreneurs in the community than I thought that there was. I saw so many entrepreneurs that were so passionate about their idea!"

Activities included design thinking, personal reflection, social media, community service, marketing, and public speaking. Along with developing their own ideas, students at D.R.I.V.E. developed a deeper understanding of entrepreneurship, built a personal network of supportive entrepreneurs in the community, learned new tools to help with critical thinking and problem solving, and explored new ideas for their futures. Asked during a closing reflection to sum up her experience of D.R.I.V.E. in five words or less, one camper declared: "This has changed my life."

ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT CONTRIBUTOR

Maribeth Saleem-Tanner is the Director of Civic Engagement at Marietta College, and an experienced educator and nonprofit professional who enjoys building collaborative environments, innovative programs, and strong organizational structures.



SPOTLIGHT ON WORK-BASED LEARNING

Battelle for Kids partnered with the Interactive Media class at Wayne County Schools Career Center for a work-based learning experience. A group of juniors and seniors, led by student project manager Matt Wolf and teacher, Jennifer Rue took on all aspects of video to create a video about the YEC grant. Students pre-planned, developed creative briefs, wrote, coordinated, and conducted interviews with YEC educators, edited, designed, and delivered the final product.

ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT CONTRIBUTOR

Matt Wolf is a 2016 graduate of Chippewa Local School District and Wayne County Schools CTC. His future plans include attending Kent State University to pursue a degree in media production.



A step in creating a viable Entrepreneurship Pathway for students is building capacity in teachers to teach dual enrollment programs in their home high schools. As such, the YEC's partnerships with higher education have played a crucial role in building teacher capacity in the region. One such example is the creation of credentialing programs that are primarily online, so that teachers can take classes more conveniently.



SPOTLIGHT ON TEACHER CREDENTIALING

As the first cohort of teachers prepares to finish The University of Akron's (UA) English credentialing module, the program has already helped shape how high school teachers envision their College Credit Plus teaching. "I have become a more effective writing teacher who is much more confident in her skills to teach composition," one teacher declared as she reflected on her experience in the program. And she is not alone in her praise for the University of Akron's program effectiveness.

UA's English innovative program is devoted to helping high school teachers meet the credentialing standards for dual credit instructors in Ohio. The credentialing module offers a cohesive set of courses specifically designed for the needs of dual credit teachers, with an emphasis on disciplinary content and its application to college-level courses. All classes are online, allowing busy teachers from all over to fit the classes into their schedules.

"We never had to go to campus for class," one teacher said, which "makes [the UA Credentialing Module] entirely possible."



The UA program's balance between composition and literature classes makes it distinct from many online credentialing programs that emphasize literature classes. As a result, teachers get a firmer grounding in teaching English composition courses commonly offered through College Credit Plus. The three courses in Composition Studies introduce high school teachers to the theoretical foundations of the first-year composition, the most current models of argumentation and research, and instruction in digital and multimodal writing. The three literature courses, meanwhile, provide teachers with a view of current practices in the field, as well as the chance to explore how those practices influence the study of Shakespeare and twentieth century literature in college-level courses.

The result, according to the teachers themselves, is a uniquely effective program. One teacher noted, "The small class as well as the high level of interaction with my colleagues has made this program an intrinsically rewarding experience." A second said she was impressed with "the respect our instructors have for what we do ... they respect our positions, our experiences, and our input. We have the opportunity to use our collective knowledge to tackle important issues in our field."

Thanks to generous support through YEC, the dual credit credentialing module continues to grow, with two additional teacher cohorts working their way through the program. As a result, we're happy to think that even more College Credit Plus students will be benefiting from this innovative training.

“As part of the YEC, I was able to earn a dual enrollment certificate through the Graduate Programs in Business with The University of Akron. I took six MBA-level business classes that covered accounting, entrepreneurship, business law, international business, marketing, and management. I can incorporate these various topics in my current business classes and now have the ability to teach future business College Credit Plus classes at Waynedale.”

—Jennifer Walton, Southeast Local School District

ABOUT UA

The University of Akron is one of Ohio's most influential public research universities, contributing to the resurgence of the local economy, providing a workforce highly trained in diverse disciplines, and known for an innovative approach to higher education.

