



**INITIATIVE**

June 2007

*A partnership among business, education, community and town government to assist students in Grades K-12 with an awareness of the world of work through career exploration activities.*

**Business/Education Comments**

By Pat Van Haste (substituting for John Annick)

This year, BEI celebrated its twelfth anniversary! We extend our thanks to all our business partners, some 350 strong. Without their help, we wouldn't be able to support so many career exploration experiences for Trumbull students,

Some highlights of 2006-07 include:

- surpassing last year's record in awarding 29 grants, for a total of \$20,609.
- sponsoring meetings where speakers from Connecticut Business and Industry Council, Trumbull's Economic and Development Office, CES's Regional Arts Center, and Silver Petrucelli Inc., architects for the THS renovation, shared their ideas and knowledge with attendees.
- supporting fields trips for our students to MIT (Dr. Langer's Biotech lab), Cold Springs Harbor (Dr. Watson's DNA lab), and the CPA Association annual student conference.
- funding the ACE Mentor Program- one student awarded a scholarship
- continuing support of Channel 17 with increased offerings
- promoting S.O.S.(Student Office Services)- in support of Trumbull's special education students
- supporting the Clearinghouse letter-mailed to 1000+ THS alumni
- sponsoring the Fed Challenge

Our year will close with our annual Recognition event to be held at Unilever Corporation in Trumbull on June 5. We thank those who made this event possible this year, including our host, Unilever.

**Special Recognition Awards**

**Business Person of the Year-** to Scott Vincini of Financial Solutions, LLC of Trumbull. Scott's tireless work contributed to the huge success of this year's first annual Rotary Business Expo held at Trumbull High School.

**Ray Avery Award** to Mary Keane- Mary's unique support of volunteer efforts within Trumbull earned her this year's plaudits.

**Making a Difference Awards** to the following:

Harriet Rago - Vice President of Junior Achievement of Western Connecticut, Harriet helped introduce Junior Achievement curriculum into both elementary and middle schools this year.

Damon Lewis- a ninth grade school counselor at THS, Damon assisted with this year's GEAR Up activity held at Housatonic Community College, as well as working on THS's Career Exploration and Community Service Fair.

Tony Pijar- Dean of Students at THS, Tony helped coordinate the annual Business/Education Conference held at the Trumbull Marriott.

Ben and Debbie Carrara- of Executive Office Services in Bridgeport. Ben and Debbie provide printing services to the BEI Recognition Event every year at no charge.

**Special Recognition Award** - to Dr. Anthony Minotti, Assistant Superintendent of Trumbull Public Schools, with a big thank you for his many years of service not only to the school system but also to BEI.

A major thank you to all our financial contributors including the following:

- Akzo Nobel Functional Chemicals LLC
- Aquarion Water Co. of CT
- Arbitration International
- Birarelli Insurance
- Cartensen Memorial Fund
- Greg Annick and family
- HealthNet of Northeast, Inc.
- Metrusky Wealth Management
- Monroe Business Associates, LLC
- Newtown Savings Bank
- People's Bank
- Southern CT Gas Co.
- Mary Spiegel
- Trefz Foundation
- Trumbull Chamber of Commerce
- Trumbull Rotary
- Trumbull's Own Chamber
- Unilever US Foundation
- United Illuminating

Please support us in the fall as we strive to enhance our programs. JOIN US and be a part of this special effort to bring together business and education! ■

**Trumbull High School Celebrates School to Career 2006-2007**

By JoAnn O'Connell

This has been a banner year at Trumbull High School with many successful career related initiatives. The school year was kicked off with the annual Career Exploration and Community Service Fair in September attended by more than 500 students. Participants came from 28 local business and service organizations. This year's Rotary EXPO allowed for the entire student community to participate in career exploration activities including visiting booths located in our gymnasium as well as having in class speakers. Thirty students from grades 9 - 12 participated in the Architecture, Construction and Engineering ACE Mentor Program. Sixty participants attended our GEAR UP PROGRAM sponsored by BEI and Housatonic Community College. The mission of the GEAR UP PROGRAM is to engage every junior and senior without definite post high school plans to become aware of their options and to put into place a PLAN OF ACTION. The Business and Educator's Conference was an incredible success. Collaboration, problem solving and presentation among business partners, students and educators was representative of the enthusiasm and commitment that exists among these three groups. The Fed Challenge, Bi-Centennial, Model UN, extensive Job Shadowing, Math Team, Robotics and Biotechnology

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John Annick & James Somers

initiatives, attendance at major conferences by students such as the Construction Career Fair in Wallingford are samplings of what is happening at THS. Many of our students have demonstrated a commitment to Community Service and Career Exploration. ■

## **Volunteering with JA in Trumbull**

By Mary Jo Romano

With JA's instructional design, volunteering is made easy. At least that is what long time volunteers (George Ameer and Jean Nagy) say about the program. The format is fluid from beginning to end. Materials are received in a timely manner leaving the instructors plenty of time to prepare for the classroom adventure. Props are used during instruction followed by activities and then a summary and review at the end. Even a new volunteer could easily follow this time tested and successful format.

