High School District 214
Career Pathways
Program Stories
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As educators, we have a responsibility to prepare every student for success after graduation.

High School District 214 is committed to that mission. Our robust Career Pathways program provides students with rigorous academic courses, access to early college credits and industry certifications, and personalized, career-specific learning experiences that take them outside the classroom to internships with our 950 business partners.

In all, District 214 students can choose from nearly four dozen career areas of focus across 16 nationally recognized career clusters — from health science, education and finance to information technology, manufacturing, and architecture and construction.

With business, community and education partners, we are breaking down barriers to college access by providing innovative career-focused opportunities for early college credits, and building opportunities for students to explore careers now to discover their future today.

Our Career Pathways program gives students the academic skills to make them college and career ready, and also instills grit and perseverance to and achieve their future goals.

In spring 2018, the Daily Herald launched a 16-part series exploring the Career Pathways program one pathway at a time. The stories, written primarily by District 214 students about their own peers, spotlighted students who engaged the Pathways to their fullest potential. The Daily Herald’s delivery of these stories, often as a centerpiece package on the front page of the Neighbor section, created even greater exposure of a program that is replicable nationwide.

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Steppingstone to success

Submitted by District 214

It has been a decade since North- west Suburban High School Dis- trict 214 launched an innovative new approach to education: a Career Path- ways program that delivers early col- lege credits, career credentials and internship experiences as part of a con- certed effort to ensure students gradu- ate career and college ready.

The program began when Wheel- ing High School administration met with business leaders and the vil- lage’s department of economic devel- opment in 2008 to collaboratively address a skilled worker shortage in manufacturing. 

They believed the answer to filling high-paying jobs and launching suc- cessful careers should begin with high school.

The district’s Career Pathways pro- gram now boasts nearly four dozen career pathways across 16 nationally identified career clusters.

Today, the internship program that ensures every graduate has a real-world work experience has been loaded publicly by the White House; District 214 has amassed nearly 1,000 business partners; and students have collectively earned tens of thousands early college credit hours and hun- dreds of career credentials.

The district’s “Redefining Ready” movement, launched in 2015 in part- nership with AASA, The School Super- intendents Association, aligns closely with the groundwork already laid, pre- senting the belief that students are more than a test score.

New metrics now assess readiness based on numerous factors, includ- ing completion of career credentials, success in AP courses, participation in internships and school attendance.

District 214’s efforts over the last decade, backed by a supportive board of education and educators who have embraced the transformative change, have helped ensure every graduate is discovering their future.

Local and state leaders have lauded the program. More recently, District 214 Superintendent Dr. David R. Schuler was awarded the 2018 National Superintendent of the Year in part for the career path- ways work he has led to break down barriers to college access and affordability.

Over the next 16 weeks, we’re tak- ing a closer look at how District 214 re-imagined the high school curric- ulum, cultivated new partnerships to ensure pathways are in line with industry trends, and took back the narrative on public education.

A lesson in law

By Kayleigh Padar
John Hersey High School

Kayla Diaz has always been interested in the legal pro- fession. So when Elk Grove High School began offering an American law class, she immediately signed up.

The semesterlong course, which helps students bet- ter understand America’s legal system, is the introduc- tory class to two legal-focused pathways, part of Northwest Suburban High School Dis- trict 214’s Career Pathways program.

The District 214 pro- gram, with 44 career path- ways, is designed to help high school students discover their futures through a sequence of career-focused courses, work- place learning experiences and access to career creden- tials and early college credits.

Now a senior, Diaz is deter- mined to attend law school, become a lawyer and help others.

“I’m glad I’ve taken [these classes] because now I have a specific view on what I want to do when I grow up,” said Diaz, who graduates in May.

Elk Grove and John Hersey high schools launched the Criminal Justice and Legal Services pathways nearly two years ago. Both pathways have since expanded to other Dis- trict 214 schools, with 873 stu- dents currently participating district-wide.

Making career decisions in high school can help pave the way for students determined to become lawyers, given that law school attrition rates run as high as 20 percent or more, according to studies based on American Bar Association numbers, and tuition and fees average $46,000 a year for pri- vate university law programs.

Both pathways are open to all students interested in other legal professions as well, such as police officers, FBI agents and crime scene investiga- tors, and also are well-suited for those who want to develop public speaking skills or pursue public service, said Dis- trict 214 administrators.

“I love teaching these classes because the law is so relevant to our daily lives. Stu- dents are interested in the law and have the laws that are cre- ated affect them,” said Hersey social science teacher Jodi Blazer.

Outside class, students have opportunities to partici- pate in co-curricular activi- ties such as the Law or Mock Trial teams. These students work with practicing attor- neys to prepare for mock- trial competitions, including the Northwest Suburban Bar Association’s Annual Mock Trial Invitational at the Rolling Meadows Courthouse.

“It’s so cool to be able to go into a courtroom and be able to face off against an oppo- nent in terms of a legal issue because, yes, you get to fig- ure out if that’s something you want to do,” said Hersey junior Joseph Lehman.

“But it’s also a lot of fun to be able to stand up there and prove yourself in front of the judge and the lawyers.”

But it’s not all mock trial and classes. Elk Grove senior Jakub Gornik, who wants to pursue a career in law enforcement, is currently participating in a practicum with the Elk Grove Village Police Department. Through this, he’s learning dif- ferent aspects of policing and how police enforce the law.

Elk Grove High School’s criminal and constitutional law teacher Dan Saken and social sciences teacher Stephanie Kezios have worked to encour- age students such as Gornik by bringing in speakers from various law-related fields, per- forming mock trial simulations and taking them to workshops facilitated by law school stu- dents and professors.

“While it is certainly a chal- lenge creating a brand-new course, the engagement and enthusiasm our students have shown for these classes make us extremely excited about the prospects of the pathway moving forward,” Saken said.
Food for thought

ProStart program cooks up new culinary expertise for District 214 students

By Kayleigh Padar
John Hersey High School

On the outside, it looks like a suburban high school. But inside, Buffalo Grove High School is home to The Bison Grill, a student-run restaurant that handles an average of 20 catering jobs a year for community outreach events, school meetings and professional luncheons that host local and state officials.

