

HERKIMER • FULTON
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BOCES
Creating Opportunities
for Growth

2024
ANNUAL MEETING
REPORT



Herkimer BOCES Annual Meeting – April 11, 2024



2024 Annual Meeting Report

The Annual Meeting Report serves as the program for the 2024 Annual Meeting and provides news, budget information and feature stories.

On the cover: Herkimer BOCES Automotive Technology senior Bella Crafton, from Dolgeville Central School District, works on a car in class.

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Agenda for the Annual Meeting

The 2024 Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES Annual Meeting will take place starting at 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 11.

I. Welcome

II. Call to Order

- ▶ Pledge of Allegiance
- ▶ Approval of 2023 Minutes
Jessica Bartlett,
West Canada Valley CSD
Board President

III. 2024 Community Partnership Award – Human Resource Directions (Employee Assistance Program)

- ▶ Linda Yost, President

IV. District Superintendent's Message

- ▶ D.J. Shepardson,
Herkimer BOCES
District Superintendent

V. Introduction of BOCES Board Candidates

- ▶ Respective component superintendents
- ▶ BOCES board candidates will address the audience

VI. Adjournment

- ▶ Jessica Bartlett

Minutes from the 2023 Annual Meeting

Herkimer BOCES Board of Education President Holly Pullis welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Annual Meeting Chairman and Frankfort-Schuyler Central School District Board of Education President Joseph Ciccone called the meeting to order at 7:26 p.m. and requested everyone rise to recite "The Pledge of Allegiance." The 2022 Annual Meeting minutes were reviewed.

Herkimer BOCES Board of Education member Janine Lynch moved and Mount Markham board member Tom Huxtable seconded a motion to approve the 2022 Annual Meeting minutes. All members present voted in favor.

The 2023 Community Partnership Award was presented to Mark Scalise and FoltsBrook Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation for its continued support of the Herkimer BOCES high school and adult nursing students.

A "Your Kids, Your BOCES" presentation was given by Herkimer BOCES District Superintendent Sandra Sherwood.

Sherwood introduced component superintendents that had candidates for the open BOCES board seats.

Four candidates were nominated for four BOCES Board of Education seats. Three seats are for three-year terms of office from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2026, and one seat (Frankfort-Schuyler) is for a one-year term of office from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. The candidates seeking a position on the BOCES Board of Education were introduced: Michele Szarek – Poland CSD, Ronald Loiacono – Mount Markham CSD, James "Bob" Schmid – Dolgeville CSD, and Kathy Sarafin – Frankfort-Schuyler CSD.

Pullis reminded everyone of the BOCES budget vote and election of BOCES board members scheduled for April 19, 2023. She congratulated Mark Scalise and FoltsBrook Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation for being named as the Herkimer BOCES 2023 Community Partnership Award winner and thanked the student performers from Frankfort-Schuyler High School for their performance of "Grease."

With no further business, Ciccone called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Schmid moved and Dolgeville board member Craig Spofford seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. All members present voted in favor.

-Shawn Maxson, Clerk of the Board

A letter to our component school board members and superintendents

April 2024

Dear component board members and superintendents,

We are excited to welcome you to the Annual Meeting at Herkimer BOCES! We are meeting at the WEB Complex on Gros Boulevard.

The structure of this meeting will be somewhat different from the past, as we will not be holding a full sit-down dinner. Instead, we will be providing food stations that will include small plate options and desserts. This will provide the opportunity for attendees to socialize as well as enjoy the entertainment provided by the students from West Canada Valley, which will be our host district for this year's meeting.

We are grateful to all of our boards of education and superintendents for supporting our BOCES and the upcoming facility project.

The regional support will allow us to do much-needed maintenance and renovations of our two main facilities. The project was formally approved by the New York State Education Department in January, contractor bids/contracts have been approved, and work will begin in June at the WEB Complex.

For our Annual Meeting, Mrs. Jessica Bartlett, president of the West Canada Valley Central School District Board of Education, will be the chairperson of the meeting.

With West Canada Valley as our host district, the West Canada Valley Jazz Band will provide the entertainment for the evening.

In this publication, you will see that our student focus is on a student from Poland Central School District who joined both Pathways Academy and the Advanced Manufacturing program as a junior and is now a senior. His teachers report that he is doing very well and plans to work locally in the advanced manufacturing industry right out of high school.

Our Community Partnership Award recipient this year is Human Resource Directions (HRD). HRD plays a critical role in supporting employees in the region through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). EAP provides many areas of support to individuals and families through a variety of resources. In a region that at times can struggle to locate supportive resources, Human Resource Directions has become the answer for many employees in the region. We are so thankful for this partnership.

Thank you again for your continued support of our programs and students. Please do not hesitate to reach out to myself or any of the BOCES Board members with your ideas and suggestions. Thank you for coming together to celebrate the many accomplishments of this region!

Sincerely,

Holly Sue Pullis

President,
Board of
Education

Herkimer-Fulton-
Hamilton-Otsego
BOCES



Administrative and capital budget primers

Administrative Budget Primer

BOCES operates with the collective support of its component school districts; the districts must pay an administrative assessment to cover the administrative portion of the total costs of operating BOCES.

A district's responsibility or level of ownership of the administrative budget is determined by its student population.

The number used is resident weighted average daily attendance [RWADA].

Each district's proportion of the total RWADA for all districts is the district's portion of the administrative budget responsibility.

The BOCES administrative budget is submitted to each component Board of Education for annual approval in April.

If approved by the boards of education, the administrative budget is reviewed by the New York State Education Department for its compliance with law and regulation.

Upon approval, the administrative budget is static. This means that, unlike program budgets maintained by BOCES, the administrative budget does not fluctuate because of district requests.

The categories that make up the administrative budget are prescribed by law and, therefore, are consistent BOCES-to-

BOCES throughout New York state.

Capital Budget Primer

An estimate of the rentals, capital expenditures and debt service of the BOCES is presented along with the BOCES administrative budget.

State legislation, which gave component boards the right to vote on the administrative budget in 1994, purposely exempted the capital budget from a vote.

Were the capital budget fixed, BOCES would be unable to respond to mid-year district requests requiring additional classroom rentals, such as special education classes.

