

Summer STEM Internship Program



Georgia Employability Skills Task Force Recommendation No. 1 School Goal 3

- Formalize relationships and partnerships with postsecondary institutions, advisory boards, and local businesses to coordinate employability skills initiatives and support systems.

Overview

The Ware County High School Career, Technical, and Agricultural (CTAE) work-based learning (WBL) coordinator and the Waycross/Ware County Chamber of Commerce partnered to offer a Summer STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) Internship Program to students at Ware County High School. The program exposed students to various job opportunities available in STEM-focused local businesses and industries by providing them with paid internships during the summer. The program was advertised to students via morning announcements, flyers, and lunchroom announcements, and to the businesses via chamber email blasts, letters from Ware County High School, and in-person meetings.

A Georgia Department of Labor (DOL) representative, Patrick Simmons, came to the high school to conduct a workshop on résumé writing, interviewing, and registering for DOL services. The students then applied to internship opportunities, participated in a panel interview during the first week of summer break, and if selected, worked for 20 hours per week for 4 weeks over the summer. After all internships were completed, a luncheon was held to celebrate. Those attending the luncheon included business mentors, students, board of education members, the superintendent, the CTAE director, and county and city officials.

Skills Development

The Summer STEM Internship Program affords students an opportunity to participate in an advanced internship placement prior to college, providing a great addition to a college application or résumé. A Georgia DOL representative conducts a workshop at the school on résumé writing, interviewing, and registering for DOL services. In addition, members of the business community interview students and select students to work in their offices for 4 weeks. Interviews are conducted in a panel-style format.

Audience and Initiative Impact

The target audience for the Summer STEM Internship Program was rising juniors and seniors, as well as graduating seniors, although the application process was open to all interested students who met the requirements. To be eligible to apply, students must have had good attendance, no discipline issues, and at least a 2.5 grade point average. Twenty students at Ware County High School participate in the program annually.

Additional stakeholders include the Waycross/Ware County Chamber of Commerce and the local business community. Ultimately, the STEM internship program broadens students' understanding of the job market in the Waycross area and is intended to encourage students to return to Waycross upon completion of college. This creates a valuable pipeline of students making the connection from secondary, postsecondary, and area workforce needs.

School/District: Ware County High School

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Georgia Employability Skills Task Force Recommendations

1. Integrate employability skills into curriculum and learning experiences from prekindergarten through postsecondary education.
2. Support educators and other stakeholders in developing employability skills instruction.
3. Develop deeper and stronger relationships between industry and education to enhance teacher and mentor roles in quality work-based learning and career development opportunities.

To learn more about college- and career-readiness work in the southeast states, please contact Beth Howard-Brown (bhoward-brown@air.org), Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) director, or visit the SECC website (southeast-cc.org).

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