With nearly 26,000 students and more than 300 associate, bachelor's, master's, doctorate, and law degree programs, The University of Akron offers career-focused and experiential learning that helps students get ahead in the job market.



SPOTLIGHT ON COLLEGE CREDIT PLUS

At Southeast Local, there have been numerous College Credit Plus classes implemented in the last year. Several of those classes were delivered in the distance learning lab. The YEC grant provided the opportunity to fund new devices for students to have one-to-one computing access during the school day in grades 6–12. Feedback from students, teachers, and parents reflects positively. As teacher capacity increases, more courses will be offered.

"The Young Entrepreneurs Consortium Straight A Grant has enabled me to take courses toward earning a master's degree in organizational communications. With this degree, I will be qualified to contribute to Southeast Local by teaching dual credit communications courses at Waynedale High School. Waynedale students will then experience advanced speech courses taught by a teacher they already know and have built relationships with. Even now, my students are benefiting from the resources, strategies, and activities I am exposed to through my courses," shares Jessica Weaver.

Adds Kevin Stacy, "This grant has been instrumental in shaping my pedagogical outlook and strategies base. Through working in this cohort, I've been able to collaborate with other area teachers, discuss at great length a variety of teaching strategies, study many theorists, and practice an array of methods for better instruction. The classes have also fortified and bolstered my content knowledge in writing and reading. Thanks to my experience in the cohort, my students will directly benefit by being subjected to a unique, dynamic classroom learning experience that is backed by professionals and theorists who have come before me."



SPOTLIGHT ON USING STUDENT FEEDBACK TO FOSTER HOPE

Teachers from eight YEC school districts are administering The Student Experience Survey® to gather students' feedback about the degree to which the classroom environment fosters student hope, engagement, and a sense of belonging within a well-managed classroom. These non-academic skills and dispositions have been shown to impact learning in significant, positive ways. For example, multiple studies have shown that student hope is a greater predictor of academic success than ACT®, SAT®, or GPA. Further, these non-academic soft skills and dispositions are important factors that may be positively impacted by the YEC's implementation of work- and problem-based learning courses.

Class survey results are provided to teachers for their own analysis, reflection, and response. First, teachers are encouraged to review their results and simply consider, "What did I learn from my students' feedback?" Next, teachers often choose one particular area on which to focus and then commit to trying new strategies in the classroom. For example, one teacher whose class survey results indicated that students didn't feel she knew their interests, might try to integrate her knowledge of individual students into an upcoming lesson.

In response to surveys administered in March–April 2016, teachers are just beginning to use the data to inform their teaching practice in ways that support the YEC's goals to improve student achievement and prepare students to compete in a 21st century global economy. All YEC districts will again have the opportunity to administer the survey during the 2016–2017 school year in any grade 6–12 classroom.