The Bison Grill is part of North-west Suburban High School District 214’s Culinary Arts Career Pathway, a series of courses that teach students the skills they need to pursue culinary and hospitality careers through a program called ProStart.

ProStart is a two-year, national, college-level program designed by the National Restaurant Association to help educate high school students in the culinary field while giving them an opportunity to earn up to 12 hours of early college credit.

“I do believe ProStart helps in preparing you for the [food industry] lifestyle,” says Trish Miller, a senior at John Hersey High School who is participating in ProStart at Buffalo Grove. “It is a lot of work, I will admit that, but it sets you up for success.”

The program, which is open to all District 214 students and held at Buffalo Grove, Elk Grove and Rolling Meadows high schools, prepares students for jobs ranging from hotel and resort managers to chefs, head cooks and food service management.

Students learn how to plan menus, order food and other inventory, prep and cook different meals, manage restaurants, and handle events, among other skills. They also visit restaurants and catering services, participate in internships and work in high school catering programs.

For example, students at Elk Grove have prepared food for the district’s Education Foundation events and handled an alumni open house for 800 people. Rolling Meadows and Buffalo Grove students cater Education Foundation golf outings to help raise money to support public education. And several times a year, students create luncheons for staff and visitors.

Upon completion of each level of the program, students are tested for certification in ProStart, with 54 states earning certification in the 2016-17 school year.

“This certification has brought with it acceptance into the finest culinary universities, scholarships, higher wages and better positions in the culinary field,” says Buf-falo Grove ProStart teacher Ronna Pilanz.

Students also participate in competitions. In February, the four-member team from Rolling Meadows and Elk Grove high schools took third place in the ProStart state management competition, winning a combined total of $80,000 in scholarships with their plan for a new restaurant concept.

The team had to create everything from actual floor plans and marketing tactics to menu development and pricing.

“The students on the ProStart team are some of the hardest working students I know,” says Rolling Meadows ProStart teacher Kimmi Krupicka. “Being a part of this competition really gives the students an advantage to see how the food-service industry works beyond the textbooks, and I’m so proud of what they accomplished.”

Another aspect of the Culinary Arts pathway is Elk Grove’s partnership with Schaumburg restauran-t Frato’s Pizza & Catering. Students compete by developing original recipes, such as Chil-i Chil-i Bang Bang Pizza and Loaded Ranch Tater Tots Pizza.

While the winning recipes are featured on the Frato’s menu, students get to work closely with the staff and receive professional feedback.

“I learned from this experience how to cook better and how to manage my time when I cook,” says Elk Grove High School senior Sarah Kolak.

On Wednesday, April 4, — Christopher Placek

Buffalo Grove senior Eric Luck prepares a meal in the Bison Grill at Buffalo Grove High School. Luck is part of the school’s ProStart program, which teaches students the skills they need to pursue culinary and hospitality careers.

Dustin Green, BBQ Experience Manager/Grill Master from Weber Grill, visited Elk Grove High School culinary arts students in the fall of 2017 to teach them about charcoal grilling.
Career head-start
District 214 Pathway, DECA club help students find their calling in business

By MJ Hurley
Wheeling High School

For Deirdra Day and Renee Portenlanger, participating in District 214’s Business Management and Administration Career Pathway is adding up to a promising future as the two pursue careers in business.

For Day, a 2017 Buffalo Grove High School graduate now at the University of Illinois, it was a high school business class and field trip that solidified her love of business.

“As part of the accounting curriculum, our class took a trip down to [financial services firm] Grant Thornton in Chicago and were able to hear firsthand experiences from workers in audit, tax and advisory, which solidified my decision to do advisory work,” Day said.

Portenlanger, a John Hersey High School senior, discovered her passion through the business club DECA, which led her to the business management pathway.

“My sophomore year I started doing DECA, and it allowed me to discover a passion for business and motivated me to take business classes later on in my high school career,” Portenlanger said.

“DECA especially helped me express my creativity and be professional while speaking, which carried over into my entrepreneur-ship class, in which we have to pitch in front of potential investors,”

The business management pathway is designed to help students decide if a business career is right for them. The coursework helps them prepare for careers as accountants, financial advisors and analysts, human resource specialists and market research analysts, among others.

Students are also able to build startups through the district’s entrepreneurship program, which engages students in all aspects of building a business, from identifying and solving a problem to creating a business model and testing their product.

Each District 214 school sends a team of students to the district’s Startup Showcase competition to pitch their innovative ideas to a panel of judges.

SnapClix, a weight collar invented in a Wheeling entrepreneurship class, recently appeared on ABC’s “Shark Tank,” and Skunk Aid, a deskunking kit for dogs invented by Buffalo Grove entrepreneurship students, was featured on NBC’s “Today” show.

As part of the pathway, District 214 partners with National Louis University to offer dual-credit courses, which allows students to earn college credits toward their business degree while still in high school. Through the District 214-National Louis 1+3 program, students have the opportunity to earn a free year of college while in high school and then finish their bachelor’s degree in business management in three years.

In addition to giving students a head start on deciding on their goals, Pauline DeGrazia, director of undergraduate programming at National Louis, said she believes there is a huge cost benefit of this partnership for students.

“I feel that the partnership between NLU and D214 is unique because it offers a significant savings to students at a time when college costs are skyrocketing,” said DeGrazia.

“NLU has faced this challenge within higher education by reducing our tuition to $10,710 per year, with the goal of helping students to graduate from NLU with little to no debt. Students who participate in dual-credit can save even more.”

For students such as Day, who choose to attend college elsewhere, the credits can still count toward their degree. Taking accounting helped Day because the University of Illinois accepted the accounting course she took in high school.

