

# DCBOCES SPOTLIGHT

February 2016



## Introducing Middle School Students to Hands-on Learning

### Career and Technical Institute Offers Active Learning in Career Areas

For students in middle school, at times school can become simple routine. Excitement about learning wanes. Twice each year, the Career and Technical Institute (CTI) shakes things up by offering enrichment opportunities to Dutchess County middle school students, introducing them to exciting hands-on learning. The goal is to invigorate students and help them to think about different ways of learning.



"There have been fewer opportunities for this type of learning in recent years due to all of the requirements for districts to emphasize math and ELA," said

Mitchell Shron, principal of CTI. "While important, it has been at the expense of project based learning. Our goal is to get kids interested in learning. Classes are kept small because we want them to be engaged as much as possible."

Students and guidance counselors are praising the program and recommending it to other students.

"I think the Enrichment Programs at CTI are great. Any opportunity a middle school student has to get a career-related experience is a beautiful thing," said Denise Haines, Millbrook Middle School guidance counselor. "Students here are encouraged to apply to the enrichment program and to choose what they think they would be interested in learning more about."

CTI, which specializes in a variety of career training areas including health care, culinary arts, security, construction, mechanics, and cosmetology, rotates the offerings for each session.

**The next sessions to be held will be Wednesday evenings, from 6 PM to 8 PM, April 6, 13, 20, and 27.**

These sessions will include classes in filmmaking, small engines, and computer repair. No fees are charged to students or their school districts for the program. A summer session will also be held in July 2016. According to Haines, her students especially like the "hands-on" aspect of the program.





One student loved the culinary arts program because it was "all about the cooking," said Haines. A seventh grader liked that each student got their own engine block in the four-cycle engine class and had a chance to work independently. Both students would recommend their programs to other students, said Haines.

"I am impressed with the CTI Enrichment Program," said Grace Ann Smith, a Wappingers Central School District guidance counselor. "It gives our middle school level students exposure to a different type of learning, something outside of their traditional school day. It really is wonderful

to hear students share their experiences and discuss what they have learned. They are always inquiring as to when the next session will be. It has proved to be an exciting and worthwhile program."

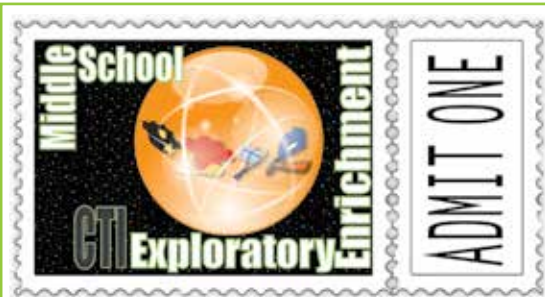
And current CTI students augment their own education by serving as assistants. Austin Haley-Berry, a 17-year-old Red Hook High student, volunteered for the last computer repair session and will be assisting in April.



"I feel like they enjoyed it and got a good chunk of information," said Haley-Berry. "It was a good group of kids and they wanted to learn."

Red Hook classmate Alexander Thiry, 18, is also looking forward to helping at the April session. "The students really like it," he said. "And really, the best way to know something is to learn it and then teach it to someone else."

"All students at some point may have difficulty seeing a connection between what they learn in school and their future careers. Enrichment can help," said Shron. "We want the students to feel a sense of amazement and know that this is something that can be a part of their education," he said.



Students will enjoy these career and technical education courses by gaining knowledge and learning basic hands-on skills. In addition, parents are invited to stay and learn about CTI and career choices for their students.

Next Sessions: **April 6, 13, 20, and 27**  
 Time: **Wednesday, 6 PM - 8 PM**  
 Classes: **Filmmaking**  
**Small Engines**  
**Computer Repair**

Application Deadline: **March 14, 2016**

Applications are available in the Guidance Departments at Dutchess County middle schools or visit the Dutchess BOCES website, [www.dcboces.org/cti/news](http://www.dcboces.org/cti/news) to download the pdf.

