
NCPN Florida Student Showcase: A Win-Win for Conference Attendees and Students

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Forty career pathway students from across Florida recently participated in the Florida Student Showcase during the 2011 National Career Pathways Network Conference in Orlando, Florida. Sponsored by the Florida Career Pathways Network, the student showcase was part of the main exhibit hall and highlighted a total of twelve exceptional secondary and postsecondary career pathway programs in ten of the sixteen "career clusters" identified by the United States Department of Education. The following programs were showcased:

- Academy of Future Teachers, St. Augustine High School, St. Johns County
- A/C Refrigeration and Heating Service Technology, Santa Fe College, Gainesville
- Aviation Institute, Broward College, Pembroke Pines
- Building Construction Management Technology, Santa Fe College, Gainesville
- CyberPatriot, Air Force Association's Cyber Defense Competition, Orlando
- Digital Design, Jensen Beach High School, Martin County
- Engineering Technology, Lakewood Ranch High School, Manatee County
- Health Careers Academy, Tavares High School, Lake County
- Health science Academy, Bradford-Union Area Career Technical Center, Starke
- Lakeland Electric Power Academy, Tenoroc High School, Polk County
- Veterinary Assisting Academy, Fort Pierce Westwood High School, St. Lucie County

- Welding Program, Santa Fe High College, Gainesville

Including students in the conference gave students, educators, and other career pathways stakeholders a unique opportunity to interact with and learn from each other. Conference-goers learned first-hand about career pathways programs from some of Florida's best and brightest students as they perused showcase exhibits that included table displays, pictures, video, program-specific equipment, and demonstrations. Health Science Academy students from the Bradford-Union Area Technical Center gave free health assessments that included a blood pressure screening and blood sugar testing. Students enjoyed interacting on a professional level with educators and each other. They passionately shared, with conference attendees and each other, information about their chosen career pathway and the programs that are preparing them for continuing education and careers.



Having career pathway students at the NCPN conference, as one might expect, was a definite boon for the conference and those attending. It was perhaps less noticeable, but particularly uplifting, to witness how much the students benefited. But don't take my word for it! Below are examples of feedback from students who participated in the showcase:

“I enjoyed learning about all the different career pathways people were interested in and I loved being able to explain more about my own career pathway. I liked how a lot of the pathways mixed with each other—for instance, our Allied Health group and the Sports Medicine group got along very well. We both had a lot of information to share with each other because of the closeness of our fields.” – **Chelsea Aldrich**



“I was able to work on my speaking skills, especially in a professional way. I enjoyed getting the chance to talk to people and spread awareness of our academy and all of the great things we do.” – **Andrea Schwenk**

“I enjoyed the experience of meeting people from all over the world.” – **Anthony Tran**

“I believe other students would benefit greatly from this experience because it gives a student a chance to interact with people in a professional setting.” – **Brittney Robinson**

“I enjoyed interacting with people. I was able to work on my speaking skills, especially in a professional way. The food was pretty good too!” – **Alicia Bailey**

The Florida Student Showcase was truly a win-win event for those attending the NCPN Conference and for the career pathways students who benefited greatly from the experience.

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