“In addition to this, my performance in dual-credit classes allowed me to transfer into college with a 4.0 GPA, which raises my cumulative GPA, which is something that is very helpful,” she said.
From digital to print

District 214 Journalism Pathway teaches students the value of communications

By Kayleigh Padar
John Hersey High School

Interviewing professional athletes, covering state championships and taking photos along the sidelines are only some of the experiences that helped John Hersey High School senior Caroline Stiefbold decide to major in journalism at the University of Missouri next year.

"Being a part of the journalism pathway ... has definitely prepared me as I head off to college and take the next step in my journalism career," said Stiefbold, a senior who has worked on the John Hersey student newspaper, The Correspondent, for four years and is currently one of four editors-in-chief.

To prepare students for careers in broadcasting, reporting and digital communications, Northwest Suburban High School District 214 offers classes in its Journalism and Broadcasting Career Pathway. The pathway supplements these courses with practical experience through student newspapers, websites, webcasts, podcasts, yearbooks and broadcasts, as well as internships.

For example, students

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Student journalists from across District 214 gained press credentials to cover a Chicago Bears practice in August 2017 at Prospect High School. The students interviewed Sherrick McManis of the Bears following the practice.

About this series

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Prospect High School senior Zach Miller, who is editor-in-chief of the school’s yearbook, gets an action shot of the Chicago Bears during a practice in August 2017.

Wheeling High School senior Shailah Magallon works alongside freshman Kamila Walus to help edit a story for the school’s newspaper, The Spokesman.
Pathway: Journalism classes teach students how to communicate

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interested in print, photo and digital journalism can work on student newspapers in all of the district’s high schools, putting out a print newspaper as well as digital news through websites and live streams. For those interested in broadcast journalism, some schools have a variety of options, such as Prospect High School’s broadcasting of sports games with postgame interviews, along with weekly sports programs.

In addition, the district offers Studio 214, which gives students the opportunity to work with award-winning producers, directors and editors to produce a television show. This year, students are working on a program that follows the day of a local house by fellow students from the district’s Practical Architectural Construction program.

“In Studio 214, students learn how to best communicate their messages. By understanding visual communication, students will be able to express their own point of view and to better understand the point of view of others,” Studio 214 teacher Steven Apter said.

The key to the program is enabling students to learn journalism skills by using them, with the curriculum changing to keep up to date with new media technologies.

“Journalism is a class that is authentic education. We’re not imagining scenarios. We are working as journalists, creating a real product,” said Hersey journalism adviser Janet Levin, who has been teaching journalism for 37 years and has led The Correspondent for 33 years.

For their productions and in class, students are in charge of everything, from coming up with story ideas and doing research and interviews to creating the end product on deadline — all skills that can be transferred to any career.

“I initially enrolled in journalism because I like to write, but I never expected it to help me with more than just that,” Wheeling High School senior Shailah Magallon said. “The way my journalism class is set up it gives you an insight of a ‘real world’ job because there are deadlines and people are relying on you.”

“They’re learning about communication in so many different forms — storytelling, how to work as a team, how to sit down and interview another person and actually listen to what they have to say,” said Prospect High School journalism adviser Jason Block.

“They learn the importance of truth and fairness. They learn to make tough decisions about what is going to run in print or online, and (they learn) to question not if we can say something, but if we should say something.”
Good place to start

Internships, advisors guide District 214 students on their career paths

Submitted by District 214

Before she begins college and a career in marketing, Jessy Syed already knows the kinds of skills she’ll need to thrive in the field.

As part of Northwest Suburban High School District 214’s Career Pathways program, the Buffalo Grove High School senior has participated in marketing internships, including one last summer at the Rolling Meadows Chamber of Commerce.

The experiences, she said, have helped her develop an array of soft skills that marketing professionals use every day.

“When you’re in an office environment, you’re actually seeing how people with years of experience under their belt are interacting with clients, and when they are smiling and have eye contact and positive body language,” said Syed, who will study marketing and behavioral economics at the University of Pennsylvania.

“You’re learning a lot about what it takes to be a people person in those situations.”

The Career Pathways program offers all District 214 students the opportunity to participate in internships and other workplace learning experiences that match their career interests.

Nearly 3,000 students annually take advantage of work-based learning experiences that are coordinated by District 214’s Center for Career Discovery. The center works with more than 950 local businesses and industry partners to make these opportunities possible.

The center’s goals are multifaceted. It helps District 214 students discover what they

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About this series, and how you can help

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want — or, more importantly, what they don’t want — to pursue beyond high school. It also helps them understand what skills are needed in the workplace.

In addition to workplace learning experiences, the Center for Career Discovery holds annual Career Nights, provides students with resume and interviewing support, and brings industry guest speakers to classes.

The center also offers career advisors, job placement specialists and job coaches to help students further explore their interests and discover careers.

Funded primarily by federal, state and private grants, District 214’s Center for Career Discovery program has been recognized at the state and national levels for its unique and innovative career exploration model, including at the White House’s 2015 Summit on Next-Generation High Schools.

“The (District 214) community really is a trailblazer,” said Jason Quiara, a senior program officer with The Joyce Foundation, which provided funding to expand District 214’s Career Pathways program.

“I think (the community) got to the point faster than a lot of other communities in that there needs to be an economic engine to public education.”

Helping students gain skills in the workplace benefits employers as well. Keats Manufacturing in Wheeling has worked with student interns from District 214 for at least six years. The partnership has helped Keats introduce young people to careers in manufacturing and within the company, said Matt Eggemeyer of Keats Manufacturing.

“It’s an amazing opportunity to pitch your business [and] your industry, especially in manufacturing … for all of us, it’s our duty to expose careers in manufacturing,” Eggemeyer said of partnering with District 214. “This is one small piece that we can do to help the manufacturing community.”

Elk Grove High School student Radek Luczak said his engineering internship last summer with Pepper Construction cemented engineering as his future career. It also taught him how to interact with supervisors and what is expected on work sites. Now, Luczak, a junior, is deciding between the aerospace and electrical engineering fields.

“The internship gave me knowledge that other students can’t get from class or just talking to someone,” he said. “It’s such an interesting job, and this internship is going to be an advantage.”
Margaux Cummings, a junior at Prospect High School, already knows what she plans to do in the future: She wants to become a computer programmer. Thanks to her high school studies through the Northwest Suburban High School District 214’s Programming and Software Development Career Pathway, she’s well on her way.