NYS Commissioner of Education letter for BOCES annual meetings

February 2024

Dear members of the Cooperative Boards of New York state:

I hope this message finds you and your communities well. Following in-depth conversations with educators and stakeholders across the state to advance our mission to raise the knowledge, skill, and opportunity of all the people in New York, we have identified critical areas requiring our collective focus and action. These areas are funding equity, opportunities, and supports for increased collaboration between districts with the support of Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), high school opportunity for all students, data modernization, and reimagining teacher and leader preparation and development - stand at the core of the Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) legislative and state aid priorities.

Deeply rooted in the values of lifelong learning, equity, excellence, access, service, and stewardship, these priorities will help bridge the opportunity and transcript gap that faces students from historically underserved communities. These include those living in rural communities and our largest cities. We hope that the "Portrait of Graduate" developed by a robust stakeholder input process and an extensive review of relevant research, literature, and experience shared in the New York State Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures Report¹ will serve as a north star as we prepare all students for the challenges and promise of the 21st Century workforce.

Supporting students to achieve the goals set forth in the Graduation Measures Report will take regional collaboration. BOCES have long exemplified leadership in pioneering regional educational opportunities that broaden access to advanced coursework, enhance workforce development through career and technical education opportunities, integrate K-12 education with higher learning by fostering dual enrollment, and boldly rethink high school graduation pathways to make this dream a reality. Ensuring that every student graduating from high school in New York is fully equipped for meaningful careers, college, and civic engagement in a global context remains our shared and unwavering goal.

As we navigate this pivotal moment in New York's educational history, it is essential that we hold true to a system of education that inspires and ignites teaching and learning through a commitment to a P-20 continuum, equity, social-emotional learning, and safe and supportive schools and communities. As we work with BOCES to frame the future of New York's educational landscape, I am reminded of a quote by Helen Keller - "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." This reminds us that collaboration remains at the heart of our work to build a more promising future for all students.

Best wishes for a continued successful and transformative year ahead.

Sincerely,
Betty A. Rosa,
New York State Commissioner of Education

¹ See page 26 at <https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/grad-measures/nys-blue-ribbon-commission-graduation-measures-report.pdf>

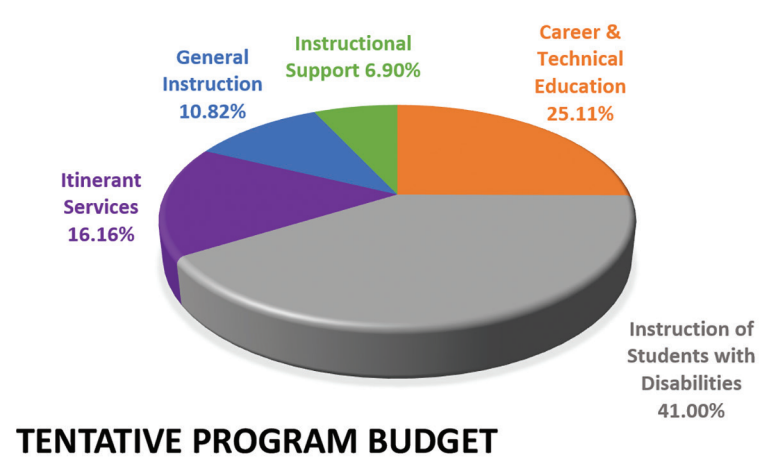
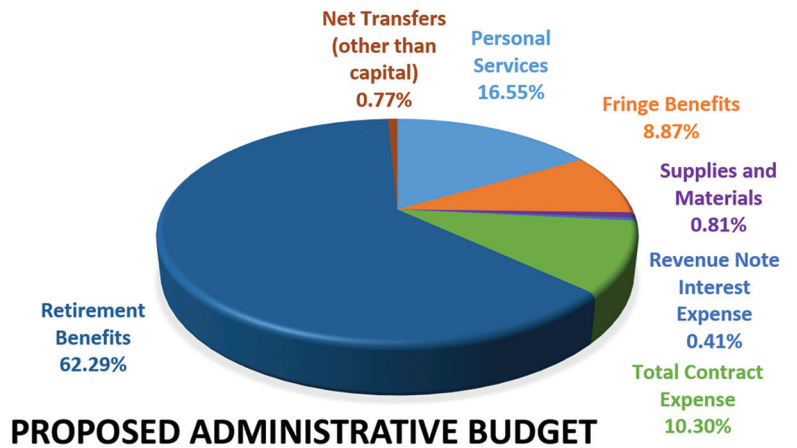
2024-25 Proposed Budget Summaries

Summary of Proposed Administrative Budget

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Personnel Services* | \$724,159 |
| Fringe Benefits** | \$387,984 |
| Equipment | \$0 |
| Supplies and Materials | \$35,370 |
| Revenue Note Interest Expense | \$18,000 |
| Total Contract Expense | \$450,800 |
| Retirement Health Insurance Benefits | \$2,725,000 |
| Net Transfers (other than capital) | \$33,595 |
| Total Administrative Budget | \$4,374,908 |

*Salaries of central administrative and supervisory personnel.

**Benefits of central administrative and supervisory personnel.



Summary of Tentative Capital Budget

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Rental of Facilities | \$640,000 |
| Transfer to Capital Project Fund | \$10,190,000 |
| Total Capital Budget | \$10,830,000 |

Summary of Tentative Program Budget

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Career and Technical Education | \$6,418,389 |
| Instruction of Students with Disabilities | \$10,478,451 |
| Itinerant Services | \$4,129,868 |
| General Instruction | \$2,766,512 |
| Instructional Support | \$1,764,207 |
| Total Program Budget | \$25,557,427 |

Compensation of District Superintendent of Schools

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| State Salary | \$43,499 |
| BOCES Salary | \$155,000 |
| Annualized Benefits | \$36,924 |
| Total Compensation | \$235,423 |

Voting Information

Members of all component boards of education will vote on the 2024-25 Herkimer BOCES administrative budget on Wednesday, April 17. Voting will take place in each district. After board members cast individual votes, each school board will file a single majority vote.

Component boards will also vote on three BOCES Board of Education seats, which are each for a three-year term. The following districts have open seats: Frankfort-Schuyler, Little Falls and Richfield Springs.



Central Valley seniors Peter Macri III (left) and Jady Dixon (right) work together to saw a log during class in the Herkimer BOCES Conservation program.

