

Now is the time to start planning those special events to attract students to nontraditional career fields. Trailblazers provides support services to assist you with the planning and preparation of student events.

"Live Wires" - A club focused on encouraging and supporting students interested in pursuing a nontraditional career track. Contact us to become a coordinator this year!

Career Fair - Let us help you improving your event using our materials.

Career Camps - It's not too early to start thinking about day-long and week-long events for next spring and summer.

Career Expos - Get your community involved by showcasing your Nontraditional Career Pathways.

Visit www.ctetrailblazers.org for step-by-step guides to event planning:

Email us at trailblazers@virginia.edu for assistance using a "Best Practice" approach to your event this year.

VDOE BUSINESS:

Free! [GIS ArcView Software for VA schools](#)

VDOE [Webinars](#), including: [Introduction to GIS](#)

The new [Administrative Planning Guide](#) is now available ONLINE!

Follow the Washington DC news on the [ACTE CTE Policy Watch Blog](#).

MEET TRAILBLAZERS STAFF AT THESE UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Virginia Career & Technical Education Association, Exchange Team Meetings Staunton, Oct 6-9

BHS Professional Development Day, Bridgewater, Oct 12

Virginia Counselors Association Convention 2009 Williamsburg, Nov 11-14

American Career & Technical Education Association, Nashville, Nov 19-21

National Association for Partnerships in Equity Arlington, April 12-15

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Best Practices Around Virginia: Building Business Partnerships

PARTNERSHIPS IN BEDFORD COUNTY SCHOOL, BUSINESS, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Students often know very little about career opportunities in fields that are not traditional for their gender. Giving students positive exposure to more of the world beyond their horizons is a great way to build confidence and encourage them to build a career plan, and try CTE courses, even non-traditional ones.

One way to accomplish this is to build partnerships with local employers, so they will open their doors to students visits, offer mentorships, and participate in school career fairs. But partnerships don't just happen on their own. It takes hard work and engagement across traditional agency silos to make them happen. Bedford County is a great example of what can be done when agencies work together.

In the Lynchburg area Region 2000, businesses and economic development groups saw a need to convince students to stay and work for local companies. They decided to promote this with a campaign called *Grow Your Own*. Bedford County Economic Development staff developed a survey to learn about the career interests of seniors at three Bedford County high schools.

In the meantime, two career coaches, Miranda Lowry and Josselyn Gregory, from Central Virginia Community College were already hard at work in Bedford County high schools on a related mission — helping students define career aspirations and recognize community college and other postsecondary programs that can help them achieve their goals. When they heard about the survey, they knew that this information about students' interests would be valuable and the *Grow Your Own* campaign would be a perfect avenue for connecting students with career exploration opportunities.

When they expressed an interest, the career coaches were invited to join the meetings of the Bedford steering committee, given survey results, and asked for suggestions on

plans-of-action. Working with the county economic development team, they made plans to take student on tours of local businesses and to invite local businesses into schools to showcase their opportunities on "Club Day."

Last winter, Bedford county high school students visited a range of employers, including Bedford Memorial Hospital, the largest employer in the City of Bedford. They also visited Sentry Equipment Erectors, a high tech manufacturing operation where they received a tour lead by the company's founder, Adam Vinoskey.

Students were inspired by their the field trips. One said, "it helped me have an even better understanding of my career choices." Another reported, "I got to explore the outside workforce and was compelled by what jobs are available."

The business visits introduced students to careers and opportunities they did not know existed and encouraged them to find a future in their home area. As Josselyn Gregory says, "For some, the information was life-changing." In follow-up surveys, 70% of students said that they were more likely to stay in this area to work or return to work in this area later.

Not every locality is as fortunate as Bedford County, to have an economic development team that reaches out to help build partnerships. In many communities, CTE professionals themselves have to take the lead in partnership building. If this is your job, consider engaging your locality's own economic development team in this process. These experts know local business; they know who is looking for workers and why. They can be ideal partners in your efforts to develop business partnerships.

Read more about Partnerships and download resources from:

www.ctetrailblazers.org/partnershipsbedford

Define Green Jobs and Green Opportunities for Your Students

Green Jobs for the Future

Green jobs are a part of our future. Federal money is being distributed to assist with training for green jobs, and opportunities will continue to grow in these fields as we wean ourselves from an economy based on imported oil.

To help educators and others participate in this process, the Department of Labor has begun research to define what kind of jobs should be considered green jobs. This research is referenced in Department of Labor solicitations for grant applications for green energy-related funding. It may be used as a starting point for identifying green industries and occupations and informing the development of training and job placement programs. ACTE anticipate that federal funds will be available for developing green training in CTE, in which case it will be important to understand these DOL definitions.

Twelve employment sectors are seen as particularly important in the green economy:

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|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Agriculture & Forestry | • Green Construction |
| • Energy Efficiency | • Manufacturing |
| • Energy Trading | • Recycling & Waste Reduction |
| • Energy & Carbon Capture | • Renewable Energy Generation |
| • Environment Protection | • Research, Design, & Consulting |
| • Governmental & Regulatory | |

While it is very difficult to define green occupations precisely, it is possible to show which occupations are gradually becoming more green: The "greening" of occupations refers to the extent to which green economy activities and technologies increase the demand for existing occupations, shape the work and worker requirements needed for occupational performance, or generate unique work and worker requirements.

The Department of Labor has created three lists of "greening" occupations to help guide planning and program development:

Green increased demand occupations. The green economy brings an increase in demand for an existing occupation (e.g. Agricultural inspectors, Hydrologists, Locomotive engineers);

Green enhanced skills occupations. The green economy raises the skill level of work in an existing occupation (e.g. Automotive technicians, Landscape architects, Transportation managers);

New and emerging green occupations. The green economy is creating the need for unique work and worker requirements (e.g. Air quality control specialists, Fuel cell technicians, Wind turbine technicians)

See these lists and learn more about the Department of Labor's research on our website: www.ctetrailblazers.org/greenjobs

How a Simple Classroom Survey Can Help Keep Students Coming Back to School

Student Surveys Increase Retention Rates

Teachers and administrators work hard to recruit students to nontraditional programs. We need to work just as hard to retain them—to make sure that they succeed in class and stay to complete their programs. One teacher has found that entrance and exit surveys are an effective way to communicate with students and increase retention.

The National Institute for Women in Trades, Technology, & Science has been working with eight California community colleges providing training and assistance on recruiting and retaining women in technology programs in which they are under-represented. The July IWITTS WomenTech Educators Newsletter ([Subscribe here](#)) reports that surveys developed by one of the participating electronics instructors have been an extremely effective retention tool.

The surveys began when an electronics professor at El Camino College began administering short surveys for extra credit to his students at the beginning and end of his courses. With these simple questionnaires the professor saw a 9% increase in retention of female students and 7% in male. Because of this

improvement, the college decided to administer the survey to the welding students as well. The surveys asked students about previous education, current education goals, and knowledge of student services available at the college. Surveys were divided by gender and whether the student took daytime or nighttime classes.

The results showed that females were, in general, more aware than males of student support services. Evening students as a whole were less aware than daytime students. This short survey has helped connect students with the services provided by the college as well as to help improve retention.

Career and Technical Education teachers could use surveys like these to connect with their students as well. This process would allow teachers to find out, in a confidential way, what students expect of their courses, what assistance they think they need, and what career goals and expectations they have.

Read more about IWITTS' work with California Community Colleges at the [National Institute for Women in Trades, Technology & Science website](#).

"Determine that the thing can and shall be done, and then we shall find the way." - Abraham Lincoln