So far, she has completed all four courses in the pathway, designed her own math-focused app, Magmatics, that’s available on Apple’s App Store; and had an internship. For her senior year, she plans to do independent study, working on app ideas and helping teach coding to lower-level classes.

“I’ve gone further than I thought I could get,” Cummings said of the IT pathway experience. “I didn’t think I could get an app published on the App Store (for example). It’s helped a lot in other situations as well because I learned more problem-solving skills in the classes, and that transfers to other things.”

The demand for computer and information technology professionals is growing — IT jobs are expected to increase 13 percent by 2026, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. District 214’s program and software pathway offers career-focused courses, including dual-credit classes that give students college credits, along with internships and other related activities.

This helps students prepare for careers as a computer programmer, computer hardware engineer, network architect and software developer.

For Buffalo Grove High School senior Troy Nelson, a 2017 summer internship at Shultes Precision Manufacturing in web development gave him real-world exposure to IT work.

“I (worked) on the website they currently have, adding new information to it, making it look more vibrant, (adding) more new ways to introduce it to the customers and the workers so they can really see what the company is about,” Nelson said, adding that the experience broadened his view of how businesses function and the role of IT beyond the basics.

The Programming and Software Development Pathway started in the 2014-15 school year with the introduction of a mobile app development course, which teaches students coding and programming languages.

At the time, District 214 schools were among a handful in the country to offer the curriculum, which was developed by MobileMakersEDU.

To make his AP computer science classes even more interesting, Prospect

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Pathway: Students get hands-on training

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High School career and technical educator Paul Hennig introduced an app development course that ties in entrepreneurship.

“The students are the programmers and the faculty are the clients. I’m trying to replicate a real-life dev shop,” Hennig said. “Over the past three years, my students have created awesome apps that benefit the students and teachers.”

Taking advantage of his IT classes, John Hersey High School junior John Dattilo in December won the 2017 Congressional App Challenge for the Illinois 9th District for his app Dialog, which helps people with diabetes manage and track their disease, including calculating insulin dosages quickly. The app is available on the App Store, and Dattilo said he intends to keep it up to date.

Dattilo, who plans to study economics and computer science in college, said he has benefitted from his teacher and the computer programming pathway.

“The computer science classes have helped teach me all the basic information that I need to know to code.”
A design for the future

Graphic arts pathway builds skills for visual arts careers

By Ayse Eldes
Prospect High School

As a paper-and-pen artist, Rolling Meadows High School student Miranda Adelman wasn’t sure about trying graphic arts when Northwest Suburban High School District 214 launched the Graphic Arts Career Pathway at her school during her freshman year.

But with encouragement from her mom, Adelman opted to take an introductory graphic arts course. This decision was the turning point in her plans for the future.

“Originally, I was like, ‘Oh, I don’t know,’” said Adelman, who plans to pursue a career in visual arts after graduating this month. “I took the class my sophomore year, and I kind of just fell in love with everything.”

District 214 students interested in pursuing graphic design start with the basic graphic arts course and move on to an advanced design course that combines an internship opportunity at Harper College with an honors-level design course.

“I really like that class ... one reason being you get college credit,” said Rolling Meadows graphic design teacher Kent Dyer. “The second thing is you’re getting (District) 214 credit. The class is all project-based, and it’s really geared toward real-life designing, real-life application.”

The graphic arts pathway prepares students for careers in such fields as advertising, art education, graphic design and web design through classes, internships, mentorships and art shows. It also leads them to opportunities to earn certificates at Harper in various areas such as desktop publishing, web design and digital photography.

The pathway courses differ slightly in each of the District 214 schools. While the dual-credit and Advanced Placement courses are offered throughout the district,

students at Rolling Meadows, for example, can take a Small Business Management class.

According to Dyer, Small Business Management combines business elements with graphic design projects, with students forming teams to work on design projects for real-life clients. Last semester, a group of students designed graduation shirts for Juliette Low Elementary School’s fifth grade class, learning how to manage a budget while meeting client requests and arranging delivery and packaging for their customers.

At Prospect High School, students in the beginning graphic arts classes get the opportunity to collaborate with students in the school’s Entrepreneurship course. Graphic arts students design shirts, buttons, posters or other requested products for business projects for students taking the Entrepreneurship class.

For second-year pathway students, Prospect graphic arts teacher Andre Poisson organizes several field trips to different companies with graphic arts departments. On a recent trip to a local photo shoot, one student

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**Pathway: Students get real-life experience**

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discovered how her passion for makeup could be combined with a graphic arts background to work on such sets.

“There are so many opportunities and so many different things, so everybody can find their niche,” Poisson said.

At Rolling Meadows, students have gotten practical experience by designing T-shirts for the Rolling Meadows Fire Department and the school’s own sports teams and clubs.

Graphic design students provide apparel designs for the school’s Spirit store, which sells shirts starting at $5 to make sure every student can afford one.

“Some of these kids are telling me, ‘We’re walking down the hall, and we see
de like 500 people wearing the shirt I designed,’” Dyer said. “The kids are taking pride in it, and they’re enjoying seeing their stuff on everyone and knowing that by being part of this class, this pathway, they’re reshaping and redesigning our school and our school spirit.”
Blueprint for success

Submitted by District 214

Buffalo Grove High School senior Bartek Orlowski credits one course with his decision to pursue a career in carpentry.

While that math skill might not be for everyone, Orlowski says the Geometry in Construction class, which combines geometry with hands-on construction training as part of High School District 214’s Architecture and Construction Career Pathways, was a turning point for him.

“I’m very happy I took (the class) because, at the time, I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do in life,” Orlowski says. “But at the end of sophomore year, I was sure I wanted to become a carpenter.”

