



2022 EXCELLENCE IN PRACTICE AWARDS

Two Michigan schools have received the prestigious 2022 Excellence in Practice Awards from the Michigan Department of Education, recognizing exemplary practices in preparing Michigan's students for careers and higher education.

The Career and Technical Education Outstanding Program Award recognizes a successful, exemplary, state-approved career and technical education program that demonstrates outstanding outcomes, produces measurable results, and leads to documented success in employment or postsecondary education/training.

This year's winner is **Kent Career Tech Center: Health Science Program.**

When any Kent County student thinks about pursuing a health career, their counselors know right where to steer them: KCTC, a program of Kent ISD. KCTC's health department is an outstanding, rigorous program renowned throughout the community. Our postsecondary and local healthcare partners seek out our quality students. The KCTC Health program is for students interested in learning the skills to succeed in the healthcare field. The recommended path for high school juniors is to begin in Health Careers Foundations to learn about the multiple types of health careers available. After the first year, students have the opportunity to pursue a national certification in the second-year courses: Diagnostics (Phlebotomy, Cardiography, X-Ray), Certified Nurse Technician, Patient Care Technician, Emergency Medical Services, Medical Assistant, Pharmacy, and Sports Medicine and Therapies.

Enrolled students are engaged not only in classroom instruction, hands-on activities, and lab-based skill experiences, but also meaningful on-site opportunities: partnering with doctors, nurses, physical therapists, emergency workers, and many others, through guest speaker visits, field trips, work-based learning opportunities, professional mentoring, and sustained clinical internships. Innovative activities and demonstrations help students apply the information learned in class, enabling them to be effective communicators, critical thinkers, and life-long learners, as demonstrated by health scores on KCTC's Career and Employability skills (soft skills). The learning environment and additional opportunities reflect the real workplace students might encounter during a career as a healthcare professional.

KCTC teachers were amazing during the COVID pandemic and did not miss a learning opportunity. They utilized the pre-planning done in anticipation of a shutdown. The importance of being prepared with lessons that were engaging and still fulfilled state requirements was one thing learned during this pandemic. They began to think differently. Cameras were utilized to demonstrate skills to students. Students demonstrated skills at home and recorded on their phones, staff utilized learning management systems that they had not tried previously and tried many types of online games and resources to keep learning





moving forward! All KCTC health classes still completed their courses and certifications with the same level of intensity normally displayed in their classrooms. They made sure that every student was connected and kept up with their normal level of work. They even taught students what professional looked like on Zoom----sitting up straight, turning on the camera (no black screens at KCTC), and even still requiring students to wear their scrubs!

The Career and College Readiness Initiative Award recognizes outstanding practices, programs, or services that demonstrate exemplary support of career/college planning for students (that include their interests, abilities, and skills), promotion of high academic expectations, and linking secondary course taking (including CTE) to prepare for postsecondary education and careers.

This year's winner is **Charlevoix-Emmet Intermediate School District: Construction Trades Continuum Initiative.**

Charlevoix-Emmet Intermediate School District (Char-Em ISD) has developed a Construction Trades Continuum that provides scaffolding for students to begin their journey in the construction trades field. Students in grades 6-12 and postgraduates up to 20 years old develop knowledge and skills as it relates to the construction field while earning specific industry recognized credentials, articulated credit to post-secondary partners, and/or employment directly after high school.

Students in grades 6-8 within Char-Em ISD receive their first experience in Construction Trades through a 3-day summer program where they learn the know-how and develop the hands-on skills it takes to be successful in the building trades. Through the process of building a 10x16 ft shed, students learn safety skills and proper operation of a variety of hand and power tools. Students also learn floor and wall layout, differences between rafters and trusses, and how to frame in a roof with rafters. Other important knowledge these young students gain about the building trades includes meeting code for residential construction further broadening their horizons. Through this 3-day summer camp, students gain a strong foundation for success in the next phase of their Construction Trades journey.

Students then have the option to enroll in one of five Construction Technology high school CTE programs to further their skills, knowledge, and certification. At this point in their journey, they receive their first experience with local business and industry via real-life, hands-on projects, MiCareerQuest event, job shadows, mock interviews, resume preparation, soft skill development, financial literacy, state and industry recognized credentials such as the 60-hour Pre-Licensure, along with supplemental certifications, the students have the opportunity to explore full property development beginning with the construction of the house all the way to installing irrigation systems and landscaping. This allows students to gain a





better understanding of what goes into property development and management. After this experience, they have an additional opportunity to explore which involves giving back to their community and further developing their knowledge and leadership skills.

When students reach ages 16-20, they are given the opportunity to participate in the Construction Trades Summer Work Program, an 8-week paid summer work experience in partnership with Michigan Works! where students receive a \$14 per hour stipend. In this program, students build new construction facilities within northern Michigan communities. After the completion of the new buildings, students have an opportunity to participate in a one-week job shadow with local business and industry professionals, where they further apply the foundational skills, they have learned, this time at a live construction site. Birchwood Construction, a local partner, opened their doors through job shadows, job interviews, and side-by-side, hands-on work. In addition, each student is equipped with a brand-new pair of work boots and a starter tool set. After completion of the program, each student receives an additional stipend of \$500 to purchase additional tools and equipment.

