

A person wearing a light blue button-down shirt is reading a newspaper. They are holding a pair of glasses in their right hand. The background is a soft-focus view of the newspaper's text.

CAWS

CULLMAN AREA WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

Linking People To Careers

**A Job Resource For The
Cullman Area**

November 30, 2010

Ads in the CAWS section also appear on The Cullman Times website at:
CullmanTimes.com

Career Coach Program helps students plan for their future!

Wallace State Career Coaches: Elizabeth Moore, Brenda Johnson and Jennifer Helton are presently working with students in Blount, Cullman, Morgan and Winston counties. In an effort to help students prepare for their future: coaches concentrate on four difference areas. These areas are: Career Assessment, Career Exploration, Career Planning and Employability Skills.

Career Assessment: Career Coaches administer and interpret career assessments under the direction of school counselors. They match students with a career that firs their interest, skill and their values.

Career Exploration: Coaches help students explore the 16 different Career Clusters. This is achieved their one on one meetings and group presentation.

Career Planning: Based on the type of career that the student is pursuing: information is presented to help the student adequately prepare to meet their goals.

Employability Skills: Community and College resources are used to present soft skills training to student to utilized employment opportunities to various careers.

The success of the program and the rewards of working with students are best expressed by Counselors and Career Coaches in their own words:

"Elizabeth does a wonderful job and provides an indispensable service to our students and supports the efforts of our Guidance and Counseling department. By using the Kuder program' students are able to access their interests, research career opportunities and develop educational plans preparing them for their chosen careers," **Delan Trimble, Counselor, Vinemont High School.**

"Brenda is a tremendous asset to our students and our school, we are very fortunate to have her working with our students. The work that she does preparing our students for their careers and the workforce is an invaluable service," **Karron Standridge, Counselor, Hayden High School.**

"Many students do not make a connection between the things they love and do well and channeling those things into a career that fits them. It is exciting to watch my seniors realize they have a future that will raise their standard of living substantially", Career Coach, Brenda Johnson.

" I have personally known students who planned to drop out of high school until they realized what they can do if they finish school. Students find motivation when they see what the future can hold for them," Elizabeth Moore, Career Coach, Vinemont High School.



Career Coach Elizabeth Moore, Vinemont High School with student.

Good Hope Students share their "Keeping it Real" experiences

Recently 9th grade students (the class of 2014) at Good Hope High School participated in the "Keeping it Real" program sponsored by CAWS. Susan Eller from the Cullman Economic Development office presented the program to students on the first day. She gave them an over view of the growing opportunities available in industry , what employers look for in future employees and the importance of planning for their future and staying in school. At the end of this session, the students received a hypothetical job and a family situation.

The next day students visited 12 different booths staffed by volunteers from Rehau, Topre, Wallace State, the Cullman Area Career Center and area businesses. Students were then challenged to provide the necessities for their family needs based on their monthly income. . Volunteers were graciously treated to refreshments provide by the GHHS Youth Literacy Leaders and senior members: Tiffany Gorff, Jordan York, and A'Lora Cleghorn served as hostesses for the event.

Normally the program officially ends after the second day but, 9th grade English teacher; Anita Richter took the lesson one step further. She assigned her students the task of writing a narrative based on their "Keeping it Real" experience. Students wrote detailed narratives and drew family portraits based on their future families and job situations.

In the narratives students describe their daily life and the challenges facing their families. They write of: refrigerators breaking down , saving to buy a car, and the challenges of buying health insurance, clothes and groceries for their families. Their family members have names and they work at specific places. They share stories of being single parents leaving their children to go to work and not being able to afford nice clothes for them because of working minimum wage jobs.

They also share success stories of going back to school and how a better education enables them to provide more abundantly for their families.

"It's always amazing how little ninth graders know about the real world of paying bills, working day after day, and managing a household. The "Keeping It Real" program provides them with useful information in a fun and interactive format.

We appreciate all of the volunteers taking time out of their busy schedules to help the ninth graders have a better understanding of what it takes to be successful," 9th Grade English teacher, **Anita Richter, Good Hope High School.**



Susan Eller presenting the Keeping it Real Program to students.



Good Hope students draw family portraits based on their Keeping it Real Experience.