A look at component school enrollments for the last 10 years

Central Valley:

- ▶ 2014-15: 2,224
- ▶ 2015-16: 2,229
- ▶ 2016-17: 2,216
- ▶ 2017-18: 2,191
- ▶ 2018-19: 2,121
- ▶ 2019-20: 2,114
- ▶ 2020-21: 2,130
- ▶ 2021-22: 2,088
- ▶ 2022-23: 2,076
- ▶ 2023-24: 2,053

Dolgeville:

- ▶ 2014-15: 877
- ▶ 2015-16: 893
- ▶ 2016-17: 851
- ▶ 2017-18: 874
- ▶ 2018-19: 804
- ▶ 2019-20: 815
- ▶ 2020-21: 798
- ▶ 2021-22: 787
- ▶ 2022-23: 778
- ▶ 2023-24: 755

Frankfort-Schuyler:

- ▶ 2014-15: 987
- ▶ 2015-16: 955
- ▶ 2016-17: 942
- ▶ 2017-18: 949
- ▶ 2018-19: 927
- ▶ 2019-20: 942
- ▶ 2020-21: 883
- ▶ 2021-22: 841
- ▶ 2022-23: 839
- ▶ 2023-24: 842

Herkimer:

- ▶ 2014-15: 1,132
- ▶ 2015-16: 1,141
- ▶ 2016-17: 1,101
- ▶ 2017-18: 1,052
- ▶ 2018-19: 1,066
- ▶ 2019-20: 1,044
- ▶ 2020-21: 1,008
- ▶ 2021-22: 1,072
- ▶ 2022-23: 1,056
- ▶ 2023-24: 1,058

Little Falls:

- ▶ 2014-15: 1,085
- ▶ 2015-16: 1,075
- ▶ 2016-17: 1,104
- ▶ 2017-18: 1,112
- ▶ 2018-19: 1,096
- ▶ 2019-20: 1,076
- ▶ 2020-21: 1,065
- ▶ 2021-22: 1,091
- ▶ 2022-23: 1,075
- ▶ 2023-24: 1,102

Mount Markham:

- ▶ 2014-15: 1,060
- ▶ 2015-16: 1,055
- ▶ 2016-17: 1,049
- ▶ 2017-18: 1,038
- ▶ 2018-19: 1,058
- ▶ 2019-20: 1,044
- ▶ 2020-21: 987
- ▶ 2021-22: 1,015
- ▶ 2022-23: 1,021
- ▶ 2023-24: 973

Owen D. Young:

- ▶ 2014-15: 201
- ▶ 2015-16: 191
- ▶ 2016-17: 191
- ▶ 2017-18: 193
- ▶ 2018-19: 194
- ▶ 2019-20: 184
- ▶ 2020-21: 173
- ▶ 2021-22: 181
- ▶ 2022-23: 180
- ▶ 2023-24: 171

Poland:

- ▶ 2014-15: 585
- ▶ 2015-16: 549
- ▶ 2016-17: 572
- ▶ 2017-18: 551
- ▶ 2018-19: 551
- ▶ 2019-20: 536
- ▶ 2020-21: 517
- ▶ 2021-22: 513
- ▶ 2022-23: 512
- ▶ 2023-24: 498

Richfield Springs:

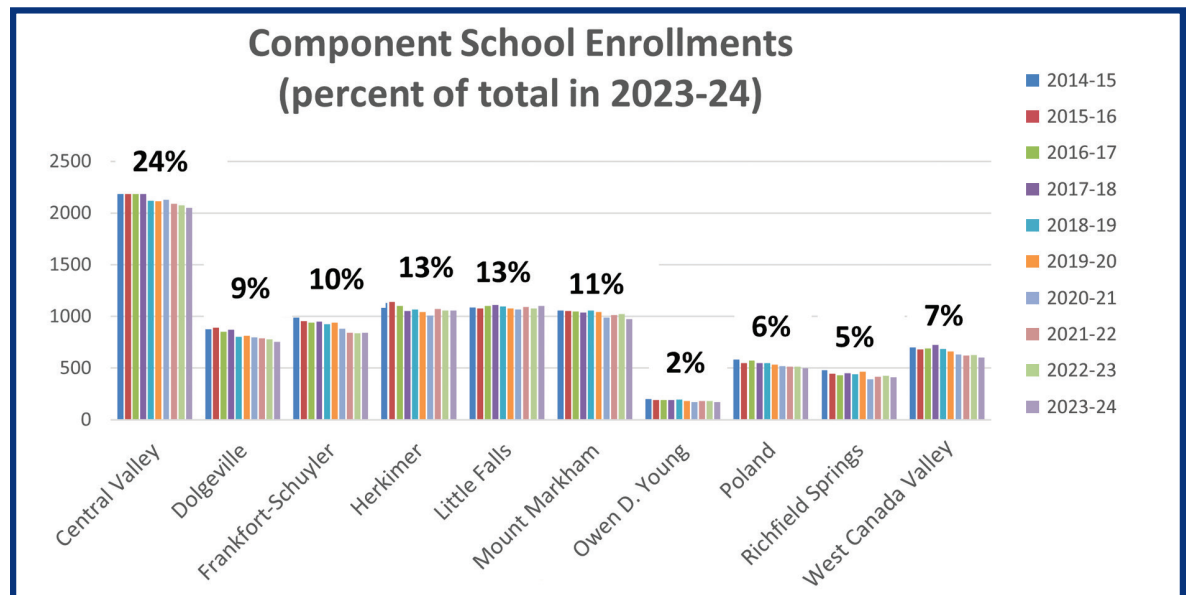
- ▶ 2014-15: 478
- ▶ 2015-16: 448
- ▶ 2016-17: 431
- ▶ 2017-18: 449
- ▶ 2018-19: 441
- ▶ 2019-20: 467
- ▶ 2020-21: 390
- ▶ 2021-22: 417
- ▶ 2022-23: 424
- ▶ 2023-24: 413

West Canada Valley:

- ▶ 2014-15: 700
- ▶ 2015-16: 683
- ▶ 2016-17: 689
- ▶ 2017-18: 727
- ▶ 2018-19: 686
- ▶ 2019-20: 660
- ▶ 2020-21: 634
- ▶ 2021-22: 620
- ▶ 2022-23: 625
- ▶ 2023-24: 602

Total:

- ▶ 2014-15: 9,329
- ▶ 2015-16: 9,219
- ▶ 2016-17: 9,146
- ▶ 2017-18: 9,136
- ▶ 2018-19: 8,944
- ▶ 2019-20: 8,882
- ▶ 2020-21: 8,585
- ▶ 2021-22: 8,625
- ▶ 2022-23: 8,586
- ▶ 2023-24: 8,467



Percentage of CTE participation out of component district enrollment for grades 11-12

Regional grades 11-12 enrollment:

- 2016-17: 1,380
- 2017-18: 1,359
- 2018-19: 1,333
- 2019-20: 1,352

CTE enrollment*:

- 2020-21: 1,398
- 2021-22: 1,319
- 2022-23: 1,272
- 2023-24: 1,322

- 2016-17: 478
- 2017-18: 421
- 2018-19: 390
- 2019-20: 383

- 2020-21: 369
- 2021-22: 396
- 2022-23: 411
- 2023-24: 482

Percentage of CTE enrollment*:

- 2016-17: 34.64%
- 2017-18: 30.98%
- 2018-19: 29.26%
- 2019-20: 28.33%
- 2020-21: 26.39%
- 2021-22: 30.02%
- 2022-23: 32.31%
- 2023-24: 36.46%

*These CTE enrollment numbers don't include READiTEC. CTE 2023-24 enrollment with READiTEC is 513.

*Percentage of CTE enrollment out of regional grades 11-12 enrollment

Program highlights – updates on some of the many BOCES programs

Technical Education

Submitted by Director of School Services and Outreach Zane Mahar.

In thinking of Technical education this year, and all the good things occurring, I am reminded of the slogan of the 4-H organization, which is "Making the Best Better." Many of our programs have undergone programmatic renovations this year, leading to a renaissance and rededication to technical excellence.

Are you called to be a HERO?

One of our major curriculum initiatives this year was the creation of our HERO (Heavy Equipment Repair Operation) program. Students in this program not only learn the fundamentals of safe heavy equipment operation, but are now able to learn to repair heavy equipment and diesel engines, leading to possible certification as a diesel technician.

There are many paths to caring

Another programmatic improvement this year is the addition of home health care aide and personal care assistant certifications to our Health Science Careers program. While the backbone of this course is still our certified nursing assistant (CNA) program, we understand that the healthcare landscape in the Mohawk Valley region is one that desperately needs employees in all areas. Working with both the state and local partners, we developed pathways that allow students to leave BOCES with additional credentials and to expand their employability.

Who is PAM?

Well, in this case, PAM is not a person but a program. Formerly known as Outdoor Power Equipment, students in PAM (Power Sports & Agricultural Mechanics) learn the finer points of working on engines in anything from a lawn mower to a farm tractor or a motorcycle to a Jet Ski.

Modeling lifelong learning

According to www.investopedia.com, "Kaizen is a Japanese term meaning change for the better or continuous improvement. It is a Japanese business philosophy that concerns the processes that continuously improve operations and involve all employees. Kaizen sees improvement in productivity as a gradual and methodical process."

Under the leadership of Principal of Technical Education Sheri Perry, teachers have spent the year continually striving to become better at their craft, through the use of targeted and meaningful professional development.

On two separate occasions, teachers have been involved in working with representatives from the New York State Education Department regarding best educational practice in career and technical education.

Successful Open House held

We had incredible turnout for our CTE Open House held Wednesday, March 13, 2024. The theme of the evening was "Back to Basics"



Owen D. Young Central School District junior Cameron Burgher operates a backhoe to clear snow during class in the Herkimer BOCES Heavy Equipment Repair Operations program.

with an emphasis on each of our Technical Education programs showcasing the career paths that can begin at Herkimer BOCES. Perry and her team did a wonderful job recruiting, welcoming and informing prospective students and families about the career opportunities that exist at Herkimer BOCES.

Continued on the next page...



From left: West Canada Valley's Colten Lisowski and Frankfort-Schuyler's Angelo Colicic III and Luka Gregory working in Power Sports & Agricultural Mechanics.



Richfield Springs Central School District junior Jesse Bowman welds during class in the Herkimer BOCES Welding and Metal Fabrication program.

Program highlights continued – updates on some of the many BOCES programs

Enhanced recruitment and work-based learning opportunities

This last year, as part of our alignment to CTE best practice, we hired a full-time work-based learning coordinator and marketing advisor. Melinda Maycock accepted this new role after having been an accomplished teacher of graphic design in our very own Visual Communications Media Arts program. She has worked tirelessly with our counselors and teachers to increase our Sophomore Visitation Day sign-ups by 12% and has single handedly negotiated 15 new articulation agreements with colleges impacting eight CTE programs.

Culinary arts

Our Culinary and Hospitality program catered a dinner for CTE principals and directors who were at Herkimer BOCES for the Nov. 17, 2023, Association of Career and Technical Education Administrators meeting. Our colleagues from other tech centers commented on how good the meal was and how professional the students looked and acted.

VP-TECH attends Engineering Wars

On Oct. 13, 2023, students from the Herkimer BOCES Valley Pathways in Technology Early College High School (VP-TECH) combined with students from the Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES P-TECH to travel to Corning to compete in Engineering Wars. Last year's champions, Greater Southern Tier BOCES, hosted the event. Engineering

Wars presented students with a particular "problem" or task to be solved. Students were challenged to create a solution and had to build a Rube Goldberg machine to carry out the assigned task.

Students Participating on this year's VP-TECH team were: Theresa DeLong (Frankfort-Schuyler), Cooper Jordan (Herkimer), Sarah Maine (Central Valley), Ross Richards III (Herkimer), Keeghan Spring (Central Valley), Caileigh Youker (Dolgeville) and Kaden Kleist (Dolgeville).

Establishing a Community Closet

The VP-TECH Student Council members take great pride in helping their peers in any way they can and are thrilled to have received a generous donation of personal hygiene products from our business partner, H&R Block. Our generous community partner delivered many items to the WEB Complex on Nov. 1, 2023, and after some heavy lifting, organizing and restocking of the Community Closet, it was fully stocked. Donations will always be welcomed from those within



From left: Herkimer junior JayMike Crichton and Little Falls junior Marshall Chandler chop apples together in the Herkimer BOCES Culinary and Hospitality program.

BOCES, other community members or business partners. Interested parties may contact VP-TECH Student Council advisor Samantha Wahl at swahl@herkimer-boces.org for more information or to make donations.