Northwest Suburban District 214’s Architecture and Construction Pathways are designed to prepare students for careers in such areas as architecture, construction and civil engineering, as well as specific trades including carpentry and plumbing — jobs that are forecast to be in high demand over the next 10 years, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“I’m very passionate about the program,” says Marc Sears, who teaches District 214’s College Practical Architectural Construction (PAC), a dual-credit program with Harper College that offers hands-on construction for students as part of the pathway. “You don’t have to go to a four-year school to be successful. There’s a high demand with anything working with your hands.”

Students start with basic concepts and smaller projects that teach them how to use tools safely. Geometry in Construction is offered during the second year of the pathway and combines geometry with a real-life building project, constructing walls for a house for a disabled veteran.

Students at Buffalo Grove High School build the walls for half the house while students at Rolling Meadows High School build the other half. This year, the walls were shipped to Texas, where the home is being constructed through the national non-profit A Soldier’s Journey.

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Pathway: Students get job experience

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Home.
By their junior year, students can start the two-year PAC program, remodeling a single-family home in the district. The project begins with a spring Architecture Showcase, where teams of students engaged in CAD and architectural design from each District 214 high school present plans for a property purchased by the school district.

Once a design is picked, the plans are vetted by an architectural firm, and that fall students begin the remodel. They work on everything from demolition, to flooring, cabinets and tile work, to plumbing and electric. Once they’re finished, the home is sold and proceeds go toward purchasing another house.

PAC students can also compete in a statewide SkillsUSA competition for students in trades. This year, Orlowski took second place in the carpentry division, a difficult contest that requires constant effort to build a small structure from blueprints in just eight hours.

But for Orlowski, that kind of work is one of the things he enjoys about carpentry — and why he plans to start his own company in the future.

“My advice to students with interest in construction or architecture is try to work in the field for at least one summer to see if you’re up for all the hard work,” he said. “If you are, then stick with it! The demand for hardworking teenagers is very high.”

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Cybersecurity pathway prepares students for IT careers

When it comes to careers, Buffalo Grove High School junior William Rupert is certain he’s on the right track with High School District 214’s cybersecurity career pathway.

"Taking this pathway," Rupert said, "is one of the best things you can do. I really enjoy it because it’s not like office work, where you’re just filling out reports. You’re hands-on, yet you need to be able to adapt to situations and fix them as they arise."

Cybersecurity is also one of the most in-demand skill sets in today’s job field. According to a recent study by cybersecurity company McAfee, 82 percent of U.S. IT respondents said there is a large shortage of cybersecurity professionals in their own companies, with a projected 1 million to 2 million positions unfilled globally in 2019.

Northwest Suburban High School District 214 students on this pathway start out with basic courses and work their way up through operating systems, hardware systems and networking before taking the Advanced Network Systems and Cybersecurity class.

Along the way, they can earn CompTIA certificates in IT Fundamentals, AV+ Network+ and Security+, and also have an opportunity to earn dual credits with District 214’s higher education partners.

"This is a huge growth area," said Tom Polak, information systems instructor for the district. "There is a great need for students who are qualified to identify attackers, viruses [and] manage networks and organization data."

In March, District 214 hosted a group of technology leaders, school superintendents and colleges to start building a pipeline of cybersecurity talent in Illinois beginning in elementary school.

Leaders from IBM, Ugtek and Discover attended the event and discussed ways to partner with schools to build a curriculum that would give students experiences and certifications to fill cyber jobs.

In addition to classes, district students compete in national competitions to get actual experience with real-world simulations. For example, CyberPatriot is an Air Force Association competition with about 5,000 middle school and high school teams nationwide.

"It’s as real world as you get," Polak said. "We were given three to four computers, and you have six hours to find the security flaws. The flaws can be as easy as software updates needing to be installed to finding hidden programs that don’t belong on the machine."

One advantage of competitions is that they offer students hands-on situations that require students to actually hack into systems.

"People always consider hackers as a negative thing," said Mike Derksen, a Career and Technical Education teacher at Rolling Meadows High School. "But it’s really not anymore. There are so many people being hired as [ethical] hackers to help [companies] discover their vulnerabilities."

One student who has been gaining actual work experience is recent John Hersey High School graduate Mark Thomas, who earned three certifications before his senior year. He’s currently working for an IT and bioinformatics company in Prospect Heights, developing software for clients, maintaining client sites and configuring servers and networks on a project basis.

He said the pathway helped him decide what he wanted to do in the future. This fall he’s planning to attend the University of Texas at Dallas to major in computer software engineering and information technology.

"This [pathway] is basically exposing you to everything in the networking world, and then you can choose your own adventure from there," Thomas said.
### Dual purpose

Submitted by Northwest Suburbs
High School District 214

During her senior year of high school, Alethia Hernandez enrolled in online college classes offered through Northwest Suburban High School District 214’s new Early College Center.

The development of the Early College Center paved the way for Hernandez to concurrently earn a semester of high school and college credit while saving time and money on college tuition. Through the online classes, Hernandez said she gained skills that will help her in the future.

“(Being a part of this online program) shows that I am definitely college ready and that I have a lot of potential,” said Hernandez, a 2018 Elk Grove High School graduate. “It made (colleges and universities) realize that I’m independent and I’m really ready to take on challenging courses.”

In District 214’s Career Pathways program, students have a variety of opportunities to earn college credits while in high school, significantly increasing their chances to succeed at the college level and saving them thousands of dollars.

The ultimate goal is to break down barriers of postsecondary access and affordability while ensuring students leave high school poised to excel.

Through the Advanced Placement program, students take rigorous, college-level courses and are guaranteed college credit at any public state college or university in Illinois by earning a 3 or higher on the end-of-year exam.

At the same time, District 214 offers more than 60 dual credit course opportunities through partnering with colleges such as Eastern Illinois University and including professional development courses.

From left, Alethia Hernandez and Nigh Hardict help each other with an online lesson in District 214’s Early College Center. Both students simultaneously earned high school and college credit.

### Early College Center helps District 214 students earn credits and save money

About this series, and how you can help

This story is part of a 16-week series looking at Northwest Suburban High School District 214’s Career Pathways program.

