

**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**FROM: Becky Nelson / GFPSchool Job Shadow Coordinator / 406-899-8642**

**RE: National Career & Technical Education Month (February) as we highlight various classes throughout the month and the opportunities for our students.**

“Celebrate Today ~ Own Tomorrow” is the theme for the National Career & Technical Education month. We will celebrate the entire month of February featuring various classes in the Great Falls Public School along with our community partners, the Great Falls Chamber of Commerce, our internship and job shadow programs. On February 6<sup>th</sup> Career & Technical Education students will accept a Proclamation from Mayor Kelly as he recognizes the month of February as GFPS CTE Month.

Great Falls Public School offers eighty Career & Technical Education courses at Great Falls High School, C.M.Russell High School and Paris Education Center which include:

- Agriculture
- Business & Computer Science
- Family Consumer Science
- Health Sciences
- Trades & Industry

We also have opportunities for Independent Study, Internships and Job Shadows. Our internship program has grown this year to expand into construction (Talcott Construction), automotive and Great Falls College. The job shadow program has also grown to include four hours of “shadowing” outside the medical community to include the Russell Art Auction and various platforms of media.

We currently have 2,835 high school students enrolled in CTE courses at the three high schools. This year we have 466 seniors graduating with three or more CTE credits (six or more classes).

We have a great partnership with the community whether it be independent studies, internships or job shadows. The opportunities continue to grow.

The High School House is one example of our Career & Technical Education classes. A partnership over the last twenty years with NeighborWorks has given our high school students from Great Falls High and C.M.Russell High School the opportunity to build forty six homes for families from the ground breaking to our Interior Design class choosing the color of carpet. Sheila Rice, NeighborWorks Executive Director commented, “The High School House is a win-win project. The students win because they gain construction skills in a real life setting. The school district wins because kids stay in school and graduate. The neighborhood wins because a new home replaces a blighted property. The City wins because the new home produces property taxes to support fire, police and many other city services. The family that purchases the home wins because the home is affordable to their budget. NeighborWorks

Great Falls wins because the high school house project furthers our mission of rebuilding neighborhoods, creating homeownership opportunities and developing quality homes.” According to the Association for Career and Technical Education, research shows that many of the country’s fastest-growing occupations require the technical, communication, time management, and leadership skills taught in America’s career and technical education programs.

Career and Technical Education prepares Montana K-12 students for a wide range of careers and postsecondary education programs. Career and Technical Education courses are found in Montana’s middle schools, high schools and career centers. Career and Technical Education courses provide students with life and employment skills to make them highly desirable employees in today’s modern workforce. Skills learned in K-12 Career and Technical Education courses prepare students to enter the workforce or to continue their education with a much higher degree of focus and direction for their career goals.

### **Impact of Career and Technical Education**

#### **Academic Impact**

- In writing CTE students scored 18.66 percent better than other high school students and 9 percent better on the math standards.
- In Montana students who are enrolled in CTE classes have a graduation rate of 96.2 percent vs. non-CTE students with a rate of 91.3 percent. (OPI, 2013)
- CTE students who graduate with a CTE concentration are “2.5 times more likely to be employed while pursuing postsecondary education than are college prep students.”
- Wages of CTE students show an “average increase in earnings of \$1,200 immediately after graduation and \$1,800 seven years later.” (Techniques, 2004, p. 79)

#### **Community Impact**

- CTE graduates are 10-15 percent more likely to be in the labor force, and earn 8 to 9 percent more than graduates of academic programs. (Techniques, 2008, p. 50)
- According to ACTE, 4 out of 5 secondary CTE graduates who pursued postsecondary education after high school had earned a credential or were still enrolled two years later in a program. (ACTE, 2014)

#### **Economic Impact**

- In 2004, Students who drop out of school will earn an average of \$9,671 less per year than student who graduate from high school. (ACTE, 2007)
- Over the students lifetime the loss is about \$260,000. Individual costs to the U.S. economy can exceed \$50 billion in federal and state income taxes for all 23 million dropouts reported a year. (ACTE, 2007)
- If all students were in a CTE program with the same graduation rate with the 6.5 percent increase in graduation rate Montana and federal levels would benefit with \$1,458,197 increase in tax revenue. (Based on \$4,460 per student in tax revenue potential)

To learn more about Career Technical Education month, contact the GFPS CTE Office at 268-6024.

