

SKILLS FOR SUCCESS PRESS

FLAGSTAFF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Our Future Leaders Need You!

Inspiration often comes through windows of opportunity that are opened by a mentor. Most of us can say that we have become the business professional or educator we are today because of hard work, dedication, and those who inspired us.

Who are the people that inspired *you*? Who introduced you to your profession or showed you possibilities you'd never seen before? Would you like to be that person to the next generation?

The Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce *Skills for Success* initiative, in partnership with Flagstaff Unified School District, pairs classrooms with local businesses. Skills for Success allows students to explore career options in Flagstaff and learn from a professional's real-world experience. Students learn how what they are learning in the classroom applies directly to the "real world," and meet the professionals in the community who inspire leadership and success.

Science teacher Curt Craig of Mount Elden Middle School says, "The program made an impression by connecting science and the way science works in the business community. (When we visited Northern Arizona Signs) students benefitted by seeing how various gases work to create light energy."

"Skills" is entering its seventh year as a successful program that teaches "soft" skills to students outside of the classroom and brings leaders inside junior and senior high school to share their knowledge.

"We are so proud of this program and the teachers and business leaders who have made a difference to the students," said Chamber President/CEO Julie Pastrick. "While there are many facets to Skills, our main goals are to help students learn about the career opportunities right here in Flagstaff. Many students experience an 'aha' moment when they connect the dots with what they are learning and how they can decide their future."

Be a part of this exciting initiative by bringing your business or classroom to the Skills for Success program.

Why, you, as teachers, might want to get involved:

1. You will learn first-hand what employers are looking for from students when hiring local graduates.
2. You will have successful managers and business



WL Gore is one of the many businesses involved with Skills for Success.

owners tell your students what they find valuable in employees.

3. Your students will become more aware of the wide variety of career opportunities right here in Flagstaff.
4. You will be able to tour our local businesses and give your students the "behind-the-scenes" insider view of how a business or non-profit organization works.

Why you, as a business professional, might want to participate:

1. You will meet tomorrow's workforce and let them know your expectations as an employer.
2. You will help develop the "soft skills" necessary to be successful, including responsibility and business ethics.
3. You'll inspire young minds to pursue your industry for potential employment.
4. You may meet potential new hires or interns.
5. Generate excitement about your business with youngsters who could be today's (or tomorrow's) consumers.

Please contact the Chamber to be a part of Skills for Success. We would love to have an open discussion with you about the benefits and responsibilities of "Skills."

'Skills' Classes Visit the Workplace

The cornerstone of the Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce 'Skills for Success' initiative is the visits that middle- and high-school students make to Chamber members to get a hands-on look at local businesses. They get acquainted with the details of running a local business and what it takes to get hired.

Skills for Success, made possible by **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona**, just celebrated its sixth year of partnership with the Flagstaff Unified School District in pairing classes with businesses. Students are made aware of career opportunities here in Flagstaff and also learn about the "soft" skills they will need to develop to be successful in the workplace.

At **SCA Tissue** in Bellemont, students from **Karen Moeller's** Transition Skills class at Flagstaff High School toured the plant which produces paper products from recycled materials.

There are about 125 people working at the plant, in jobs that range from manning and maintaining the machines, to operating forklifts, to working in the front office or being an occupational health nurse. They learned how global the local plant really is.

Curt Craig's science students from Mount Elden Middle School got to actually "work" at **Northern**



Students visited Aveda Salons, Northern Arizona Signs and SCA Tissue as part of the Skills for Success program.

Arizona Signs & Graphics, where they learned how to transfer lettering cut from rolls of colored material onto signs.

"A long time ago, sign painters were guys who hand-lettered signs with a brush and paint," explained business owner Phil Keesee. "And there are still people who do that, but it's a dying craft. These rolls of material that you see on the walls -

those are our paints."

As the students transferred yellow lettering that spelled out "Mount Elden Middle School" to black signs, shop supervisor Rob Stang called out to Keesee, "So, do we have any signmakers here?"

Keesee replied, "You know, I think I see some naturals." (continue next page).

2010-2011 Partners in Chamber 'Skills for Success' Initiative

Business partners in the Skills for Success Initiative last year were:

- Boyer Heating & Cooling
- East Flagstaff Family Medicine
- Goodwill Industries
- Nestle Purina
- Northern Arizona Signs
- PathoGene
- Red 115 Salon & Spa
- SCA Tissue
- 2nd Chance Center for Animals

- TGen
- W.L. Gore & Associates

Teachers in the program were from Flagstaff & Coconino high schools, Mount Elden & Sinagua middle schools and the New Start alternative school. They included:

- Stephanie Birdwell (CHS)
- Curt Craig (MEMS)
- Bob Friend (CHS)