“Best Robotics” Competition held at Wallace State College

The 2nd "Best Robotics" competition was held on the campus of Wallace State on October 30. The event was attended by 250+ students representing 15 different schools from five area counties. According to Gene Dudley, Electronics Instructor and BEST Hub Coordinator at Wallace State, the event can be best described as a "Rock Concert on steroids for geeks, complete with high school bands, cheerleaders and mascots."

The event is the culmination of a six week process. The theme of this year's competition was "Total Recall" based on quality improvement methodologies such as Total Quality Management, Kaizen, Zero Defects, Six Sigma, and Poka Yoke with an ability to incorporate these approaches into their overall production strategy.

Students assemble their teams and meet for the first time at the "Kickoff" to learn the rules and receive their supplies in the form of two kits which will be used in building their robot. After students receive their assignment, they meet in groups to brainstorm, design and sketch their projects. Four weeks later, students meet for "Demo Day", a practice run through of their robots. Students are then able to make necessary adjustments to their models. Two weeks later, students meet for the final competition.

Winners of this year's event will go on to compete in "The South's Best Competition" in Auburn on November 15.

This year's winners are:

1st Place Weaver High School - Robotics

1st Place Marshall Technical School - Best Award

2nd Place Holly Pond High School - Robotics

2nd Place Hartselle Jr. High School - BEST Award

The purpose of the competition according to Gene Dudley, "Is to encourage middle and high school students about STEM (Science, Technology Engineering Math) programs at Wallace State Community College.

For more information, please visit www.bestrobotics.org <<http://www.bestrobotics.org/>> or <http://www.northalabamabest.com/> <<http://www.northalabamabest.com/>>



*Taylor Tucker and Jared Blakemon
Holly Pond Robotics Team Members*

CAWS Partners Working for Success

Josh Culwell, a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom, returned from military duty and decided to return to school in 2009. Josh decided to pursue an education in Auto Collision. His first stop on his road to success was the Alabama Career Center. After discussing his options with one of the career counselors, he discovered that he was qualified to receive funding for his education through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The Auto Collision program met the requirements of the WIA program because it is considered a high growth, and a high demand need throughout industry. With the education that he received from Wallace, Josh went on to win 1st place in the Alabama State Skills USA Competition and placed 18th in the National competition in Auto Refinishing. The partnership between Wallace State and local industry provided Josh with opportunities to work in his chosen field in the Cullman area. Josh is presently employed by REHAU Automotive, a Tier 1 supplier of painted polymer parts. Josh credits his success to many Wallace State instructors and in particular Collision Repair instructor, Tim Graves.

In the case of Josh Culwell, the CAWS partnership has proven to be a formula for success. From funding through the Alabama Career Center to education received at Wallace State Community College to employment at REHAU, the partnership produces qualified workers for local industry and this is the reason that Cullman Area Workforce Solutions CAWS was founded.



Josh Culwell

***Congratulations
to the Wallace State Drafting Department
for receiving accreditation through the
American Drafting Association!***

Cullman Christian Students participate in the Keeping it Real Program

In September, 9th grade students from Cullman Christian School joined the growing ranks of student participating in the Keeping It Real program in Cullman County. Jason White, The Final Touch, and Dan Plank, Rehau, presented the program to students the first day at their school. Students then traveled to Vinemont HS to participate in the 2nd day of the program.



“Keeping It Real” program participants

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Mike Rowe Kicks off "Go Build Alabama" Ad Campaign

Recently a major add campaign kicked off in Alabama featuring Mike Rowe, host of Discovery Channel's "Dirty Jobs" as spokesperson. The purpose of the new campaign is to highlight the growing shortage of skilled labor in industry. In the United States, workers going into skilled trade areas are not keeping pace with the rate of retiring workers. This is creating a national shortage in skilled labor. However, this shortage is creating major opportunities for men and women properly trained in high demand fields. While unemployment rates are high, jobs are still available for

"Skill is back in demand. Steel toed boots are back in fashion. And work is not the enemy," Mike Rowe

individuals with the training and skills needed in high demand areas. Rowe believes that, "There is a misconception that skilled trades are low-paying work but this just isn't true. Some

bring home a six-figure annual salary and have a nice balanced family life. "For more information and to learn more about the growing need for skilled labor, visit www.gobuildalabama.com <<http://www.gobuildalabama.com/>> and www.mikeroweworks.com <<http://www.mikeroweworks.com/>> .

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