To join District 214’s Career Pathways effort as an internship host, career mentor or classroom speaker, contact Barb Kain in the Teaching and Learning Department, barb.kain@d214.org.

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See COLLEGE on PAGE 2

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**UPDATE:** The early college credit program has been rebranded as the Early College Center as of July 1, 2018. The name change reflects the early college credit program’s expanded work with the College Level Mathematics Program. This program assists students in preparing for college-level mathematics. For more information about District 214’s Early College Center, visit www.district214.edu/early-college-center.
College: Students earn dual credits in program

Continued from Page 1

Noemi Ramos works on an assignment in District 214’s Early College Center. Eighteen students enrolled in online classes during the 2017-18 school year and collectively earned 208 hours of college credits at Arizona State University.

University, Harper College, National Louis University and Northeastern Illinois University.

In the 2017-18 school year, District 214 students earned 37,500 college credits. For students attending an Illinois public university, that figure equates to a potential savings of $12.9 million. At a state community college, it translates to $4.1 million saved.

“Through our partnerships, students are able to fully benefit from the college-level instruction which has traditionally occurred in our high schools, as well as experience new opportunities for learning,” said Dan Weidner, District 214’s director of academic programs and pathways. “Collectively, these efforts have allowed us to increase access to and reduce the overall cost of college attendance for our students.”

The Early College Center, which opened last fall in the Forest View Educational Center, provides an opportunity for District 214 seniors to participate in a honors, online program to complete college-level coursework. Students can earn up to 16 college credits through Arizona State University.

Students must first apply to the program. Once accepted, they take an eight-week honors course every quarter, as well as a self-paced math course guided by a District 214 teacher.

Students spend the mornings in their home schools and the afternoons at the Early College Center.

In the center’s first year, 18 students from different academic backgrounds enrolled in online classes. The students, all of whom are headed to college this fall, earned 208 hours of college credits at Arizona State.

The classes, which include College Algebra and English Composition, are challenging, said Nigh Hardrict, who graduated from Elk Grove High School in May. But, ultimately, the courses and the experience taught Hardrict valuable lessons.

“This has helped me to be responsible and manage my time better,” said Hardrict, who heads to Valparaiso University in the fall. “Before, I was already an independent learner. But coming here, I’m understanding how college will be.”
Future teachers get started with Dist. 214 education pathway

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Students from across District 214 gathered in May to sign letters of intent to become teachers. The signing ceremony, one part of District 214’s Education Career Pathway, was held at the Forest View Education Center and brought together 140 students.

Education: Students make pledge to become teachers

Continued from Page 1

“\text{It’s so great that the district is recognizing the need for teachers and the importance of teachers — and how hard it is to be a teacher,}” said Rolling Meadows teacher Linda Thorsen, who runs the district’s Education Academy, an intensive, hands-on dual credit teaching course for seniors in the education pathway.

Students who qualify for the Education Academy teach in four different educational settings and take dual-credit teacher education courses with Thorson at Rolling Meadows.

Allie Ontaneda, a recent graduate of Rolling Meadows High School, said that Education Academy helped prepare her for the teaching career that she’s dreamed about since she was young. She has learned to write lesson plans and teach them to students — a challenging but rewarding experience.

“This is the most difficult part of the class, but well worth it because of the experience and confidence we are building,” she said.

This fall, Ontaneda will attend Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin, to major in Spanish and minor in secondary education to become a high school Spanish teacher.

“I hope to return to District 214 to teach and give back to the community that helped me grow and find my purpose,” she said.
From belting out solos in show choir competitions to making an audience roar with laughter at an improv show, recent John Hersey High School graduate Thoro Brown has explored his passion through the Performing Arts Career Pathways offered by Northwest Suburban High School District 214.

“The programs I’ve participated in are very beneficial,” said Brown, who credits his various arts experiences with his decision to pursue a degree in musical theater at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee in Boston.

“It’s such a great family and place to feel welcome and bring stories and music to the audiences.”

District 214 offers several Performing Arts and Visual Arts pathways to prepare students for the diverse opportunities in creative industries. Careers can range from acting, stage management, art or photography and commercial and industrial design to teaching.

“If we can help students develop their creativity in an organized and professional way, then the opportunities and careers in the arts are endless,” said Buffalo Grove High School’s Fine and Performing Arts co-coordinator Elizabeth Bennett, who used her network to implement artist presentations during lunch hours, so students have the chance to hear what it means to create a resume as a professional in the field.

Other teachers have taken similar approaches, with an eye on ensuring students know their career options. Diane Basilion, a veteran dance teacher at Wheeling High School, has provided students with unparalleled experiences, including touring established Chicago studios and renowned theaters to learn the ins and outs of arts administration — an opportunity for those interested in managing a theater or gallery.

Some schools, including Buffalo Grove and Prospect, feature student-managed galleries to display the work of students, alumni and professionals. Separately, an annual all-district summer musical creates roles that include technical designers, directing assistants and marketing publicists in addition to performers.

The summer musical, this year running July 12-14, also allows students the opportunity to earn dual credit from Eastern Illinois University by attending a weekly course. A theme throughout these pathways is leadership. Many students work individually with professional artists on visual pieces or with professional musicians to compose music. Whether designing and building sets, directing plays or arranging music compositions for others to perform, student leadership is at the core of arts education in the district.

The district’s Fine Arts Pathway insists there is endless opportunities for students driven to work in the arts field, with student exposure to an extensive list of classes, clubs, exhibits, performances and personalized education, including private instruction.

The district’s fine arts career adviser places students in internships in the industry to further explore opportunities including technical theater, music, performance and business.

“Exposure to art-based careers outside of high school can completely change a student’s perspective on the job options in the real world,” District 214 Fine and Performing Arts coordinator Jeremy Morton said.

“Our staff does an excellent job finding students’ talents and passions. While encouraging them to grow, they also provide a plethora of opportunities to explore the arts — whether that is through performance, direction, marketing, creation or technical skills — and related careers.”
A step ahead

By Amanda Talalaj
Wheeling High School

Hatie Canbolat has wanted to be a doctor since she became interested in science in third grade. This summer, Canbolat, who will be a senior at Buffalo Grove High School in the fall, is getting hands-on experience as an intern at Athletico Physical Therapy as part of Northwest Suburban High School District 214’s Health Sciences Career Pathway.

