

HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONS PROGRAM



Original Creators:

Community Education Coalition,
Department of Workforce
Development,
Economic Opportunities through
Education (EcO15)



Target Audience:

Middle and high school students



Synopsis:

The Champions program exemplifies the success of Dream It. Do It. by creating broad awareness about manufacturing careers, redefining the image of manufacturing, demonstrating how young people and adults can secure great advanced manufacturing jobs through training and education, and bringing together our region's education and workforce system.



Type of Activity:

Career Counseling and Coaching



Dream It. Do It. Location:

Southeast Indiana

In the 2013-14 school year alone, Dream It. Do It. SE Indiana exposed tens of thousands of students, parents, and educators in the ten county region to advanced manufacturing/STEM as a top-tier career choice.



ECO15, EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONS STORY



In 2007, the Community Education Coalition (CEC) was awarded the EcO15 grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to support new initiatives that link educational opportunities to careers, especially in the industrial sectors that drive the regional economy: advanced manufacturing and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) based industries for 10 counties in Southeast Indiana. The idea for this work was first identified in an economic analysis of Southeast Indiana in 2006 commissioned by the CEC and the Department of Workforce Development.

The analysis discovered that Southeast Indiana was in need of a recruitment tool for our major employers that invested, supplemented and/or enhanced educational programming throughout the region focused on delivering a more qualified labor pool to drive future business success.

“The first thing cut is usually tours, learning about careers,” said Stephanie Weber, EcO15 Communications & Outreach Director and the Dream It. Do It. Southeast Indiana Program Manager. “Those programs get cut because they didn’t have funding, so with the grant we wanted to figure out a way to encourage career exploration.”

With support from Community Education Coalition, Department of Workforce Development, and over 200 industry partners, the High School Champions Program was born.

“THERE HAS BEEN TRUST BUILT FOCUSED ON ONE GOAL: TO FILL THE PIPELINE.”

The Champions Program is a human network aimed to educate students about the exciting careers that manufacturing offers. Champions provide and receive information on manufacturing related activity in their community/school, including increasing manufacturing related course enrollments.

“Who better to influence than someone who is already in the high school and already meets with students on a regular basis?” There are currently 29 champions throughout the region. Champions serve as the advocate and single point of contact for each

high school in Southeast Indiana. Responsibilities include facilitating sharing and communication of information and resources, increasing awareness of career opportunities in manufacturing courses, and increasing student enrollments in manufacturing and STEM related courses.

It has helped close the gap between education and industry inside the school system; Champions set up tours, career fairs, educator externships, job shadowing opportunities, and the list goes on. The program has also created a deep trust between education and industry.

“When I first started, I had no idea about the policies and acronyms of education. Same goes for industry,” said Weber. “Now, we are all speaking the same language. This program helped to make this happen.”

The program also includes County Coordinators, who serve as liaisons to bring industry and education on the needs, job outlook, planning, etc.

Yet, after the first year of the program, the Champions provided feedback that implementing ideas and activities were difficult to implement without support staff. In 2009, Champions recruited Student Ambassadors.

Student Ambassadors help recruit middle school students into the high school Project Lead The Way (PLTW) pre-engineering, project-based learning curriculum as well as targeted career and technical education courses by visiting with elementary and middle school classes and sharing their personal experiences in these targeted courses and the Dream It. Do It. program. In exchange, Student Ambassadors build their own resumes and are able to network with industry partners.

“This program is important because students don’t always have access to stimuli that encourages interest in STEM careers beyond medicine or electronics,” said Steve Mackey, Southern Indiana Placement Services-Learning and Development Leader with Cummins Inc.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Individual	Role	Responsibilities
Current Career and Tech Ed Students	Student Ambassadors	Promote career and technical education programs to peers
High School Educators and Counselors	Dream It. Do It. Champions	Promote career and technical education programs and related careers to students considering their pathway
Economic Development Representative	County Coordinators	Liaison to industry