SDNB Students Put Information Technology, Computer Science Skills to the Test

New Berlin, Wis. -Students involved in the School District of New Berlin's information technology support, computer science and software engineering programs were invited to Waukesha County Technical College in April to "choose their challenge" in workshops designed to test their IT and computer science knowledge.

In one workshop, with the help of WCTC staff and student mentors, SDNB students participated in several interactive activities that mimicked the everyday work of computer support specialists, such as working with a major help/service desk software solution, troubleshooting computer/network issues, and participating in a technical writing challenge.

Students also participated in a hackathon and were tasked with starting a working app of their own invention.

"Field experiences provide a valuable learning opportunity to students by providing insight into the connection between what they are learning in class and what they can expect in their post-secondary education," said SDNB Director of Information Technology Brandon Kostolni.

District and building administrators support piloting new experiences like this to evaluate the student benefits and guide the curriculum and instruction provided in the classroom. WCTC continues to be a valued partner in these efforts.

Earlier in April, students were provided with opportunities to learn more about post-secondary education in technology through the UW System at an informational session hosted by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's School of Information Studies. The program accepts credits for prior learning from a variety of different programs and offers unique perspective as to how a post-secondary technology degree can be customized.

Additionally, a select group of students participated in a separate coding challenge sponsored by Marquette's Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science Department and subsidized by a CS4HS grant from Google. During the competition, student teams from a variety of school districts worked on assigned programming challenges.

"This event brings together some of our region's brightest future tech talent," SDNB computer science teacher Manal Roumani said. "Competing against other bright minds provides students with an opportunity to show what they know and identify ways to challenge themselves in the future."

Following learning experiences like these, students reflect and record information in their Academic and Career Plan. The plan helps students select their high school courses as well as which post-secondary programs of study might best align to their personal, social, academic and career goals.

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