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# CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION: A Partnership for Student Success

*By Jarred Howard,  
Patoka Valley Career  
and Technical Education  
Cooperative Director*



**T**here are exciting things happening in the Patoka Valley Career and Technical Education (CTE) Cooperative. The Patoka Valley CTE Cooperative serves 10 school corporations (Greater Jasper Consolidated Schools, Southeast Dubois County Schools, Northeast Dubois County Schools, Southwest Dubois County Schools, Pike County School Corporation, East Gibson School Corporation, North Spencer School Corporation, Tell City School Corporation, Cannelton City Schools, and Perry Central School Corporation) with Greater Jasper Consolidated Schools serving as the LEA. The Cooperative is host to 20 programs that students attend daily for high-quality and relevant learning experiences. Programs include: 4 different Health Science programs, Welding Technology, Precision Machining, Criminal Justice, Emergency Medical Tech, 2 Construction Trades programs, 2 Automotive Technology programs, IT Computer Support and Networking, Education Professions, CNA, Work-based Learning, and Automation and Robotics. All programs serve the local workforce needs of Dubois, Spencer, Perry and Gibson Counties. With the recent shift in Graduation Pathways, there is a dramatic increase in the number of students enrolling in cooperative programs. Through CTE programs, we are educating our students, parents, community leaders, and industry partners of the multitude of opportunities for students and the future workforce.

The Patoka Valley CTE Cooperative has worked tirelessly to shift the perception of career and technical education as a means for future success for ALL students. Part of the shift requires an understanding of the local community, educational facts and employment statistics. In 1970, approximately 35% of high school graduates attended college. That seems like an appropriate number of students since 25% of the jobs in Dubois County required a 4-year degree. Students were able to graduate from college, move back home, and find a professional job with ease. Over the next 30 years, Dubois County saw a dramatic increase in the number of students who attended college. Parents, counselors, college recruiters, and many others highly encouraged students to attend a 4-year post-secondary institution after graduating high school. Students were told they must attend college if they wanted to be a success. Currently, approximately 80% of students in Dubois County attend some type of post-secondary training. However, only 40% are graduating from a post-secondary institution in 6 years. Keep in mind that a 40% graduation rate is Top 5 in the state of Indiana. Also, keep in mind that only 25% of the jobs in Dubois County require a 4-year degree. In other words, we have students graduating from college, with student loan debt (US average \$25,000), that cannot find a job or are underemployed.

THROUGH CTE PROGRAMS, WE ARE EDUCATING OUR STUDENTS, PARENTS, COMMUNITY LEADERS, AND INDUSTRY PARTNERS OF THE MULTITUDE OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS AND THE FUTURE WORKFORCE.

This is where CTE is making an impact. Most of the jobs in the local economy require some type of post-secondary training, which includes on the job training, apprenticeship, 1-year certificate, or Associate's Degree. According to PJ McGrew, Director of Policy for



the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, 65% of jobs in Indiana require some post-secondary training. Most of which are below a 4-year degree.

Partnerships with local industry and community partners create opportunity to develop programs that provide high quality training and full-time employment for students upon graduation. In the past 2 years, Patoka Valley CTE Cooperative has added 3 new programs created from these local partnerships. To combat the CNA shortage at Memorial Hospital, a CNA program was developed to provide training for our students at Jasper High School. Due to this partnership, Memorial Hospital has a direct pipeline to future employees.

Another partnership with the Dubois County Builders Association provides for a Construction Trades program. There is an enormous shortage of skilled construction laborers in our local economy. Patoka Valley, Vincennes University at Jasper, and the Builders Association developed a partnership that provides students with classroom and "hands-on" training at Vincennes University Jasper Campus. While students earn Vincennes University



dual credits they also participate in an embedded internship experience with local contractors. Students rotate through 2 contractors each year and gain valuable field experience while our local contractors gain access to future employees.

In an effort to bridge education and local industry, Greater Jasper Consolidated Schools along with the other 3 Dubois County school districts collectively engaged community stakeholders to develop what is now Hub 19. The vision of Hub 19 is to provide career and innovation support for Dubois County through programs that prepare students for success through enhanced partnerships with local industry and business partners. The efforts of Hub 19 are meant to provide students with exposure to local jobs and educational experiences that will sustain a ready workforce.

