

FOCUSING ON THE TALENT PIPELINE: MASON CITY HIGH SCHOOL CAREER EXPO

DURING THE BUSINESS Retention and Expansion program, North Iowa Corridor staff conduct in-depth interviews with area employers. One of the more common threads that we have been hearing from employers is that they are struggling to hire and retain qualified employees.

Two years ago, the North Iowa Corridor Board of Directors refocused the strategic priorities to include more emphasis on workforce and the talent pipeline. It is within that focus that Corridor staff have focused on career exploration for our area students. We strive to make students and young adults aware of the great opportunities that exist in their back yards, right here in North Iowa.

It is within that talent pipeline focus that IowaWORKS North Iowa, the Mason City High School and the North Iowa Corridor hosted a career exploration day for the Mason City High School Class of 2018 on November 10.

The junior class took the National Career Readiness Certificate assessment in the morning and the students spent the afternoon with 20 area employers during a Career Expo. Employers were invited based on their work with the Healthcare and Advanced Manufacturing Sector Partnerships and the Iowa Registered Apprenticeship program.

The Career Expo was set up like a “speed dating” event. The students had 5 twelve minute sessions with employers. During the twelve minute sessions the students interacted with the employers in small groups before moving to the next employer that they were interested in.



Feedback from both the students and participating employers was very positive and both enjoyed the structured, small group interactions. “We really enjoyed meeting with students in this small group format,” said Terri Swanson, Director of Human Resources at MetalCraft. “The students were very engaged in the sessions and I felt like we connected with several students who have indicated that they would like to follow up with MetalCraft.”

Students will be following up with employers of their choosing for more one-on-one interaction such as job shadows or business tours, in conjunction with NIACC Career Connections.

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