Adult Practical Nursing Program

Submitted by Director of School Services and Outreach Zane Mahar.

A new location

This school year, the Adult Practical Nursing Program successfully moved into a new space in the Herkimer BOCES Gateway Center on the second floor of the Arc Herkimer building at 420 E. German St. in Herkimer. The new location is a wonderful, light, open and airy space for learning. The returning students said they love the change to the new facility.



Herkimer BOCES VP-TECH student Kaden Kleist (left), from Dolgeville Central School District, poses with a student from another region during Engineering Wars.



Herkimer BOCES VP-TECH Student Council members sort items donated by H&R Block and others for use in a Community Closet the Student Council helped set up.

A new hospital

On Oct. 3, 2023, Adult Practical Nursing Program students studying to become licensed practical nurses toured the Wynn Hospital, which is just the third new hospital in New York state in 50 years. The students were welcomed with open arms. Additionally, the Mohawk Valley Health System has begun hiring LPNs back into their hospital system.

More clinical opportunities

We have expanded our clinical rotations to include our community associate Herkimer Bassett Convenient Care for our weekend students. This offers more opportunities for these students. Additionally, MVHS hopes to expand office hours for their medical offices to the weekends, and we will be offering that location to the weekend students.

Presenting to the state

Adult Practical Nursing Program Coordinator Lesa Steele presented for the state Board of Regents on Jan. 8-9. Steele accompanied a select few other nurse educators from across the state to present what simulated nursing clinical experiences look like in the state.

Step-Up to Nursing Program

The Step-Up to Nursing Program is a pilot program started this school year for students who need a little extra assistance with study skills due to either a perceived or actual educational gap due to being English as a second language learners, high school graduates from during COVID-19 or adult learners. We currently have six students in this program.

LPN partnering with CTE

We have joined into an articulation agreement with the Herkimer BOCES Health Science Careers program, a CTE program for students in grades 11-12, for a smooth transition of students into the LPN program. The adult LPN program and the high school Health Science Careers program also have collaborated to combine their advisory boards. In addition, two graduates of last year's adult LPN class who are now LPNs are joining the board this year.

Special and alternative education

Submitted by Director of Special Education and Alternative Education Roberta Matthews.

Business and community connections:

Our Herkimer BOCES classes benefit from the expertise of our region's business and community connections to strengthen student learning and to collaborate with experts in our area.

One example of this in special education is the connection with the Government, Postal, and Occupational Federal Credit Union, (GPO). GPO works with our students at Central Valley periodically to help them learn how to budget



Central Valley senior Brianna Williams (right) practices with Herkimer senior Marcéla Hartman (left) during class in the Health Science Careers program.

their money. Lessons such as budgeting can take on new meaning for students when presented by a known business. This gives students unique experiences and deepens the learning.

We have students participating in the BASE Program this year. The BASE program is a collaboration with Upstate Cerebral Palsy and provides Pre-Employment Transition Services. This program also supports students with the following pre-employment services: job exploration counseling (discuss career options and learn about in-demand jobs), work-based learning experiences (experience and gain knowledge about the workplace), counseling on post-secondary opportunities (explore training options available after graduation), workplace readiness training (improve social and independent living skills) and instruction

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Herkimer BOCES Adult Practical Nursing program student Samantha Horning practices with a mannequin in one of the new Gateway Center nursing labs.



Herkimer BOCES special education students and teachers participate in a Halloween parade outside the WEB Complex.

Program highlights continued – updates on some of the many BOCES programs

in self-advocacy (learn skills needed for greater independence).

Students may also be referred to ACCESS-VR. The goals for both BASE and ACCESS-VR are to ensure that all students with disabilities are prepared for employment, post-secondary education and community living when they leave school. Students are enjoying their experiences and learning valuable career skills at the same time.

Both our special education and preschool classes also collaborate with the districts where they are located. Students at Gregory B. Jarvis Middle School participated in Career Day. Students and their families at Central Valley Academy participated in a Transition Night. Preschool children donated dog/cat food and other animal supplies to a local animal shelter.

At Pathways, we are working with Catholic Charities on topics such as healthy relations. Representatives from Catholic Charities meet with students during their lunch period and present a topic of interest along with an art activity. February was Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Students learned about the characteristics of healthy relationships as well as some potential relationship red flags.

These experiences are just a small sampling of the collaboration that we experience both in our host schools and in our community.

Transition planning in special education and alternative education:

Malcolm X said, "Education is the passport

to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today." Herkimer BOCES is preparing now for program spaces for the future. At the end of this school year, we will be undergoing a building project at the William E. Busacker Complex. This will require some moves, some condensing of spaces and a great deal of patience.

Immediately after the closing of the 2023-2024 school year, the special education classes housed at the WEB Complex will move to Pathways. Our Pathways staff are generously making room for their colleagues. Our administrators are working through every detail so that both schools will have access to everything that they need without imposing on each other's spaces. Parent letters have been sent home, and a Zoom meeting is planned for late spring. Although there is no doubt that this will be a challenging time, the opportunity for administrators and teachers to collaborate daily in addition to the newly designed and updated special education wing at the WEB Complex are some of the positive



Herkimer BOCES preschool and prekindergarten students have a variety of positive experiences at schools across the Herkimer BOCES region.

outcomes that we are focusing on.

Preschool/prekindergarten:

Our preschool teachers have developed a Curriculum Committee to look at our current curriculum materials and research other materials. Led by our new Preschool/Prekindergarten Supervisor Abigail Izzo Broekhuizen, the Curriculum Committee meets monthly.

Recently, our preschool/prekindergarten teachers worked with Herkimer BOCES Instructional Support Services Supervisor Ruth Leavitt and our ISS team to apply for a grant from the Community Foundation. The grant would allow us to purchase materials for various kits. These kits would then be circulated between our preschool/



From left: Frankfort-Schuyler's Aiden Johnston and Herkimer's Adrianna Burris and Kendra Sheffler present for Pathways Academy at the Youth Summit.



Renderings are shown here for the Herkimer BOCES Capital Project, including color-coded hallways and modern classrooms.

prekindergarten classes along with play-based lesson plans. We are very hopeful that we will be awarded this grant.

Capital Project

Submitted by Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services James Picolla.

Under construction: exciting project updates ahead

The Capital Project team has been working for over a year evaluating the physical condition of our buildings, meeting with stakeholders and designing buildings that will meet the future needs of our students.