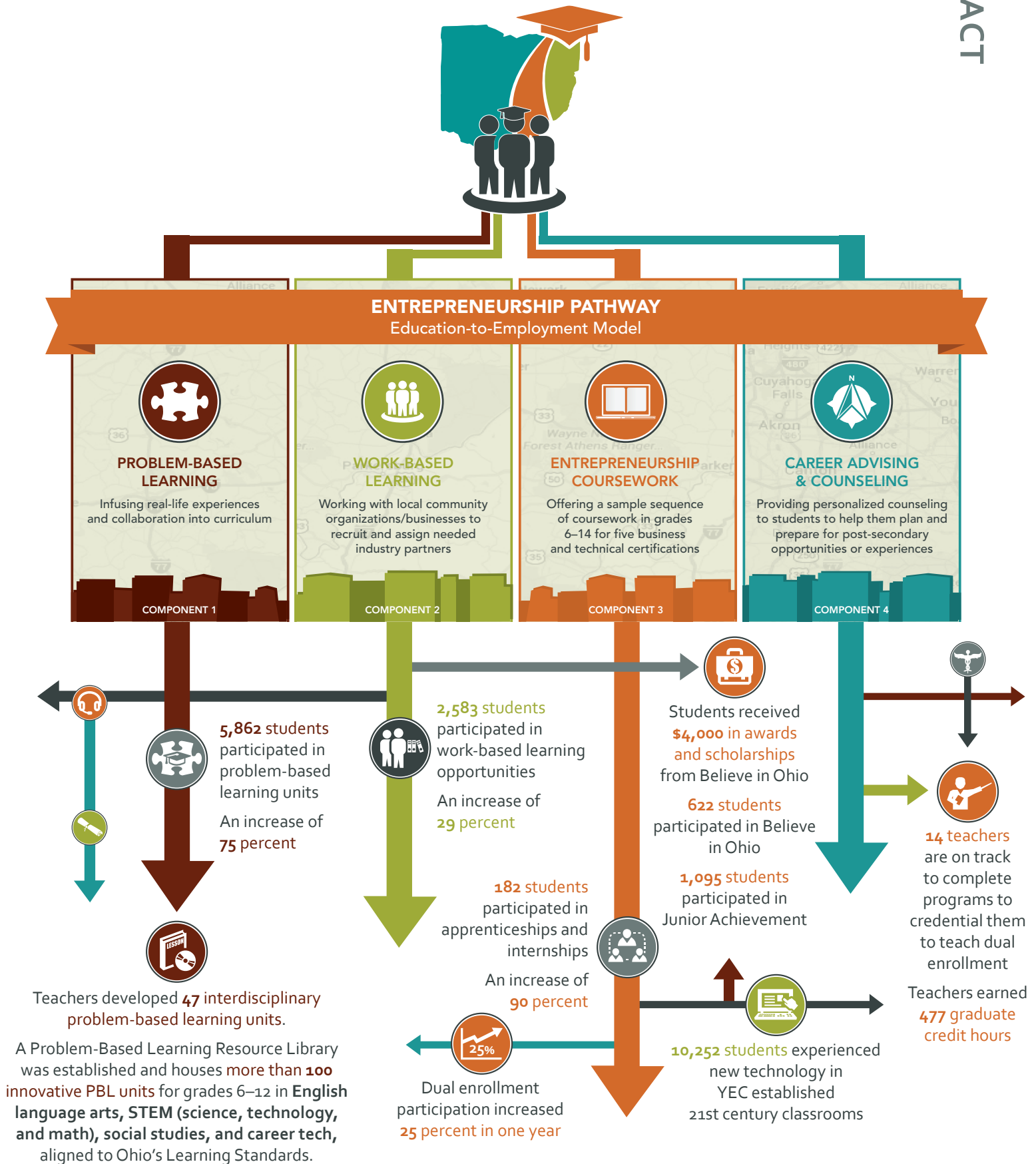
Designed to share best practices, the YEC planned and hosted a student-centered showcase through the Student Success Summit. In April 2016, more than 225 educators, students (over 100 in grades 5–12), community leaders, business leaders, elected and state officials, and higher education faculty gathered at R.G. Drage Career Technical Center to share ideas, strategies, and examples of how the YEC is making an impact in Ohio to prepare students for the future. A Gallery Walk, led by YEC students, featured programs from each of the 15 districts and learning demonstrations. With so many students in attendance, it was vital to have young regional entrepreneurs sharing their stories and impact. Keynote speakers included Blake Gibbs, Kent State student and co-founder of Zing Anything; Traci Buckner, Program Officer GAR Foundation and author; and Hart Main, Kent State student and founder of Man-Cans.

The lasting impact of the YEC is coming to fruition. The YEC “village” is increasing the flow of young entrepreneurs in order to grow local economies from Northeast to Southeast Ohio; establishing and growing a sustainable Consortium with significant community engagement to better share services and resources that will continue to enhance student achievement from grades pre-K–18; and creating a replicable template for a variety of career pathways (grades 6–14) and work-based learning.

The YEC is a model that truly involves students, not just teaches them. Students are no longer solely sitting in a classroom and learning. They are getting actively involved in learning, working together, solving problem, and thinking differently. The YEC ignites a desire to learn and achieve in our students and we’re accomplishing education at the very high level.

BY THE NUMBERS

Benchmark and Impact Data for Year 2



Data self-reported by districts



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