

WINTER 2021-22

NEW YEAR, NEW WAGE

BY EMILY SANDMAN (MANSFIELD)

We tend to associate the new year with goal setting, reflection, and celebration. While all of this is important, we often forget that in the last six or so "New Years" we have also seen a steady increase in the minimum wage in the state of Massachusetts. This raise impacts our workforce tremendously. Speaking for students, the average student works approximately 15 hours per week. With the seventy-five cent increase we saw last year, and will see again this year, that equates to an extra \$585 put directly in our students pockets, every year!

Not only do students experience the financial advantage, they feel immense gains in confidence and skill preparedness. Students know that when they enter the workforce, if they are monetarily valued at more, they must rise to the occasion to perform better. When there is the potential to earn more money, students typically tend to work harder. Although the impact of raising the minimum wage is felt across all businesses, we can only speak to the benefits that our students experience.

As part of our initiative to keep student workers informed, it is also our responsibility to ensure students are made aware of worker's rights, which includes being paid a fair wage. We inform all our students that they should expect to see a wage increase beginning the first week of 2022, if they are earning minimum wage. This excites students because they are typically unaware of the statewide change. We want to make sure they understand the reasoning behind this adjustment and utilize the extra income wisely!

Students who have questions or did not receive this automatic increase (where applicable), are encouraged to contact their school's Career Specialist. The SCP believes in representing all student workers in the workplace.

SCP has been busy exploring alternative post-secondary options in the area!



Southeastern Technical Institute Counselor Breakfast in Easton, MA.



Gift bag from touring Porter and Chester's New Facility in Brockton, MA

A colorful graphic with a background of fireworks. At the top, it says 'ATTLEBORO AREA SCHOOL TO CAREER PARTNERSHIP'. Below that, in large pink letters, it says 'NEW YEAR, NEW WAGE!'. In a yellow rounded rectangle, it says '\$14.25'. At the bottom left, there is a calendar icon for 'JAN 1'. To the right of the calendar, it says 'Starting January 1st, 2022 the minimum wage in MA has been RAISED from \$13.50 to \$14.25 per hour. If this change affects you, be sure to check your next paystub for the increase!'.

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NEW


Catching Up with the Career Specialists

"I'm excited to be back in-person with all our wonderful students. This year, I am working closely with CTE in running  the exploratory program for our freshmen. Our new school will be opening in 2022 and we'll have some great additions coming soon!"
~Mrs. Marshall (Attleboro)

"I am working on initiatives this year that I am really excited about! These include a "Where Are Hornets Working" board, presentations to the business and core academic classes, and a  personal goal of having every student looking for a job, placed within one month of them coming to see me."
~Ms. Sandman (Mansfield)

"We have had an exciting start to the school year at NAHS with receipt of a  planning grant from DESE for the Innovation Pathways program in Advanced Manufacturing. We're hoping to provide students with direct career paths through work based learning that equips them with opportunities and knowledge in this growing field."
~Mrs. Magit (North Attleboro)

"I'm enjoying working with the students, faculty, and staff at Norton High school. I've been busy working with students 1:1 and sharing presentations with classes to assist students with career  exploration, resume writing, and job hunting."
~Mrs. Kozikis (Norton)

"Now that just about every store in the Route 6 area is hiring, my office has been very busy. Some of my students have conducted virtual informational interviews with a biotechnologist, an  architect, a makeup artist and a psychologist. I have been bringing working professionals into the building to speak to a variety of classes!"
~Mrs. Amaral (Seekonk)

New Tools for Student Success

BY LISA MAGIT (NORTH ATTLEBORO)

We continue our commitment to provide students with innovative tools and resources to help prepare them for life beyond high school. As the demand for technological engagement in a hybrid world has increased, we are proud to offer our students access to Virtual Job Shadow, a platform that empowers students to discover, develop and chart career paths based on choice, not chance.