“I shadow the doctors there and observe the individual plans they have for each patient,” said Canbolat, who wants to become a pediatric surgeon. “Interning at Athletico helps me gain experience in the medical field, teaches me key concepts about physical therapy and allows me to be in a professional environment.”

Canbolat has been taking Advanced Placement science and math courses as part of District 214’s Health Science Career Pathway since her sophomore year. The program offers students basic pathway courses to ground them in health sciences as well as electives such as AP Biology, AP Chemistry and AP Psychology. In addition, the pathway includes internship opportunities like Canbolat’s, as well as industry mentorships and certification opportunities.

The program is designed to prepare students for a wide range of health care professions, from emergency medical technicians and paramedics and nurses and nursing assistants to physician assistants, pharmacists, doctors, surgeons, dentists and psychiatrists, all of which will be in high demand in the future, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In addition to these programs, District 214 is launching a “Middle College” health careers partnership this fall: an opportunity for students to spend their senior year at Harper College, earning dual credit and getting a jump start on their careers and their college education.

“It is giving students the opportunity to earn around 30 hours of college credit in a health career certification or degree area that will help them progress into their health career futures,” said Dan Weidner, director of Academic Programs and Pathways. “Through our career pathways, we’re really trying to help students decide what their post-secondary path is while still in high school, so they can go to college with purpose.”

At Elk Grove High School, Caryn Blanke teaches introduction to health careers and medical terminology classes. There, students study the human body and medical terminology and learn skills such as how to speak to patients and interact with a team.

District 214 students have opportunities to explore careers in the health science field and earn certifications, including a Certified Nursing Assistant certificate, before they complete high school.

About this series
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214: Students get taste of medical careers

Continued from Page 1

and how to chart patient information. In addition, 10 to 15 health care professionals speak to the classes throughout the year to talk about their work in the field.

“This is a great advantage for students in our health care classes, because they are meeting professionals face to face and starting to make connections,” Blanke said.

Jenna Baltes, who will be a senior at Prospect High School this fall, said teachers in the Health Science Career Pathway have made a substantial impact on her life.

“All have inspired my career in health science and helped me learn ... why science is such an incredible and interesting field,” she said.

In addition to her courses, Baltes is getting hands-on experience through a pharmaceutical internship at Walgreens this summer, another District 214 partner, working with pharmacists and doing the work of a pharmacy technician to advance her medical knowledge.

“I couldn’t see myself in any other field,” said Baltes, who wants to become a military doctor one day, carrying on her family’s generations-long legacy of service. “Being able to help others through the pathway of science is truly a dream of mine.”
Personalized experiences

By Kayleigh Padar
John Hersey High School

More than two years ago, Northwest Suburban High School District 214 opened its first coffee cart in the main hallway of the district’s headquarters.

About 18 students with special needs in the district’s transition program worked behind the cart in the mornings and afternoons. With the help of a staff member, they learned to handle money, restock supplies and improve their social skills and communication.

Today, nearly 130 special needs students across District 214 work at microbusinesses in their schools and in workplaces in the Northwest suburbs.

The experiences, coordinated by District 214’s Center for Career Discovery, are part of the district’s effort to ensure all students explore careers, leave with an authentic workplace experience and gain soft skills to help them find jobs.

Special needs students in Dist. 214
learn job skills to help find careers

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Pathways: Experience leads to choices

Continued from Page 1

“These experiences are student-centered, driven by interests and strengths, and meet students where they are socially, emotionally and academically to prepare them for success,” said Krista Paul, District 214’s assistant director of career and technical education, who oversees the Center for Career Discovery.

Once students have identified a career area of interest, they are matched with a job site for a semester and given support to grow.

For example, the district uses grant funds to employ job coaches to work directly with special needs students at every workplace. Job coaches help students develop appropriate work habits and behavior, including problem solving, staying on task, asking for help and taking the initiative, district officials said.

Besides microbusinesses in the schools, students work at jobs in the community and serve in a variety of roles, from helping prepare food to delivering mail to interacting with adults and children.

Laura Shaffer was a student in District 214’s transition program for 18-to-22-year-olds. As a student, she worked at a few job sites, including the Rolling Meadows Public Library, TJ Maxx and Walgreens.

At each workplace, Shaffer said she learned valuable skills and gained insight.

“I’ve learned a lot from all these job sites. Take one thing at a time and don’t go too fast. If you make a mistake, it’s OK,” she said.

A few years ago, while working at Walgreens, Shaffer impressed her supervisor with her work ethic and was offered a job.

“I was very excited. This (was) my first time being hired for a job,” she said.

Last school year, Brandon Artwohl worked at Marshalls, where he learned how to put sensors on products and how to tag items.

“My favorite part ... is seeing other people that I know and talking and helping them out,” said Artwohl, a recent John Hersey High School graduate.

Giving students the opportunity to interact with others in the community and outside of the classroom has value, said Hersey special education division head Genevieve Rosenberg.

“They learn to respond to someone other than their teachers, so they learn to respond to someone who really is their boss and has the potential to be their real boss,” she said.
Autos and aviation

District 214 students learn career options in transportation with Pathways program

Submitted by District 214

Jordan Morrow thought he would have to wait until college to begin studying the fundamentals of aviation.

But the Prospect High School senior is already taking a dual credit introductory aviation course, networking with industry professionals and learning about careers in the field. The opportunities are part of an expanded transportation career pathway in Northwest Suburban High School District 214 that now includes aviation.

"I'm so glad we have this (aviation) program," said Morrow, 17, an aspiring pilot who loves to travel and learn about new cultures. "There needs to be more aviation (courses) in high school. I wish more schools had aviation integrated into their curriculum."

The aviation program in District 214's transportation career pathway launched this summer and comes as the airline industry addresses the extraordinary demand of personnel needed to maintain airplanes.