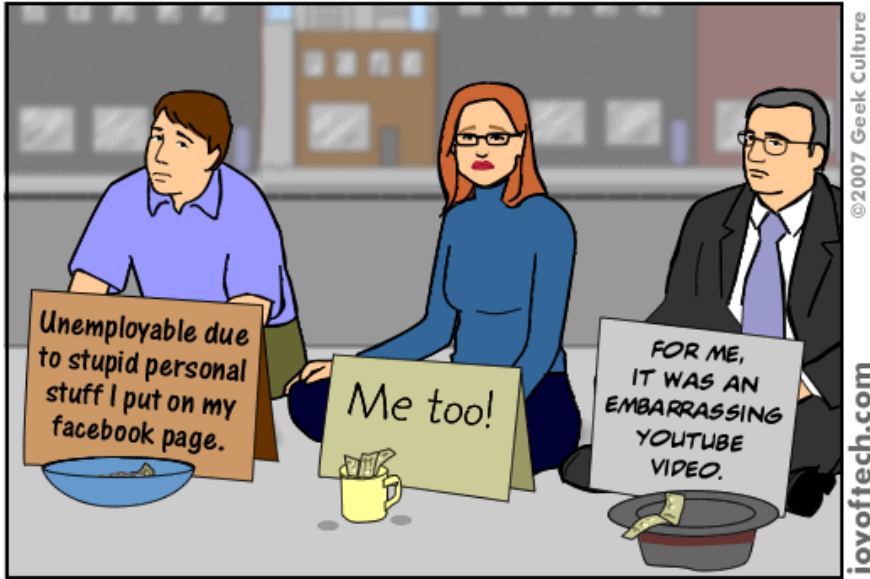
- Susan Holiday (SMS)
- Brian Locke (CHS)
- Ted Lyons (CHS)
- Rob Meyer (Project New Start)
- Karen Moeller (FHS)
- Mike Rust (FHS)
- Diana Schweitzer (FHS)
- Kelley Smith (Anatomy)

Thank you all so much for a terrific year!

‘Skills’ Classes Visit the Workplace

The Joy of Tech™

by Nitrozac & Snaggy



Signs of the social networking times.

The cartoon above was part of presentation by Goodwill Industries of Northern Arizona to students in Rob Meyer’s class at the New Start alternative school. Hints and tips on getting a job—including dressing for success, writing a great resume, interviewing skills and being careful about what you post on social media sites—are often part of Skills for Success presentations.

Meanwhile, **Diane Schweitzer’s** design and merchandising class got a lesson not only in beauty and hair products from Craig Watkins at the **Red OTS Salon** in downtown; they also learned a lot about environmental causes.

Watkins’ salons specialize in Aveda products and often it is what the products do NOT contain that is important. For example, the beauty products do not contain sulfates, animal products or synthetic dyes, demonstrating that you can have a successful business and still be good to the environment.

Finally, at **Goodwill Industries of Northern Arizona**, students in **Rob Mayer’s** class at the New Start alternative school learned about the wide range of services provided by the non-profit.

From the one-stop job station, to the Safeway training center, to the dona-

tions center and helping the homeless, each element of the facility was discussed as it might relate to a student’s future.

President & CEO David Hirsch emphasized life skills and how important it is for each employee to contribute to the mission of the workplace, no matter what business they are in.

Be part of the future development of tomorrow’s workforce. Skills for Success needs teachers and businesses for the 2011-2012 school year. Call the Chamber at 928.774.4505 for more information.

The pairings of businesses with classrooms has been creative and inspiring, with often interesting combinations that expand students’ minds about what they think that they want to pursue as a career. It’s also helpful to have adults who are not parents or teachers reinforce ideas like timeliness, consistency, customer service and fulfilling commitments that have been made.

**- FUSD
Superintendent
Barbara
Hickman,
writing about
Skills for
Success**

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The Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce “Skills for Success” initiative would not be possible without the title sponsorship of **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona**.

This initiative is the brainchild of the Chamber’s Education & Workforce Development Committee work program.

If you are interested in participating in this initiative, please contact April Gavin at 928-774-4505 or agavin@flagstaffchamber.com



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

‘Skills for Success’ Initiative

- Initiative co-sponsored by Chamber and Flagstaff Unified School District now in its 7th year.
- Partners local businesses with middle- and high-school classes.
- Businesses make students aware of local career opportunities.
- Students visit businesses to learn about ‘soft’ skills they need to develop to be successful in the workplace.

Other Chamber Education Initiatives

- Flagstaff Values Teachers—Discount card and professional development opportunities, such as the summer Lesson2Life program for teachers to experience the Northern Arizona workplace first-hand and bring that real life relevance into the classroom.
- Young Entrepreneurial Scholars (YES!) Week—Partnership with Northern Arizona Center for Entrepreneurship & Technology to promote entrepreneurship in high school students.

Chamber of Commerce Education & Workforce Development Committee

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