



WDBSCW

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
OF SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN

Hello!

Welcome to the 2018 Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin) WDBSCW spring newsletter! We want to give you an inside look at projects we focused on this winter and update you on some of our program successes.

We spent 2 weeks with the second group of [COMPASS](#) participants. They explored the independent living tools available to them as well as visited with local employers. Our [Middle College](#) students have been busy practicing their skills during industry tours and activity days. Don't forget to read our [success stories](#) to hear how a participant helped create the Computer Essentials Academy.

Thank you for your partnership and support in building a stronger talent pipeline right here in South Central Wisconsin.

Pat Schramm, WDBSCW CEO

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Full Board Meeting

Thursday, May 17 / 11am-1pm
Madison College - Truax Campus / Madison
1701 Wright Street / Room D1630B/C

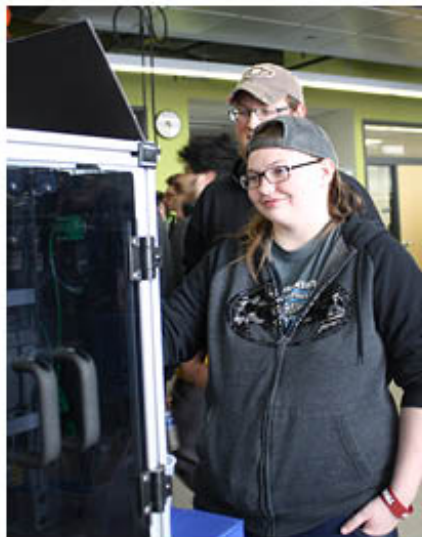
IN THE NEWS

Local Youth Apprentice Presenting Research

The WDBSCW is proud to support Youth Apprenticeships and students like Ava, who presented her research in San Francisco in January 2018.

[Read the full article](#)

BOARD UPDATES



Young Adults Explore Adulthood with COMPASS

In January 2018, 12 young adults explored the career, education and independent living tools available to them as part of COMPASS. The career readiness program is designed to prepare young adults for the workforce.



Throughout the 2 weeks, the group created resumes, practiced for interviews and developed personal budgets. They also discussed various career and education topics during an employer panel with Plastic Ingenuity, UW Health, Graphite and the Color Coding program at UW Whitewater.

The group was able to visit 2 local companies, Universal Presentation Concepts (UPC) and UW Health, to learn about the various career pathways available and the skills and education required for each. They also volunteered at

Second Harvest where they bagged and boxed over 1,800 meals for food pantries across southwestern Wisconsin.

"Thank you so much COMPASS! I will tell people about the information you guys have armed me with to give me a better edge at life!" explained Ashley, a 2018 COMPASS participant.



Hands-On With Middle College

What if high school students could spend half of their day learning about a career field that interests them? The students enrolled in Middle College can do just that. Middle College prepares high school seniors for careers in healthcare, culinary arts or manufacturing with relevant coursework and hands-on learning. Each cohort gains experiences through activities and industry tours. This year:

- The manufacturing group visited the Ingenuity Center at the Madison College - Truax campus where they practiced their skills (*pictured left*);
- The culinary arts students visited Blackhawk Country Club where they created personal pizzas (*pictured middle*); and,
- The healthcare students spend each Friday learning about different healthcare career pathways, including physical therapy (*pictured right*).

Middle College is a dual-credit career pathway program targeted toward high school seniors who are interested in advancing their education in one of the 3 cohorts. To learn more about the program, visit wdbscw.org/middle-college.



How A Participant Helped Create An Academy

Not only did Sue attend the first ever Computer Essentials Academy offered by the WorkSmart Network, but she was also one of the driving forces behind its creation.

Sue was working in a factory when she became dislocated in 2016. She rarely worked with computers and did not feel prepared to reenter the workforce. She connected to the Network through Rapid Response sessions to start building her skills, but, at the time a basic computer skills training wasn't offered.

"I asked if they could do something like [the Academy] so we could have more skills. We had nothing. We worked in a factory, a lot of us for 30 years and didn't have any skills in computers and that's what a lot of jobs were," explained Sue.

The Computer Essentials Academy was created to help participants like Sue build their computer skills, including how to use a mouse and keyboard, create documents, manage files, use the Internet and more.

After she graduated from the training, Sue was hired at Jones Dairy Farm where she uses her new skills to do quality assurance.

"My next goal is to improve on my job. I'm always learning and this was way out of my abilities in some ways and there were times I didn't think I could do it. I'm still learning and the plant I'm in, it's a growing plant so I'm growing with it."

Sue is thankful for the training she received as part of the WorkSmart Network because she learned many new skills.

"Without [WorkSmart] I wouldn't have gotten where I got today. I would not have. They were very helpful, they were very kind and they were very patient. I'm older and for me to start over again at my age was very difficult and very stressful and they kept me calm and kept me focused."

This spring the WorkSmart Network is offering the [Manufacturing Essentials](#), [Office Essentials](#) and [Accounting Essentials](#) Academies.

Overcoming Obstacles With Windows to Work

Robert joined Windows to Work before he was released from his 15-year prison sentence. Although he entered the program with a positive attitude, he was nervous about his release. He knew there would be barriers to overcome including finding employment with no recent work history.

During his 12 weeks of the Department of Corrections (DOC)-supported Windows to Work program, Robert was active in creating his release plan. The program prepared him to reenter the workforce by helping him build a resume based on his work history before prison and the institutional jobs he held.

After he was released, Robert found a temporary living placement (TLP) through the State of Wisconsin DOC where he could live for 90 days. With housing taken care of, Robert focused on his job search. He connected with the WorkSmart Network for access to WIOA programming for additional skill training and career services. Robert also attended Job Club, a club designed specifically for Windows to Work participants. The club offered him job leads, connections to community resources and assistance with job applications and barriers to employment.

Six weeks after release, Robert was hired by a multi-million dollar manufacturing company in Madison. With a steady income, he began searching for permanent housing. But his criminal history and lack of housing references quickly became an obstacle. Thankfully, Robert found a connection through his Circle of Support to a landlord who would give him a chance.

A year later, he married his longtime girlfriend, continued with his employment.

**Name has been changed to protect the privacy of the individual.*

Thanks for reading!

Stay tuned for future updates on our work across the region. In the meantime, be sure visit [our website](#) for announcements, events, news and success stories. You can also follow us on [Facebook](#) for more updates. And, we're now on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)! Follow us for more pictures and updates.

P.S. We're social! Come join us.



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