



Business and Community Partnerships Providing Pathways to Careers

The Rogers Public Schools initiated the Career Launch Work-Ready program in February of this year. The goal of program is to provide opportunities for students to participate in certification and training programs that would prepare them for careers following high school graduation. The program is designed for current seniors and 2019 graduates who will soon begin new jobs and careers. The twenty-seven certification and training programs were purposely selected to align with employment and workforce needs within the Rogers community and Northwest Arkansas region.

COVID-19 Changes Educational Landscape

By the end of February, over 50 students had registered for the certification and training programs that were scheduled to begin on March 1, 2020. With high school graduation just a couple months away, students were anxious

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to begin the certification and training programs they had selected, each of which would bring them one step closer to a job and career. The news of the COVID-19 pandemic would soon change the educational landscape for students, teachers, parents and the community. The early school closures and pandemic guidelines established new landmarks for how education and learning would continue during the remaining of the school year.

The Career Launch Work-Ready program

had just been “launched” and students were beginning the programs. With new guidelines in response to the pandemic, on-line instruction quickly replaced on-site teaching and learning, including the certification and training programs. With determination to continue the Career Launch Work-Ready program for the students, planning and work began to re-design the formats of the certification courses and trainings to ensure compliance with emerging guidelines related to the pandemic.

Partnerships with Local Business and Industry Strengthen

Working collaboratively with local business and industry partners throughout March and April, new program designs emerged, and partnerships grew stronger each day. The connection between education and industry had become more evident and meaningful in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. History is filled with stories of amazing accomplishments that have come from people working together