

VAN WERT AREA BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Van Wert Business Advisory Council was formed in 2018 to enhance communication and encourage cooperation between the educational community and the business community. The council meets monthly and representation on the joint council includes local school superintendents, business leaders representing diverse local business and industry, and local economic development partners. Members of the council are informed monthly of changes in the local economy and/or job market in addition to information provided on future careers. The council works together to identify opportunities that better prepare students for the workforce and meet the future workforce needs of local employers.

We anticipate a full schedule of events during the 2023-24 school year with job fairs, student tours and/or job shadowing in local businesses, manufacturing plants and healthcare facilities to expose students to diverse, local job opportunities. *Education on Location*, a three-credit college course will be hosted by the council. Participating educators will tour area businesses and hear presentations by business leaders aimed at increasing awareness of necessary workforce skills and highlight future top jobs. Their learning is reinforced within the teachers' instructional lessons and classroom discussions. All are exposed to the vast diversity of employment options available to students and residents of the county.

To address the current and anticipated future shortage of skilled trades workers, local stakeholders partnered to create our *Build Your Future* event. The event was expanded to 7 school districts with over 600 students participating and were exposed to 5 skilled trades (HVAC, electrical, welding, carpentry, and construction). Students were engaged in learning more of these trades, training required, earning potential and future opportunities. They worked hands-on in 15 stations to learn and demonstrate basic skills themselves (i.e. installed a light switch, siding installation, welding and pipe bending).

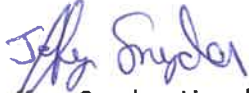
YouScience was implemented by the council, expanded and funded by Vantage Career Center. The program gives students direction by expanding their vision of opportunities. Unlike traditional interest surveys, YouScience uses fun, engaging 'brain games' to capture real measures of aptitudes (natural abilities most important to career choice) then translates those talents into real world, high-demand careers. Students and parents have access to the results to aid in their career discussions

Building on this networking between educators and business leaders, the council has compiled contact information of business representatives willing to go into the classroom to directly share information of their organization, examples of educational pathways, and personal stories with students. The compilation of willing speakers has been shared with the staff at each school.

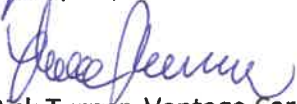
The goals of the Van Wert Area Business Advisory Council include embracing a greater understanding of challenges facing local employers, maintaining ongoing relationships and working together with educators toward tangible benefits for the students, businesses, and residents of Van Wert County.



Kathy Mollenkopf, Crestview Local Schools



Jeffrey Snyder, Lincolnview Local Schools



Rick Turner, Vantage Career Center



Mark Bagley, Van Wert City Schools



Stacy Adam, Van Wert Area Economic Development and Business Advisory Council