The overall effort of this phase is to upgrade and improve the infrastructure of the entire WEB Complex as well as to improve the teaching spaces for our special programs classrooms.

The special programs wing will feature three classroom suites, each with three classrooms, a counselor office, timeout room and storage. Every classroom in the wing will have its own bathroom.

Included in this phase are completely redesigned special education and upper CTE wings along with updates to the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC), networking, fire alarm system, blue light security system, cameras, clocks, public address (PA) system, door access system, lighting, flooring, fencing, plumbing and electrical work.

When done, much of the WEB Complex will look like a new building on the inside.

Project timeline

- January 2024: SED approval
- February 2024: contract awards
- June 2024: WEB Complex relocation
- June 2024- August 2025: WEB Complex construction
- Fall 2025: WEB Complex closeout

Construction at the WEB Complex will begin in July 2024. The entire special programs wing will be out of use throughout the summer, with some of the rooms returning to use in December 2024.

The backside of the upper CTE hallway will be under construction December 2024 to August 2025.

Technical education rooms in the upper CTE hallway will experience "rolling relocations" beginning in January 2025 through August 2025.

Lower CTE will experience night work January 2025 through August 2025.

Student transition plan

The goal of our student transition plan is to move students as few times as possible while maintaining program integrity and supporting district needs for transportation.

This summer, the entire special programs at the WEB Complex will relocate to the Remington Educational Complex for the 2024-25 school year.

At Remington, classrooms will be grouped by program, and they will be able to stay in

their space for the year. Pathways Academy and special programs will share the building.

Adult Literacy programs will move to the WEB Complex for the 2024-25 school year. Their spaces will change periodically to accommodate the construction schedule.

Beginning in January 2025, upper tech classes will experience rolling relocations for one to two months each while work is completed in the space. Lower CTE classrooms and labs will remain occupied for the duration. These spaces will experience night, weekend and vacation/break work.

Our intent is to have everyone located in their new spaces for the beginning of the 2025-26 year.

Contract bids

Bids for Phase 1b came in below our projections. The Herkimer BOCES Board of Education awarded all bids and alternates in February.

Contracts awarded were:

- General contractor: Putrelo
- Mechanical: H.J. Brandeles
- Plumbing: DiGesare Mechanical
- Electrical: S.C. Spencer Electric
- Controls and Security: Day Automation

More information

Visit <https://www.herkimer-boces.org/page/capitalproject> for additional information and updates on the capital project.

A special 'thank you' goes out to...

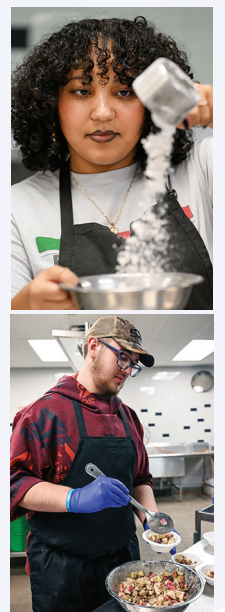
The West Canada Valley Jazz Ensemble directed by Scott Bonney for performing during the Herkimer BOCES 2024 Annual Meeting.

Pictured, rhythm section: Grayce Harvey, Glenn Broadbent and Brianna Muthig. Trumpets: Olivia Broadbent, Mya Johnson and Isabella Schrader. Trombones: Alexa McManus and Lily Williams. Saxophones: Margaret Jones, Madelyn Allen, Agafya Karyagina, William Muthig, Liam Fisher, Olivia Ray, Isaac Gilbert and Emma Canelo. Not pictured members of the ensemble: Tony

Smith, Jack Stewart, Madalyn Gross, Louis Clarke, Evelyn Russett, Logan Maida and Yevgeniy Karyagin.

The Herkimer BOCES Culinary and Hospitality program

led by long-term substitute teacher Andrea Elsenbeck and teaching assistant Angeline Farrington for providing hospitality, desserts and drinks for the meeting to go along with food provided by local vendors. Culinary students pictured here on right: Herkimer senior Isabella Meeker (top) and Poland junior Titan Warney (bottom).



Community Partnership Award: Human Resource Directions provides 'valuable benefit' to school staff in BOCES region

Whenever employees of Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES and the 10 component school districts have needed someone to talk to about their mental health or other concerns, Human Resource Directions has been there as the Employee Assistance Program for the region.

For this reason, Herkimer BOCES leaders named Human Resource Directions as the winner of the Herkimer BOCES 2024 Community Partnership Award.

Human Resource Directions President Linda Yost said she was excited when she found out about winning the award.

"The Herkimer BOCES family has been a wonderful partner," Yost said. "It's an honor and privilege to be able to serve them. The award is wonderful, but the real joy for me is the ability to serve the employees. I have a warm spot in my heart for educators."

Yost will accept the 2024 Community Partnership Award from Herkimer BOCES during the Herkimer BOCES 2024 Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 11, at the Herkimer BOCES William E. Busacker Complex.

Herkimer BOCES District Superintendent D.J. Shepardson said Human Resource Directions was selected due to Yost and the organization continuously showing commitment to supporting the employees of Herkimer BOCES and the 10 component districts.

"The plethora of services your agency provides to our employees and our component districts is of a wide range that can assist families no matter what stage of life they are in," Shepardson said. "The BOCES Board of Education and the component superintendents are grateful to be able to offer this valuable benefit to its staff."

Shepardson said Yost and the Human Resource Directions team are "true partners in education and the well-being of our staff."

"Thank you so much for your dedication on behalf of our students, schools and community," Shepardson said.

Yost founded and owns Human Resource Directions. She has been operating the agency for 28 years and makes services available

24/7, 365 days per year – or 366 days on leap years such as 2024.

The Human Resource Directions team includes a full array of clinicians to address any issue that may come up. There is a focus on coaching for success in addition to traditional clinical counseling, Yost said. Wellness coaching, relationship coaching, financial coaching, career support and legal advice are all available, she said.

Before starting Human Resource Directions, Yost worked for the New York State Office of Mental Health at several local psychiatric facilities, and she found the medical model lacking in some aspects. This led to her launching Human Resource Directions to help make the process easier for people and provide completely confidential services.

"We are a different kind of EAP," she said. "I created a model where we actually take care of everything and everybody."

