

THE VISION

The Official Newsletter of Winning Futures



YOUNG, BUT “WORK READY”

Through summer internships and jobs at **Fitz-Rite Products, Lear Corporation, Proper Group International, and SRG Global, Inc.**, our high school students are gaining marketable skills and valuable experiences they cannot gain inside a classroom.

“The Winning Futures program is the first step in preparing students for the world of work and career success,” says *Tom Ruczynski*, mentor and Senior VP at Proper Group International. “We believe our company can contribute by providing workforce exposure that will help students learn more about themselves and instill work ethics.”

Winning Futures’ students *Caroline Dimas* and *Christian Jackson* are taking the next step in expanding their knowledge outside the classroom.

Caroline Dimas won a paid summer internship with the Human Resources department at SRG Global, Inc. through

our partnership program with the Company. “We were very impressed by the students who interviewed for the internship and felt they presented themselves as well as some more experienced adults,” says *Greg Mulawa*, SRG’s VP and CFO. “They were



exceptional at conveying their transferable skills and telling their stories. The students also sent follow-up thank you letters which were professional and very genuine.”

Caroline is going into her senior year at **Cousino High School**. She is a smart student who loves to learn and enjoys building positive relationships

with teachers and other students. Caroline would be the first to admit that self-confidence was not one of her strongest attributes, but that has changed. “Working with mentors and attending business meetings with really important people helped me,” says Caroline. “I had to become more sure of myself and learn to speak with confidence.”

Time management was also a struggle for Caroline. The summer internship helped her strengthen those weaknesses. “I tend to procrastinate. This internship helped me overcome that. I had to focus on managing my time and planning things out so that I wasn’t rushing and finishing things at the last minute,” says Caroline.

Christian Jackson is heading into his senior year at **Community High School**. Christian is a quiet young man who prefers to keep to himself and often has a hard time communicating with others.

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Because of this, students would bully him. When Christian was presented with an opportunity to interview for a summer manufacturing position at Proper Group International, he was naturally very intimidated.

There was one thing that transcended Christian's trepidation and that was the financial need of his family. He worked with his mentor to create a resume and practiced for the interview. The hands-on, real world experience helped Christian learn more about himself and how to

communicate better. He was able to apply many of the Winning Futures' principles into actual practice. "Attitude is everything and with a positive attitude, you can get along with anyone and push past any difficult situation," says Christian. "I'm glad I was a part of Winning Futures; my mentor made me believe that I could do anything, and my job at Proper Group helped me see my potential."

Summer internships or jobs provide more than training opportunities; they also provide financial means. "What I'm

most proud of is that I was able to help my family buy a new car. That feels really good," says Christian.

As the needs of our future workforce continue to change, it is more important than ever that we provide ways for Millennials to not just acquire the soft skills and job readiness skills needed to be successful, but also give them exposure to successful careers. For them, this is a once in a lifetime opportunity that will launch them into a successful future!

\$37,500 in Scholarships Awarded to Teens

Twenty-eight students across Michigan were awarded scholarships through our Winning Futures Scholarship Program and RARE Everyday Hero Scholarship competition. In addition to teaching students essential goal setting and strategic planning skills, we believe it is important to award students money to help them take the next step in reaching their education goals. "I would like to thank Winning Futures for teaching me life skills that I will use for the rest of my life and for awarding me this scholarship, it will be put to good use," Says *Lawrence Hopper*, Scholarship Winner from **Madison High School**.



Your Attitude Can Make or Break You!

A mistake many workers make as they dream of the big promotion is to believe that only their job performance is taken into consideration. They forget that one of the first things a boss considers is ATTITUDE!



Attitude is the way you walk, talk, think, feel, act, react and interact with others. Your job performance is essential, but your attitude is even more important. Attitude is everything!

If you are constantly complaining, gossiping and pointing out problems, it may not matter how good you are at your job. If you constantly walk in the door with a smile on your face and show a genuine willingness to jump in and help out wherever you are needed, you will get noticed.

How you deal with the obstacles in your life is up to you. If you focus on the negative, it will consume you. If you focus on the positive, it will make everything easier. Build that strong foundation of a positive attitude, and you will soon discover that no problem is too big to solve, and no goal is impossible - even that corner office with your name on the door.

To see how Winning Futures is using local volunteers to teach these same lessons to local high school students, visit www.winningfutures.org or contact joe@winningfutures.org.

