



June 2011

INITIATIVE

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 John Annick, Co-Chair

We have completed fifteen plus years of the Business Education Initiative. What have we accomplished and what will be our role as we move forward? The new Connecticut Public ACT 10-111 (The Connecticut Plan) has the potential for needing many of the BEI resources to meet the needs of the ACT. The ACT, will require the students to earn 25 credits, an increase from the current 22 credits. In addition to other changes, each student must complete a Capstone project (a project or internship) to complete their high school learning.

Also, included in the law is a requirement for each District to provide each student a "student success plan" beginning in grades six. The District would have to track each student's career goals, and counsel the student toward courses he/she should take to attain these goals. With this in mind and the need for BEI to review our overall mission, we conducted a Strategic Planning session. An outside consultant, Wally Hauck, Optimum Leadership Inc., was hired to lead us in the Hoshin Planning Process. A sub-committee of the BEI Board of Directors participated. We have been meeting to begin the discussion and implementation of the results.

Some highlights of 2010-11 were:

- awarded 19 grants, for a total of \$19,064
- conducted a general meeting at the Regional Center for Arts
- continued the Clearinghouse Project, through support of Peoples United Bank, in sending THS students, who are currently a junior in college or working a reminder of sending their resume to one of our partners for possible employment
- continued support of the field trips to MIT (Dr. Langer's Biotech Lab), and Cold Springs Harbor (Dr. Watson's DNA Lab).
- support the ACE Mentor Program
- support of the THS Gear-up program
- support of Trumbull Education Channel
- promote S.O.S. (Student Office Services that provide career experiences for Trumbull's special needs students

The year will close on June 7th with our Annual Recognition Event and awards at the Trumbull Library Community Room.

Special Recognition Awards

Ray Avery Award to Todd Gallo, for his dedication and support to Trumbull youth school and community programs, especially in the fundraising activities that provide scholarships.

Making a Difference Awards to the following:

- Michael Niedermeier, Blum Shapiro, for performing the work necessary to obtaining the 501C3 status for the BEI Foundation.
- Lucinda Timpanelli, Trumbull High School, for her diligence and patience in the direction of the Trumbull High School construction project.
- Shawn Tait, Trumbull Education Channel Studio Director, for the operation and initiative of new activities for the Trumbull Education Channel
- Jodie Orzechowski, Cooperative Education Services, for simplfing and redesign of the BEI website.
- Jose Cardoso and Joel D. Smith, Antinozzi Associates; Dave Guzas, Fletcher Thompson, Inc.; Chad McCullough, Turner Construction Co.; Joseph Amatur, Trumbull High School; all mentors of the ACE Mentor Program, who have given their time and expertise in guiding our students in understanding of architecture, construction management and engineering.
- Diane Christiano, Stratford Public Schools, for her leadership of the ACE Area Advisory Committee.

BEI Foundation Contributors

We offer a major thank you to all our financial and In-kind contributors. They are

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Please look forward to joining us in the fall as we begin a new year and the new challenges that our students will encounter as they move on to the future world of work. JOIN US and be a part of this special effort to bring together Trumbull business and education!

A Message to Trumbull Students

By Valerie Reyher, President, BEI Inc. of Trumbull Foundation

Working at The Kennedy Center, Inc., I have had the opportunity to see employment through various aspects: As an employee who is interviewing for a job (looking to advance); career specialist helping others to find jobs; and as employer, interviewing candidates for the job. In all of these phases, there have been some common themes. First: Employers want people who can do the job. So having the right skills is important. Second: Employers want people who will work hard, be productive. Do the job you were hired to do! Third: Employers want self-starters who will learn quickly and apply their skills and experience. Fourth: Employers want experience. They want people who can do the job with little to no training.

With those four key themes, you will notice that you need experience to get the job but you can't get experience unless you have a job. Thus, this is where BEI comes in. We can help students get experience! Being educated does not automatically equal success. An education is only as good you apply that knowledge. There are many individuals who choose to be perpetual learners enrolled in educational institutions who are unable to apply their knowledge to the everyday world. An assimilation of knowledge and experience are the key foundations to success in a career. Our Trumbull BEI affords students the opportunities to begin to gain the experience they will need to go along with their knowledge. The partnership between

Town of Trumbull Business Education Initiative

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Trumbull's schools and the Trumbull business community is a win-win for all who participate. Students learn the various skill sets that are required to apply their knowledge to the business world as well as alternative applications to the education they have received. Businesses on the other hand get to take part in shaping and molding our future employment pool.