Human Resource Directions works with more than 100 schools, as well as manufacturing companies, banks and colleges. The services are also offered to everyone who lives with employees of schools or companies that the agency works with.

Human Resource Directions has its main office in Utica and has offices in Herkimer and Rome. Members of the team are available to work with employees on the phone, through Zoom Telehealth, in one of the offices or even at the workplace.

"Our services are very comprehensive," Yost said. "There's no charge. You can come to us as many times as you want."

Yost and her team members also appreciate the opportunity that assisting local employees provides for them to make a difference, Yost said.



Human Resource Directions owner and President Linda Yost.

"Most of the problems are fixable," Yost said. "It's rewarding work."

Helping employees across the region improve their lives is what it's all about, Yost said.

"For everybody who comes to us, our cumulative goal is for them to leave our service feeling better," she said.



There's always a place to talk at Human Resource Directions.

Student Spotlight: Student finds academic success and career aspirations through Pathways Academy and CTE program

As a sophomore, while struggling with a traditional school environment and not having any career plans yet, student Hadyn Miller made a decision to entrust the last two years of his high school education completely to Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES.

To start his junior year, Miller joined both the Herkimer BOCES Pathways Academy and the Herkimer BOCES Advanced Manufacturing program. Now, as a senior, he has turned around his academics, enjoys school and has plans to work locally in the advanced manufacturing industry right out of high school.

Miller now feels “a lot” differently about school and his career path than he did before discovering the BOCES programs.

“I didn’t even know that this existed,” Miller said. “In 10th grade, I didn’t even know what I wanted to do, and now, I figured it out. I hope to do this for the rest of my life.”

Miller, a Poland Central School District student, attends the Herkimer BOCES Advanced Manufacturing program in the mornings at the Herkimer BOCES William E. Busacker Complex in East Herkimer. He attends the Herkimer BOCES Pathways Academy in the afternoons at the Herkimer BOCES Remington Educational Complex in Ilion.

That Miller has been able to improve his school experience through the two BOCES programs and discover a career he wants to pursue serves as an example of how important it is to find the right subject or program to spark motivation in a student, Herkimer BOCES Director of School Services and Outreach Zane Mahar said.

“I think it speaks volumes – in a general sense – if you find something that a student’s interested in, and it holds their interest and they can see there’s meaningful work and they can make a living doing this, it gives them a



Herkimer BOCES Advanced Manufacturing and Pathways Academy senior Hadyn Miller, from Poland Central School District, operates machinery in class in the Advanced Manufacturing Program.

light at the end of the tunnel,” Mahar said. “They can see, ‘Oh, I get why I’m learning this. This isn’t just something to get a high school diploma. This is something that will set me up for life.’”

A new pathway

The Herkimer BOCES Pathways Academy is an alternative education school focused on students who have had a difficult time in a traditional school structure or have to catch up on credits but have the ability to get a high school diploma. Pathways Academy classes are project-driven and infuse career and technical education.

When attending Pathways Academy was suggested to Miller in response to how things were going for him at school academically and otherwise, Miller didn’t initially want to attend the Pathways Academy. He was told he could also join a Herkimer BOCES Career and Technical Education program if he went to Pathways, so he decided to give it a chance.

He’s glad he did.

“I was struggling with my school grades, so I figured going to Pathways and CTE would

make it easier on myself – which it has,” Miller said. “My grades have really improved a lot.”

Miller also recognized he did need to make a change away from a traditional school environment.

“It just wasn’t for me anymore,” he said.

Pathways Academy allowed him to make that change. At first, it was hard to be away from his home school, but that is no longer the case, and he prefers being at Pathways Academy.

“Luckily for me, there’s a lot of great teachers there,” Miller said. “I love that place now.”

A fateful placement

The Advanced Manufacturing program is one of 14 two-year CTE programs for juniors and seniors at Herkimer BOCES. The program focuses on setting up and operating various manual machines and building machine parts using modern manufacturing processes.

Continued on the next page...

Student Spotlight continued...

Advanced Manufacturing instructor Peter Stone's classroom is designed as a factory setting – ranging from creating a drawing to ordering parts, manufacturing, inspection, assembling and marketing. Students gain knowledge in understanding process engineering, basic tool design and quality control. Students learn skills in the areas of entry-level machinist, inspection and working in a manufacturing environment.

Miller initially requested to join one of two other CTE programs as his first choices: Welding and Metal Fabrication or Automotive Technology. He got placed into Advanced Manufacturing because the other programs were full, and he was disappointed at first because he wanted to be with some of his friends from Poland who got into Welding.

Now, he's glad for that fateful result because Advanced Manufacturing has allowed him to find both a career path and new friends.

"I actually think it was a good thing I got put in here because I think I've had a better time in here than I would in any class," Miller said. "I'm glad I got put in here because I like the guys in here."

It didn't take Miller long to learn that he enjoyed Advanced Manufacturing and having Stone as his teacher.

"When I first came into the class and started getting into it, I figured this is something I probably want to do for the rest of my life," Miller said. "I love this program. It's been the best time of my junior and senior year. This class has been a lot of fun."

Stone said Miller has been a strong student.

"He's interested," Stone said. "He likes the hands-on stuff."

Mahar said it has been a pleasure to have Miller in the building as a CTE student.

"He's a very respectful young man," Mahar said.

"He's pretty driven

for success here in this program."

A good foundation

Stone graduated from the Herkimer BOCES Machine Shop program in 1979, operated his own shop and worked in the machining and advanced manufacturing industry his whole life. He knows the value BOCES provides to students who might have otherwise become disenfranchised in their education.

"All students aren't good at English and normal curriculum," Stone said. "There are a lot of talented kids that don't just fit the mold, and that's what trade schools do. There's lots of guys in the trades making more money than lawyers."

Local companies have started asking Stone for recommendations for hires, and he only recommends students who can do the job, he said.

One time, a company was trying to get Stone to work for them, and Stone said he was happy at BOCES but that if he still had his own shop, he would hire a specific student. Stone



From left, Mount Markham seniors Thomas Doremus and Owen Cooley run a machine during Advanced Manufacturing at Herkimer BOCES.

called the student over, and the company hired the student without hesitation.

"They'll have a good foundation when they come out of here, and then they have to grow from there," Stone said. "Most of these manufacturers will train."