Virtualjobshadow.com provides our students with access to relevant video content, interest surveys, as well as mini lessons (which help learners develop the skills they need for workplace success) and much more! It empowers budding young workers to easily search for career choices by experiencing unlimited job shadowing visits across a spectrum of career clusters.

With the implementation of Virtual Job Shadow, our students can use real world advice from professionals to gain a much better understanding of the different careers they are interested in, helping them discover passions, choose directions, and prepare for future success...all from a computer!



Highlighting a Successful Virtual Winter Job Fair



Our Virtual Winter Job Fair (VWJF) was a tremendous success! We want to thank our schools, our wonderful students who attended, and most importantly, THE EMPLOYERS! We appreciate the dedication exhibited by all who helped to bring students and employers together. Part time employment is one of the important factors for high school students as they prepare for future success.

Students from our five partner schools attended a two hour virtual job fair where they met with local employers in need of seasonal and winter help. During each session, employers were able to connect with groups of students, explain the job opportunities available and how to apply. Bridging the gap between schools and employers proved to be very valuable in helping our students find employment. Our students found employer presentations interesting, engaging and were appreciative of the opportunity to ask meaningful questions. And many of those students are now gainfully employed!

Students share their experience with the VWJF..

A sophomore from Seekonk High School was able to speak to the owner of a local restaurant and asked about openings during the VWJF. The owner provided information on how to apply and she later visited the restaurant and filled out an application. She was hired for the job! Here is what the student had to say about attending:

"Everything worked out thanks to the fair! It was a lot easier to get a job from attending the fair than if I would have had to the traditional way."

Another sophomore from Mansfield was recently hired based on the connections available at the fair. She met with the hiring manager to learn about the different positions following the event and decided that after seeing how personable the company was in combination with the flexible scheduling, she wanted to apply. She is currently working there and loves her job!

Students who attended the job fair are more confident, have a better understanding of current hiring needs, and are ready to begin working. We will continue to offer job fair events (whether in person or virtual), especially for the spring and summer months. Thank you again to all who participated, we couldn't have done it without you!

"If I didn't go to the fair, I probably would have been very nervous to interview..I don't think I would have even applied. Once I knew it was low pressure, I was able to make that jump. I'm thankful I did because I really enjoy working my first job!"

If you are interested in participating in one of our events, please email partnership@schooltocareer.info

A Letter to Kendel Jester

BY CHRISTINE LACHANCE (DIRECTOR)

We wish a bittersweet farewell to Kendel Jester as she follows her dream and pursues a career in higher education. Our staff and students have been so lucky to work with Kendel as a Career Specialist with the partnership over the last four years. Kendel certainly left her mark and has supported programming in a multitude of ways. She helped strengthen our partnership and role at North Attleboro High School and also piloted the career program at Norton High School. Kendel emulated a fierce passion for the important work we do with students. The staff here at SCP and all of her wonderful colleagues sincerely thank Kendel for the impressive difference she has made in our school communities.

Since joining the SCP in 2017, Kendel has been a valuable asset and a well respected member of our team. Becoming an internal mentor to the staff you know well today, Kendel trained new Career Specialists to be efficient, eager, and educated in the unlimited opportunities available to students. As an employee, she was appreciated by co-workers for the contributions made as she initiated the many endeavors that were undertaken during her time. She helped spearhead a new website, unveiled multiple social media platforms, and implemented vital technology imperative to our success during the pandemic. Personally, Kendel created a welcoming environment for everyone and became a kind friend to all. The ability she has to connect with people and have an impact on their career exploration was evident in every year's outcomes. Kendel exceeded every expectation.

We will miss Kendel's charm, professionalism, advocacy, empathy, expertise, and strength, but know she will carry these admirable skills in helping even more students to come. Kendel, thank you for your dedication to the partnership, we wish you all the best in your future endeavors. MIT is lucky to have you.



Ms. Jester accompanying a group of NHS students on a cool field trip to News Center 5!