As a person who interviews candidates, some of the most frustrating experiences has been when applicants come in overselling their abilities and don't perform with the production and quality that they said they had. Candidates present themselves as knowing our business without really "knowing" our business. They make general assumptions from what they may have seen somewhere or possibly read about. However, they don't really know what it means to work in our field unless they have worked in it. The experience of internships, job shadows, and volunteering have allowed students the opportunity to gain the edge needed to fully understand how a business operates. Students approach employers saying I am here to learn and absorb and to fully understand what it means to work at your company. This makes you a more ideal job candidate when you are ready to pursue employment.

BEI is an excellent resource whether you are in middle school or in high school. It is never too young to learn about the business world. Businesses don't operate the same, even when they are the same type of business. Each has different values, different policies, and different expectations. Getting to know those differences is an advantage and it allows you as a student to evaluate your own core values. So, as you embark on your educational journey keep BEI in mind. We have community connections with local businesses that can afford you the opportunity to experience a real world education and which will allow you to expand the application of your knowledge. Learn more about what BEI can do for you by visiting the BEI website:
<http://trumbullbei.wordpress.com/>

Minigrant Awards 2010-11

By Alice McCloghery

This year BEI celebrates 16 years since the foundation initiated its' mission to assist Trumbull students to know more about the work world through career exploration activities, programs and events.

MIT Trip – This year's trip celebrates our tenth anniversary of visiting with Dr. Robert Langer at the MIT Labs. We have been indeed fortunate that Dr. Langer, world renowned biotechnologist, has both allowed our Trumbull students to visit with him. Over the years, he and his staff have shared their time as well as discussed how to pursue a career in research and development. Subjects such as tissue culture, organ cloning, medical surgical bandages and stem cell research have been viewed and discussed.

Biotechnology Explorations - This trip allows the students to explore the many different career opportunities which exist in the biological sciences and technologies. These experiences will open the doors for further exploration into careers in Molecular Biology, Genetics, Forensics and Biomedical Engineering. Visiting scientists from Bioconnections/Cure further the exploration while allowing students to run Polymerase Chain Reaction in an effort to identify genetically modified soy flour and Gel Electrophoresis in the identification of Sickle Cell Anemia. In addition a scientist from Invitrogen will visit St. Joseph High School and discuss the ever evolving world of protein science. This trip, in combination with labs, lectures, research and guest speakers, will provide students with an enriching experience in the biological technologies while exploring the possible career options in these fields. (Lisa Cellini – St. Josephs High School)

Botball Robotics Tournament – Students in grade levels 9-12 get the opportunity to design, program, build and operate robots. The students participate in the Botball tournament for which they design and construct robots from kits provided by the Botball organizers. The tournament rules specify the functions that each team's robot(s) must perform to score points. The robots entered into the tournament must be constructed using the parts in the supplied kits. This focuses the teams on the detail construction and programming of the robots, rather than hardware procurement. In addition to robot performance, the teams are evaluated on their planning skills through on-line progress documentation submitted periodically to the Botball officials. Two student leaders attended a training workshop in March and returned to provide instruction to the rest of the team. (Hans Drenkard – THS)

Butterfly Garden - Members of the Rainforest Club at Madison Middle School, which Roche founded five years ago, braved the rain on a drizzly, dreary day back in November to plant three butterfly gardens at the Beardsley Zoo. Using science and math skills, they designed each garden to resemble a different species of Connecticut Butterfly with the help of Beardsley Zoo educator Chris Clark. Chris Harvey of Color blends (wholesale bulbs) in Bridgeport also assisted with the planting and supplied the bulbs at a discounted price.

The first garden to appear in early March mimicked the appearance of the Cabbage Patch White Butterfly, and in April the Spring Azure



Butterfly soared to life, with its brilliant blueish-purplish flowers. Now that the calendar has turned to May the orange and black of the Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly has begun to flap and flutter up from the earth. Since perennials were used for all the designs, the gardens will be the young people's permanent gift to the zoo, and a symbol of hope and renewal.

In addition to building the gardens, the Rainforest Rescuers also met with Beardsley Zoo's graphic designer Denise Luckienchuk to create an educational sign. During this phase of the project the young environmentalists researched the life cycle of butterflies, nutritional needs, threats to the population and the importance of butterflies to the food chain. A contest was held and 6th graders Catherine Primavera and Rachel Wade won for their entry, "Come Out of Your Cocoon and Learn". 7th grader Brielle Jones was awarded second place for her slogan, "Butterflies: The 8th wonder of the World".