“Everyone can use a champion in their life! - Mike Eberhardt - Cass Tech Mentor

Mentors Of The Year Honored At 20 Year Anniversary Awards Celebration



This year, over 250 guests packed the **Emagine Theatre** in Royal Oak to celebrate Winning Futures' 20th Anniversary. The event acknowledged the special people who have contributed to the success of our organization since 1994. Six remarkable individuals were also honored as Mentors of the Year in recognition of their contributions and positive effect on the lives of students in metro Detroit. The 2014 Winning Futures Mentors of the Year are: *Heidi Beechie*, **Fiat Chrysler**

Automobiles – Pontiac Academy for Excellence; *Lee Shelby*, **SRG Global** - Harper Woods High School; *Lesley Gale*, **Davenport University** – Madison High School; *Jeffrey Lehnertz*, **Huttenlocher Group** – Warren Mott High School; *Marcia Beck*, **Colorsapes** – Cass Technical High School; *Brendan Brosnan*, **City of Warren Police Department** – Community High School. We appreciate our event sponsors **The Chrysler Foundation, Hamilton Chevrolet, Extra Credit Union** and **Lusk & Albertson**.

Winning Futures' CEO Receives Two Great Honors!

In 1994 when *Kristina Marshall* was one of the first Winning Futures' students, she never dreamed that her path with Winning Futures would be where it is today! Recently, **SUCCESS Magazine** (www.success.com), highlighted Kris and the success Winning Futures has had during and after the recession. This article has helped Winning Futures receive national exposure to the business world.

This summer, Kris was elected President of the **Detroit Chapter of the Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO)**, a global organization of 10,000 owners of \$1M+ businesses. She is the only non-profit to be accepted into the group and is the chapter's first female president. Globally, Kris is the first graduate of EO's Accelerator Program (for businesses under \$1M) to ever become president of a chapter. Since joining EO in 2009, Winning Futures has grown from \$500,000 to \$1.5M. "Because of the amazing learning events and peer-to-peer support EO provides, our team has learned and implemented many new lessons to help us be stronger and to grow," Kris Marshall explained.



Program Expansion into Cornerstone Health + Technology High School

This fall, Winning Futures is expanding our Academic Success and Career Readiness mentoring programs into Cornerstone's newly renovated Health + Technology High School. The school's blended-learning model merges traditional teaching styles with a high-technology and independent-learning style. Students have opportunities to conduct job shadows and internships at the area's top health and wellness organizations, among other unique experiences.

"Winning Futures' goal is to empower today's youth for a successful future by developing skills which can be used



throughout their lives," says *Ken Elkins*, Winning Futures' Marketing and Program Director.

"Cornerstone Health + Technology High School's model is unique and therefore a natural fit for our program. We are excited to help these Detroit students learn skills to improve their academics, character, and self-esteem."

Cornerstone Health + Technology High School is now enrolling students. Visit www.cornerstonecharters.org to learn more. If you would like to volunteer as a mentor at this or any one of our other program locations contact: Joe@winningfutures.org or visit www.winningfutures.org

Many Mentors Wonder If They Make A Difference

By *Dave Fernholz* - Mentor, Community High School

Many mentors wonder if they make a difference. Bottom line . . . you do! It is not always obvious, however, I had an experience with my mentee James that cemented it for me. James was a young man who had a problem showing up to a class in the morning. If we did not address this soon, it was going prevent him from graduating on time. James was a very outgoing young man, and I immediately came to like him. I always had a smile on my face when he was around. I knew he had great potential, but we had to solve the attendance issue.



Through our six-week goal session, James and I explored the reasons for his tardiness. After working diligently on many options, none which seemed to help, I finally suggested that he ask his boss if he could leave early on school nights to get to bed earlier. James seemed surprised when I mentioned it. I said in reply "What's the worse he can say . . . no?" I told him

no one wants a student to fail and good bosses tend to help their good, faithful employees. I told him I worked for a man who did the same for me when I was young.

James asked, and his boss let him leave early. James was able to get to school on time, improved his grades, and graduated

that year. I was so proud of his accomplishment that I went to his graduation ceremony - my first as a mentor. There, I cheered and clapped as if James were my son; it made me extremely happy. Afterward, James gave me the biggest bear hug you could imagine and had the broadest smile. Our picture is proudly placed in my office. Mentors do make a difference! With each success, we make the world a better place.

To become a mentor this fall, visit www.winningfutures.org or contact joe@winningfutures.org.

United Way

If you donate to United Way through a workplace campaign,

please select or write-in Winning Futures for your designation!

THANK YOU!

Check It Out!

Say hello to Winning Futures' new logo. The updated logo isn't a complete overhaul but the evolution of our iconic emblem. **Thanks to Identity PR for the design.**



Planned Gift

Remember Winning Futures in your planned giving. Planned gifts to Winning Futures are bequests or gifts made through a will or trust. A gift may be small or large in amount, but all are important to our organization.

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