

Chamber helps prepare students for next level

The Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce's Workforce Development department in partnership with Durham Public Schools' Career and Technical Education, Durham Technical Community College and the Triangle Society of Human Resource Management, recently held a Workplace Readiness Seminar for DPS High School Seniors in an effort to expose the students to the necessary skills they need to land a job in the future and maintain it.

Many students that participated are gearing up for summer jobs and some will enter the workforce full time upon graduation. About 140 students participated in the April 2 half-day program.

The Workplace Readiness Seminar was developed to provide students an opportunity to practice interviewing skills, expand their knowledge of workplace etiquette, explore local careers, and gather information on local career training opportunities.

Human Resources professionals from a number of local businesses were on hand to conduct mock interviews with the students to give them an idea what a real interview would be like. Students also had to complete a sample employment application. Each student received a critique on their interview and received valuable feedback on how to improve their interviewing skills.

"The interviews were great," said Malcolm Burns, a senior from Northern High School. "I learned the right way to have an interview – how to answer questions completely, what to say, and what to do. This will prepare me for the next level."

Students who were seeking employment were able to register with JobLink of Durham.

The seminar also featured a Career Exploration and Training Opportunities Fair in which students were able to meet representatives from various businesses and educational training programs to discuss aspects of their careers and the necessary skills need to work within a certain field. Representatives from Bio/Pharma, Healthcare, Animal Science, Finance, Information Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, Construction, Auto Maintenance, Engineering, Architecture and Human Services (Education, Human Resources, Law, Public Safety) were on hand to share information with the students about their jobs and what the students can do to prepare for a job in that particular field.

"This was the first time I was exposed to a lot of this information," said Zasha Cannady, a senior from Hillside High School. "This is going to help me get ahead for the future and in the working world."