"Overall I feel this experience was a wonderful learning experience for the students and I am very grateful to BEI for their continued support", stated Roche. "Hopefully visitors to the Beardsly Zoo will be inspired to create butterfly gardens in their own backyards and switch to organic rather than chemical pesticides so we can enjoy these aerial adventurers for many years to come". (Allison Roche/Donna Larkin – Madison Middle School)

Celebrate Work Event – The Kennedy Center hosted a Celebrate Work Event on October 19th which comprised of employers, small businesses, job seekers, and students learning about how individuals with disabilities can work in the competitive marketplace. The event included experiential sensitivity trainings to demonstrate the effects a disabling condition may have on a person and the efforts that are taken by an individual to compensate for their deficits. The event had a demonstration of the various technology that enables all individuals to be more effective in meeting their job expectations. Students and members of the community had the opportunity to learn how to diversify their workforce, overcome their misconceptions regarding persons with disabilities and develop a stronger commitment to partnerships and a better understanding of one's own personal limitations. (Sara Purdy/Valerie Reyher – Kennedy Center)

Dolan DNA Learning Center - The Dolan DNA Learning Center offers laboratory experiences in working with the use of restriction enzymes to "cut" lambda phage DNA and separate the "cut" DNA fragments via the use of the of the gel electrophoresis technique. Not only does the execution of this lab activity meet the guidelines of the College Board's recommendation, but it also trains students in the procedures of gel electrophoresis; affording necessary experiences that will provide them with practical entry-level skills for a potential position in the Biotechnology industry. Additionally, other biotechnological investigations such as mitochondrial DNA

sequencing are also available as either a supplement or substitution for the previously described activity. (Douglas Winters – THS)

Career Opportunities Around the World – The students research a given country including topics on topography, location, land use, traditional arts, culture, food, health, export business and government. After their research is complete students have a better understanding of the people in the country and the careers available in that country for comparison purposes. (Reenie Demkiw – Booth Hill School)

Columbia Journalism – The purpose of this project is to continue the knowledge that the students involved in journalism and the school newspaper have in regards to the medium. By attending the conference, students will be given a fresh perspective on the field and learn valuable lessons about application and execution in regards to production and creation of articles and putting out a complete and well rounded edition of the newspaper. (Jim McCaffrey/Lisa Acerbo, THS)

Exploring Green Careers in STEM – The purpose of this inquiry driven project is to explore green careers in Oceanography and Marine Sciences through an attempt to investigate the impact of carbon dioxide and other factors on our ocean and its biodiversity. Students will participate in a marine life study cruise, conduct research and present their research findings on careers in Oceanography and Marine science and will conduct research on the impact of carbon dioxide and other factors on our ocean and its biodiversity. Students will also participate in a hands-on water quality monitoring lab in school organized by a scientist from EarthPlace, Westport or by a marine scientist from Sacred Heart University, Fairfield.

Fed Challenge – The Fed Challenge is a regional competition for high school students. Students compete at the New York Federal Reserve Bank. The competition is a performance based assessment in which students testify in a mock hearing of the Federal Open Market Committee. In the hearing, students present their findings on current economic conditions as well as Federal Reserve policies. In the course of their preparation, students will analyze major indicators used by the Federal Reserve to evaluate the economy and proved policy prescriptions to be used by the Federal Reserve. (Gregg Basbagill – THS)

Helping Hands Service Project - The Helping Hands Service Project is for students with significant special needs and their typical peers, to work together to make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for a local homeless shelter. It is intended to raise awareness among our school community that students with special needs can help others, while learning and using basic life and vocational skills. The service project will be available for typical students as well. For these children they will learn how to work together with students with special needs to help the lives of others less fortunate. Students, both typical and with special needs, will gain the experience of

service learning. (Meghan Plunket)

Food Service in the Community – This project will teach the students about many different jobs that revolve around food service in the community. We will first pre-teach ideas and concepts by reading books to students and showing pictures of community workers and places. We will then give students hands-on experience by bringing them into the community. Community trips consist of taking tours of food stores, purchasing food and talking to various food service employees. While visiting restaurants, students will become familiar with the chef, the expediter, and the restaurant manager. Students will get the opportunity to order food from a cashier at a fast food restaurant, as well as from a menu at a sit-down restaurant. We will discuss the positions of a hostess, bus boy, waitress/waiter and cook. Role playing and cooking activities in the classroom will be used to reinforce the information learned through the pre-teaching and community experience. (Cheryl Wallace/Kara Peterson – Frenchtown Elementary)