Since the format appeals to different learning styles such as auditory, visual and kinesthetic, the children are very attentive and there is a high level of interaction and discussion with each lesson. They actually look forward to the next class! While teachers encourage participation from the students, the volunteers provide a different perspective and a new voice to deliver the vocabulary and experience of the real world to their young minds. They seem eager to learn about the economy, money, business and entrepreneurship from a diverse instructor base. The experience is a win for the volunteer, the teacher and most importantly the children.

Participating in the JA program is also another way to lead by example and promote volunteerism. Our children learn by what they see others do. ■

## **'Life Experiences' Can Help Adults Earn High School Diploma**

Trumbull Public Schools, through the Department of Continuing Education, is offering a process which allows residents, 21 years or older, to earn a high school diploma by demonstrating the skills they have learned through life experiences. The new External Diploma Program (EDP) is not an instructional program. It is based on the premise that in the course of day-to-day living, adults have learned and mastered many skills identical to those taught in a structured classroom. A highly successful and well-documented program which is sponsored by the American Council on Education (the same organization that sponsors the GED Tests), the EDP plan offers candidates a vehicle through which they can have their skills assessed in a work or life context. In keeping with the nationwide trend toward performance assessment, the

External Diploma Program asks diploma seekers to demonstrate competency in 65 general areas, including such real-life skills as consumer awareness, personal and family health, and occupational preparedness. The assessment features such real-life demonstrations as writing a resume and balancing a family budget.

Robert DeCerbo, Director of Trumbull Continuing Education, describes the typical applicants as mature, competent adults with years of job, child-rearing, and homemaking experiences behind them. Many, because of their family obligations or work schedule demands, need the flexible scheduling the program offers. Those interested in obtaining more information should call the Continuing Education Office (203) 452-4554. ■

## **An Overview of This Year's Minigrant Winners**

Trumbull Students benefited from nineteen minigrants this year. Here is a description of them.

*Getting to Know the Environment* - At Frenchtown, children learned about various jobs which revolve around agriscience (Kara Peterson)

*Junior Achievement Middle School Initiative* - JA introduced JA Global Marketplace curriculum in all of Trumbull's sixth grades at both Hillcrest and Madison. (Charlie Prindle and Harriet Rago)

*Career Ideas* - At Frenchtown, the Career Ideas for Kids and Community Helpers series of books were purchased and added to the school's library. (Ellen Albro)

*Growing Up Safe* - At Frenchtown, kindergarten children were exposed to representatives of safety careers including policemen, firefighters, EMS personnel, nurses, safety guards and dog wardens. The grant purchased materials to enhance the course of study. (Maria Sansone, Jennifer Crawford and Arline Alves)

*Fed Challenge* - At THS, a selected team of students participated in this competition in Economics. (Gerry McCloghry)

*A Taste of Life* - This project explored restaurant management and food preparation careers for REACH students. (Gene Brochu)

*Engineers Teaching Algebra* - At Madison, this project for 8<sup>th</sup> graders highlighted the connection between the world of mathematics, especially Algebra, and the Engineering profession. (Gina Zuk)

*Invasive Plants of CT* - At Frenchtown, utilizing local and state businesses and organizations and careers in such, 4<sup>th</sup> graders were exposed to invasive plants

and their harmful effects on CT ecology. (Susan Gaspar)

*Wall Street Economics and Finance Club* - At THS, seniors participated in this club which brings together professionals in economics and finance with students. Together they took part in seminars and learning exercises. (Gerry McCloghry)

*Read Across the Roles* - At Daniels Farm, careers books for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders were purchased in order to assist with "what do I want to be when I grow up". (Nan Stern)

*360' View/Prof. Theatre* - At the Regional Center for the Arts, students traveled to the Westport Playhouse and participated in several backstage activities exploring careers in professional theatre. (Dexter Singleton)

*The World of Fragrance* - At Hillcrest, 6<sup>th</sup> grade science students developed their own fragrance through the integration of Science (R&D), Math (Formulations) Language Arts (Brochures) and Art (Design and Layout). (Joan M. Thomas)

*Mathematics-Art Mural Project* - At Trumbull's Alternate School, a master work of art was chosen in order to explore and apply mathematical skills, along with studying careers linked to both math and art. (Rose Marie D'Aquila and Kathleen Durand)

*Project RAMES* - At Hillcrest, grade 6 students meet with professionals from the world of robotics and educational technology in order to explore career opportunities and engage in hands on project based activities. (Petrina Gunsolley)

*Career Awareness Day* - At Middlebrook, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders took part in a variety of activities to help them with future career awareness. (Ellen Lacko)

*GEARUP* - At THS, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12 graders with no post-secondary plans were taken to Housatonic Community College for a day of guest speakers, seminars and workshops. Onsite interviews were granted for those students wanting to attend a 4 year university. (Damon Lewis and JoAnn O'Connell)

*Student Literary Magazine* - At Tashua, Kindergarten to 2<sup>nd</sup> graders explored careers associated to publishing. (Carmen Brown)

*Community Helpers Help Us* - At Jane Ryan, this project highlighted helping professions (Donna Zimmer)

*This Could be My Life* - At Booth Hill, this project helped students understand what careers will be needed in the future. (J. Hoist and Betty Sue George) ■