A 2016 Boeing study found that 1.2 million new commercial airline pilots and maintenance technicians will be needed to fly and maintain the world fleet over the next 20 years.

To create the program, District 214 partnered with Lewis University and built upon the robust automotive maintenance program already designed by district educators.

At District 214 schools, for example, students can enroll in a three-year automotive program that provides access to dual credit courses through Triton College and up to nine industry certifications.

All schools have a

See PATHWAYS on PAGE 3

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Sixteen students from across District 214 participated in an introductory aviation class at the Chicago Executive Airport in Wheeling on July 24. The class is part of a new aviation program in partnership with Lewis University.

At District 214 schools, students can enroll in a three-year automotive program that provides access to dual credit courses through Triton College and up to nine industry certifications.

See for District 214

Continued on page 26
Pathways: Students can learn about planes, cars

Continued from Page 1

Elk Grove High School senior Kayla Diaz is studying law and criminal justice – fields she can take immediately after high school graduations. Diaz plans to major in business law in college, after graduating from college, and pursue a career as a paralegal.

Diaz, who is a member of the varsity girls’ softball team, said she decided to study law because she is interested in how the legal system works.

Diaz said she enjoys studying law because it is challenging and she is interested in helping people. She said she is also interested in public speaking, and she hopes to become a public defender.

Diaz said she is interested in public speaking because she enjoys being able to talk to people and help them understand the law. She said she hopes to become a public defender because she wants to help people understand the legal system.

Diaz said she is not sure if she will continue to study law after high school, but she wants to make sure that she has a plan for her future.

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Preparing for the future

District 214’s STEM, manufacturing career pathways help guide students

Submitted by District 214

Maram Safi and Abby Farmer were both interested in science and engineering when they started high school four years ago.

After taking a mix of courses in District 214’s engineering and manufacturing career pathways, both graduated in May with a clear idea of their next steps and passions. Safi will study electrical engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, while Farmer pursues industrial engineering at Bradley University in Peoria.

The two credit their teachers, the rigorous pathway courses and the learning experiences they had in and out of the classroom for making the transition to college easier.

“Being able to talk about these career pathway experiences when you’re going through the college application process really sets you apart and makes you different,” said Farmer, who attended Elk Grove High School.

Over a decade ago, District 214 pioneered its first career pathway — manufacturing — at Wheeling High School with the help of the village’s economic development department, manufacturers and business leaders.

The goal was to address the shortage of skilled workers in the manufacturing industry and, together, they built a pipeline of talent by giving students access to internships, high-tech equipment and career credentials.

Today, students interested in STEM and manufacturing careers take a combination of technology, engineering and manufacturing courses to give them a well-rounded understanding of these industries.

Students can earn early college credits through advanced classes and gain real-world skills through site visits, apprenticeships and access to advanced prototyping labs with state-of-the-art robotics and manufacturing equipment.

As part of the STEM and manufacturing curriculum, students build and program
Pathways: Program offers students opportunities

Continued from Page 1

robots from scratch. They also design and fabricate energy-efficient, high-mileage vehicles that they later race at a statewide competition.

Many middle school students in District 214’s sender schools can explore the STEM and manufacturing career pathways before they begin high school. For example, nearly all of the district’s schools offer after-school engineering and manufacturing programs for middle school students, taught by District 214 educators.

Through a partnership with Prospect Heights School District 23, MacArthur Middle School students participate on the district’s award-winning WildStang robotics team and, in turn, the team is provided with space to create and build robots.

Middle school students in District 214’s sender schools can explore the district’s manufacturing and engineering pathways through after-school programs. Hersey educator Richard Hyde, right, helps a middle school student with a project.

Based on industry demand, the district has also enhanced its automated manufacturing curriculum and updated the manufacturing and engineering laboratories at each school. Wheeling’s lab, for example, has doubled in size and includes a dedicated area for new automation and robotics cells, funded by a $150,000 donation from HydraForce in Lincolnshire.

Angel Villegas graduated in May from Wheeling and was selected for an apprenticeship with Innovative Components in Schaumburg. The apprenticeship means the company will pay for his education and provide him with on-the-job experience within the manufacturing industry.

The apprenticeship, he said, means a lot because he won’t be in debt after college and is able to pursue a career that he loves. He said he is grateful for the skills and knowledge he gained in the district’s engineering and manufacturing career pathways.

“We have such a great opportunity here, (and) more people should take advantage of it,” he said.
Village President Bill Jacob was among the elected officials this week celebrating Old McHenry Road and other work to be finished by the end of the downtown is an amenity that's expected to benefit the district.

Making career decisions in high school can help pave the way for students determined to attend law school, given that hundreds of career credentials, including a new traffic signal at Cuba Road, is the introduction that will help attract new businesses to the village.

The District 214 pro-gram now boasts nearly four dozen high schools launched the internship program that ensures every graduate has a place learning experiences and access to career credentials. Today, the internship program was among the elected officials this week celebrating Old McHenry Road and other work to be finished by the end of the downtown is an amenity that's expected to benefit the district.

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Further extending our approach to education: a Career Pathways program that delivers early college experiences as part of a connected career-focused courses, work-experience opportunities, and how the laws that are created in the U.S. are applied in different aspects of policing and how police enforce the law. The $3.8 million project will help us attract new businesses to the village.

The $3.8 million project will help us attract new businesses to the village. Outside class, students have opportunities to participate in various law-related fields, such as the Law or Mock Trial teams. These students have benefited from participation in District 214's legal-focused pathways, helping students study the U.S. legal system, is the introduction that will help attract new businesses to the village.

Students embracing legal, criminal justice studies, and how the laws that are created in the U.S. are applied in different aspects of policing and how police enforce the law. The $3.8 million project is hosting two events in the Northwest suburbs to mark MLK death anniversary.

Northwest suburbs police departments are currently participating in a diversity and human relations practicum with the Elk Grove Village Police Department. The $3.8 million project is hosting two events in the Northwest suburbs to mark MLK death anniversary.

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