HC Greenhouse Growers – Student career awareness will be explored by the planting, growing, nurturing and caring for seeds and propagated plants over the winter. Once it is warm enough to sustain tender plants and after the soil has been properly prepared, they will be planted outside in our courtyards. Our young gardeners will be educated in a variety of information concerning the growing world, including the care and maintenance of living plants, proper growing techniques, including correct lighting, water and fertilizer requirements, beginning landscaping design for both soft and hardscapes and architecture. Students will also be taught the correct maintenance and cleaning of tools and equipment. Additionally, Hillcrest houses the adjusted curriculum students' programming, and we very much feel that these students will learn and participate enthusiastically with the typical students, enhancing the experience for all. (Yazmin Carattini – Hillcrest Middle School)

Middlebrook Peer Tutors – This project is designed to introduce students to the career of teaching while helping younger students improve their reading skills. Fourth and fifth grade students will meet with teacher for an introductory assembly where the program and individual roles will be explained. Participating students will be required to write a complete paragraph on why they would like to be a peer tutor. They also need a permission slip signed by a guardian that lets the parent know they will be out of the classroom for the last 25 minutes of the day once a week. Students who complete both requirements will receive training in different aspects of instruction. They will learn what a lesson plan is and how to follow the plan. First, second and third grade teachers will develop a list of students who will benefit from a one on one instruction and review of skills. Students will be matched with peer tutors for optimum results. The students will meet with their tutors for 25 minutes once a week. At this time the

tutors will follow a provided lesson plan. The lesson plan has 6 steps: review sounds, review words, read a levelled book, orally answer comprehension questions, administer a short spelling quiz on review words, correct quiz with students. (Molly Michaels – Middlebrook)

Model UN Conference – Model UN students traveled to Washington DC to participate in the 2011 Washington Area Model UN Conference at George Washington University. Students were able to act as UN delegates as they were assigned a country and defended the country's position on various issues. Students were able to meet with diplomats in Washington DC and learn firsthand the future careers related to international relations. They were also able to interact with students at George Washington University who were majoring in international relations and discuss possible future careers with the students. This project has impacted the understanding by the student of the world of work, career opportunities and how it was successful with a business. (Katie Boland – THS)

Postcard Geography – The purpose of the project is to have students (with the help of professionals) design a post card that will depict the physical and cultural geography of Trumbull, as well as special events or activities of note in the community. Students will be sending these postcards to schools around the country and will be receiving postcards from these schools as well as part of the Postcard Geography Project. Another goal is to create a web-site where students/teachers will track the postcards and the information learned about these places. Students will have the opportunity to explore photography, graphic design, web-site development, public relations, project management and marketing through real life applications. (Jessica Mangini – Tashua)

Project Horseshoe and the Plight of the Red Knot – Fourth grade students of the Trumbull Academically Gifted Program (TAG) will act as field researchers while studying the interspecies dependency between the horseshoe crab and the red knot gull. Students will approach their learning through an inquiry based approach. In essence, they will become scientists and researchers as they:

- Think abstractly to analyze current research data and forecast possible trends in international and national decline of species
- Explore the shoreline to learn about geological and ecological processes.
- Use scientific equipment to collect animals and conduct water testing
- Utilize field sampling techniques.
- Study marine biodiversity.
- Collect, analyze, interpret and present data.
- Study water pollution and ecology.
- Interact with professionals in the marine and/or environmental field.

(Michele Molloy – Trumbull Elementary Schools)

Spanish Field Trip – Students visited the Museo del Barrio to view the exhibit called Nueva York which documents the contributions that Spanish speaking people and countries have made to New York. Spanish speaking people are the fastest grown population in the United States. They are potential employers and consumers. Understanding the culture of this large segment of the population is key to many business interests. Students will learn about the research involved in this exhibition as well as interact with the tour leader. The Museo del Barrio offers summer internships to young people. (Carmen Castedo – THS)

What Will I Be... - The object of this project is to help children build an awareness to the world of work. To help them recognize that all careers need people who can read, write and do math. The children were exposed to many different career opportunities. Various business individuals participated in the project and talked to the children about their job. They explained what they do and also explained what they had to learn before they could begin their job. They explained where they work and also where else they could work. The second grade children at Frenchtown School participate in a Community Fair in May. (Arline Alves – Frenchtown Elementary)

Yale Mock Trial – 18 students competed in a mock trial competition and experienced the setting before competing in the High School Competition. Students were able to practice and showcase the skills they had been refining for the past few weeks. During the competition students prepare like attorneys, they act like attorneys, they conduct opening and closing statements, direct and cross-examine and object and argue with opposing counsel on related matters. All of these activities are important aspects of being an attorney. Students gain a much deeper appreciation and understanding of the job of an attorney. (Eric August – THS)

THS Celebrates School to Career 2010-2011

By JoAnn O'Connell, Trumbull High School Guidance Counselor

The school year was kicked off with the annual Career Exploration and Community Service Fair in September combined with our after school club sign up program. The fair was attended by students from every grade level. Participants came from 23 local business and service organizations.