A young worker right out of high school won't be put right in with expensive materials without a lot of experience, but hiring someone with a BOCES education gives the employer an employee with enough knowledge and skills to build upon.

"The student has to prove himself, and then he gets moved forward; he gets promoted in the workforce," Stone said. "What we're doing here, we're giving you a strong foundation to go out there and basically build your house – build your reputation, build your house – and be successful."

Stone said that path will work for Miller, as it did for himself.

"That's what BOCES does," Stone said. "BOCES did that for me. They gave me a good foundation, and I went out and got into an apprenticeship and built my own place. That's one of the reasons I'm here. I want to pay it back because BOCES did me well. Thousands of kids have gone through the BOCES over the years and done really well."



Frankfort-Schuyler junior Skyer O'Dell programs a CNC lathe during class in the Herkimer BOCES Advanced Manufacturing program.

A career connection

Representatives from Riverhawk Co. in New Hartford took a tour on Oct. 24, 2023, of several Herkimer BOCES CTE programs and discussed with students the need for qualified employees to fill machinist positions in the area. Riverhawk Co. designs and manufactures innovations for hydraulic tooling and instrumentation solutions.

Stone recommended Riverhawk Co. to Miller, and Miller became very interested in working there.

"He was just taken with that, that he could put his machining skills to use, and there's a good-paying job, and they're looking for workers," Mahar said. "Since then, he's actually gone above and beyond in the program – having Pete teach him some of the extras."

Miller is one of the students that Stone is happy to recommend to Riverhawk or other companies as well.

"I have a high degree of confidence in him," Stone said. "He wants to do a good job."

Miller said Riverhawk Co. would be a good fit for him because the company trains workers as they go. He hopes to work there right after graduation from high school.

"And they pay good, so that would be nice," Miller said.

It's great that Stone has a lot of connections in the advanced manufacturing industry and knowledge to help students prepare for the work, Miller said, so he is putting in extra effort to learn everything he can.

"I find a lot of the stuff in here really interesting, and I want to get to know how to do all the stuff in here," Miller said. "Like the lathe over there, I want to figure out how to run that completely before I graduate because it will help me with getting a good job."

Miller's goals include working at Riverhawk Co. and then eventually



Representatives from Riverhawk Co. speak to Herkimer BOCES students about machining job opportunities during a BOCES tour on Oct. 24, 2023.

working for Collins Aerospace in Rome to continue in advanced manufacturing.

"That's kind of my dream job," Miller said. "They pay a lot of money. That's probably the No. 1 thing."

A moment of reflection

Sitting recently at a desk in the Advanced Manufacturing classroom as students around him operated machines and Stone provided guidance to students, Miller reflected on the path that took him to Herkimer BOCES and set him up for a successful career.

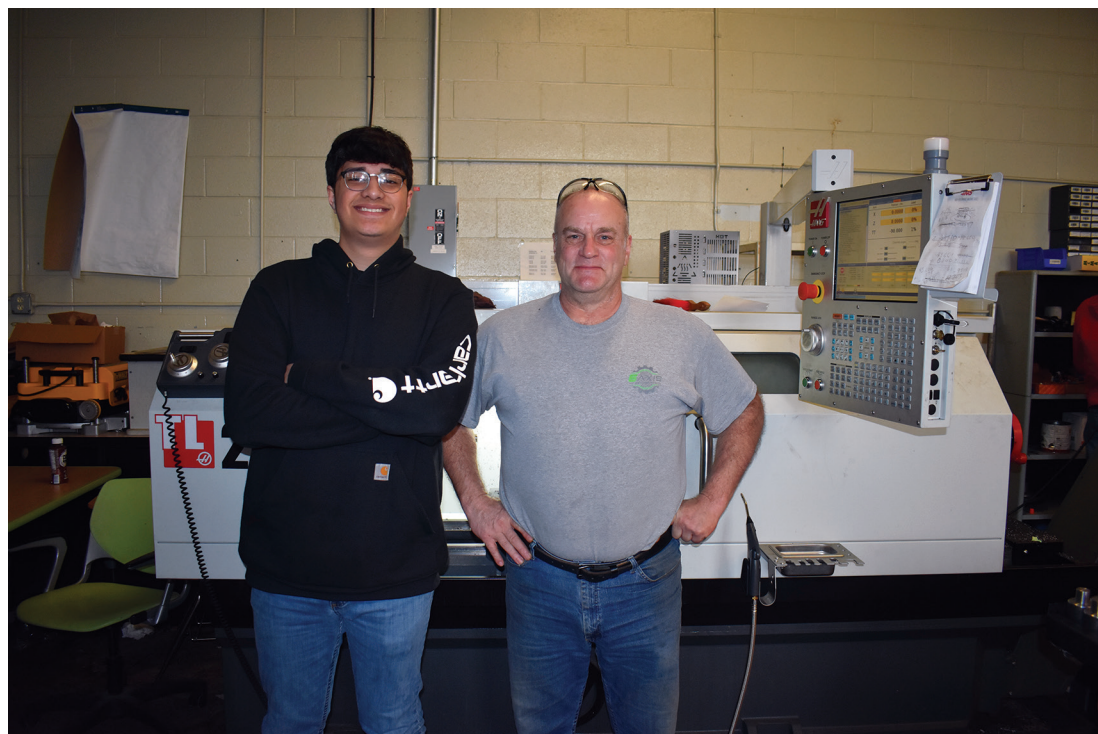
"It's really good," Miller said. "I come here, do my work, go to Pathways, kind of the same thing – chill out. I actually have a good time going to school now."

Miller said he would recommend to other students – and has done so during Sophomore Visitation Day – that they should join a CTE program, particularly Advanced Manufacturing. Miller said CTE programs allow you to learn a lot of skills and almost always get a job after high school if you choose to.

"I would strongly suggest that they come here," Miller said. "It would be a great use of half their day."

Miller is grateful to Herkimer BOCES and his teachers for supporting him through both the Pathways Academy and the Advanced Manufacturing program, improving his education and preparing him for a lifetime of work.

"It's really helped me. It's been a huge part of my learning path," Miller said. "Mr. Stone has always helped me with whatever I really need. He's been a great teacher. The same at Pathways – I've had amazing teachers."



Herkimer BOCES Advanced Manufacturing senior Hadyn Miller and instructor Peter Stone pose together in front of a CNC lathe in the Advanced Manufacturing classroom at Herkimer BOCES.

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