Core principles of the Hub 19 partnership include a desire that every student is engaged in a relevant path to success; to graduate high school ready for post-secondary and career success; promote meaningful and ongoing collaboration among schools, industry, and community; support teaching and learning grounded in relevancy; align PK through grade 12 education around a common vision of student success; and embracing the significant role education plays in achieving regional prosperity.

In the first year, the partnership has been able to develop a graduate profile that will be used to vision targets for student post-secondary readiness. In addition, partners are creating a college and career exploration, experiences, and an education framework for students in kindergarten through grade 12.

Dubois County is home to manufacturers such as Kimball International, Jasper Engines and Transmissions, Masterbrand Cabinets, Best Home Furnishings, OFS, and Kimball Electronics. Local manufacturers make up approximately 33% of all employment opportunities. Along with boasting one of the lowest unemployment rates



in Indiana, it is no surprise that a huge shortage of skilled labor related to manufacturing, machining, industrial maintenance, and robotics exists. As a means to connect students with local jobs, Hub 19, Vincennes University and Patoka Valley CTE Cooperative have developed an Automation and Robotics Academy. The academy will be hosted at the Vincennes University Jasper Campus' Center for Technology Innovation and Manufacturing facility. Students will attend classes three days per week at VUJC and participate in an imbedded internship 2 days per week. Students will rotate through 2 manufacturing facilities each year. While attending courses at VUJC, students will earn Vincennes University college credits in courses such as Introduction to Manufacturing, Automation and Robotics, Programmable Logic Controls, Fluid Power and Pneumatics, and HVAC. Students will gain relevant and transferable training while our local industry partners hope to gain access to future employees. The Automation and Robotics Academy is a shining example of how education, higher education and local industry

work together to serve the local economy.

The Patoka Valley CTE Cooperative will continue to work with local stakeholders and industry partners to develop a pipeline of future employees for our growing economy. Hub 19, Vincennes University Jasper, and the Patoka Valley CTE Cooperative are committed to working together to provide high quality training that leads to a ready workforce, high wage jobs and positively impacting local economic development. This partnership is working together to offer a Tour of Opportunity for all Dubois County 9th graders. The tour will take place in October and includes interest inventories and selection of career pathways of interest. Pathways of choice include: Agriculture, Architecture and Construction, Arts, Automation and Manufacturing, Automotive and Transportation, Business and Finance, Business and Marketing, Education, Healthcare and Social Services, and Hospitality. Students will be transported to Vincennes University Jasper Campus (VUJ) and load busses according to their choice of pathway. Industry partners from all





pathway sectors will prepare activities, facilities tours, and presentations for students throughout Dubois County. Students will return to VUJC for a campus tour and lunch after visiting with our industry partners. The Patoka Valley CTE Cooperative, Dubois Strong (economic development), VUJC, and Hub 19 are working diligently to organize this informative event. The Tour of Opportunity will provide students with exposure to all of the potential career opportunities available in Dubois County.

By gaining exposure to local careers paired with meaningful learning opportunities, students will gain high-quality training in our local schools and CTE cooperative, as well as attain the skills necessary to live and work in our local community. Economic development cannot survive without high quality educational institutions. Educational institutions cannot survive without engaged industry partners and a vision for economic development. Our economy cannot survive without education and industry working together. 

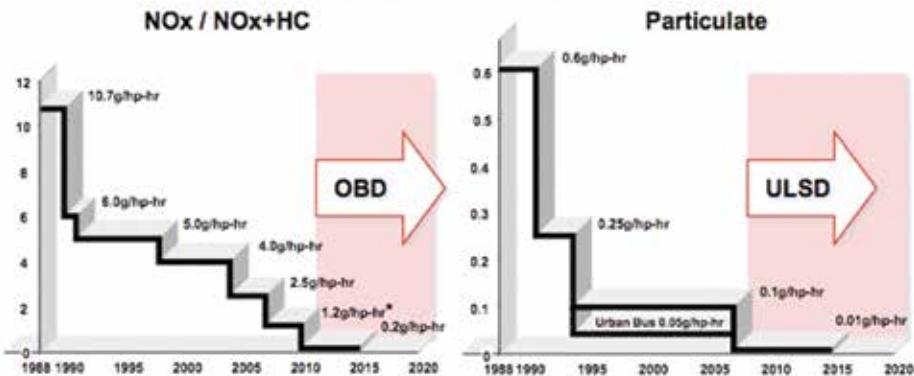
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