Twenty-eight students from grades 10 – 12 participated in the Architecture, Construction and Engineering ACE Mentor Program. The final presentations are at the end of May at Housatonic Community College.

Twenty-three students participated in the Housatonic Community College Bridges Program designed to help students GET READY TO SUCCEED IN COLLEGE. We attended two full day workshops, one in the fall, and one in the spring. These workshops were focused on Orientation to College, Career planning, Financial Aid and College Placement Test Preparation.

Fifty-seven juniors and seniors attended our GEAR UP PROGRAM. The mission 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. Dr. Anthony Minotti, formerly of Trumbull and now Assistant Superintendent of the Mamaroneck New York Public Schools, returned to be the keynote speaker demonstrating his ongoing commitment to this School to Career outreach program. Many of our students have demonstrated a commitment to Community Service and Career Exploration through our Career Internship Program as well as through substantive volunteerism involving many hours of service to local organizations.

Trumbull Continuing Education Summer Explorations 2011

By Robert DeCervo

Programs are offered during the month of July at Frenchtown School and Madison Middle School to foster student interest and spark future career exploration. Included in these offerings are art adventures, pet care, farming, cooking, movie production, flights, rockets, understanding simple machines, engineering, computers, music, drawing, painting, web design, computer art photography, robotics, dance, theater, television, video animation gaming, and more!! These programs are intended to spark an interest and stimulate thinking that could lead to exploring a specific career. For more information contact 203-452-4554 or our website: www.trumbullconted.org.

“How do we ensure that Trumbull’s children are prepared to take a productive and fulfilling role in the 21st century?”

By Gary Cialfi, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent, BOE

This question was established by the *Community Conversation Series* which was initiated in 2009. Reactions to the question continue to drive actions that require an enduring commitment from Trumbull’s educators, families, community leaders, and volunteers. During the 2010-2011 school year, the three focus outcomes of the *Community Conversation Series* have been addressed and strengthened as follows:

I. **Student Transitions:** The objective is to strengthen how educators and parents can effectively prepare students for transitions from elementary to middle school to high school to higher education and/or the workplace. Students need skills to be able to set goals, self-reflect, and compare their previous social and academic performance to their current performance.

- Both Hillcrest and Madison Middle Schools have completed the first of three years of training required for the *Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Program*. The program supports the transition from elementary school by improving important academic and behavior outcomes for all students through a framework that guides the

implementation of best evidence-based practices.

- Trumbull High School has strengthened the transition for incoming freshmen through the *Link Crew Program*. The structure enables freshmen to receive support and guidance from juniors and seniors who have learned from the challenges they experienced in transitioning to a larger school.

II. **Communication between Trumbull Public Schools and Community:** Continual reinforcement of two-way communication systems is required for strong school / family / community partnerships.

- The Trumbull P.T.A. Council has developed the *ABC’s of the Trumbull Education Budget*. This document is a comprehensive citizen’s guide to the Board of Education budget. Clearly communicated information provides support for community members to become involved in the budget process.
- The Trumbull Public School Website, www.trumbullps.org, now includes an interactive *Topics of the Month* feature. During the 2010-2011 school year, community members have accessed this link to ask questions and receive responses to topics including the Trumbull High School renovation project, school safety, bus transportation, report cards, progress reports, mid-year exams, CMT, CAPT, and the Board of Education budget process.

III. **Performance Based Assessments:** Performance based assessments (PBAs) represent a set of strategies for students to demonstrate how well they can apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired: how well they can use what they know. PBAs engage students in real world experiences and concepts enabling them to learn what 21st century colleges and employees value: critical and creative thinkers, collaborative workers, effective communicators, and innovative problem solvers.

- Both Hillcrest and Madison Middle Schools and Trumbull High School have developed performance based assessments that are based on seven common qualifiers. This “Trumbull standard” has been established as an assured experience (APBAs) in each department’s core courses.
- *The Academic Challenge for Excellence (ACE) Foundation* continues to expand financial and volunteerism support for performance based learning and assessments. Forty-six ACE sponsored groups consisting of over six-hundred students are engaged in opportunities to demonstrate how well they can apply their knowledge and skills to problem solving scenarios.

The goal to ensure that Trumbull’s children are prepared to take a productive and fulfilling role in the 21st century is indeed an enduring commitment. This commitment, from our educators, families, community leaders, and volunteers, drives sustained continuous progress.