The School-Business Partnership Executive Council with the Loudoun Education Foundation will hold its annual Partnership Breakfast on Friday, March 8, 2019. Last year’s event had a record-breaking, 800+ participants.

Each year, we are honored to show our appreciation for the amazing businesses and community organizations that show their support for Loudoun County students. Partnerships vary from volunteer time, expert feedback, and internships to financial sponsorships and classroom resources.

Please join us this year in celebrating the schools and organizations that work so hard to provide quality experiences for the students of Loudoun County. The event will be held at the National Conference Center in Leesburg, Virginia.

To register, CLICK HERE.
Community Connections & PBL Workshop

Community partners join with teacher teams to plan powerful PBL projects.

Loudoun County Public Schools has been training their teachers in Project Based Learning or PBL for years now. Through that training, we have realized the importance of involving community partners in the work. Partners allow students to have meaningful experiences that mimic real-world situations and involve an audience beyond the classroom.

On January 16, 2019, six teams of teachers from all over the county joined six prominent business partners to plan together. The workshop, which was originally designed by Dr. Eric Williams, Superintendent, was led by Dr. Ashley Ellis, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction.

Potowmack Elementary (5th Grade) teachers were partnered with Loudoun Water. Guilford Elementary (5th grade) teachers were partnered with the Energy Management office from LCPS. Harper Park Middle School (7th Grade History) worked with Morven Park. Family and Consumer Science Teachers (7th/8th Grade FACS) joined forces to partner with the Nutrition office from LCPS. John Champe High School combined computer science and environmental science to plan a project with their partner, USGIF, United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation. Riverside High School (Biology) was partnered with Janelia Research Campus.

By the end of the day, all teams had a draft project plan that involved multiple touchpoints with their business partner. Some teams will utilize skype to connect with a variety of people from their partner organization. Other teams have invited their partner out to the school to help present the driving question to students. Many teams will use the resources that each partner so willingly gave them access to.

Teachers were treated to lunch by Ford’s Fish Shack and joined by its owner, Tony Stafford, who ended up volunteering to support a project as well. The energy in the room was contagious. As an added bonus, teachers were surprised by a check presentation from Apple Federal Credit Union with the Loudoun Education Foundation. The teams were encouraged to "dream big" with their project plans and awarded Impact Grants of $1000 each to support this work.

We look forward to continuing workshops like this one. At the end of the day teachers said that the opportunity to sit alongside their community partners allowed them to think deeply about their projects and plan experiences for the students that mimic what they will see in the real-world.

The structure of the day allowed for teacher teams to come with an idea for a project and learn alongside their community partners to align the idea with the PBL project path. All participants had time to think about what it means to truly partner with a business. One of the day’s main objectives was to have "community organizations and businesses identify distinct areas of support they can offer to a school partner’s project."
Wildflour Caterers Puts Its Mission Into Practice

Visit them at wildflourcaters.com or watch their featured video HERE

The mission statement of Wildflour Caterers is to "employ and empower people with disabilities to help them achieve independence and integration in the workplace and in the community." They carry out this mission everyday through their training program, which involves teaching employees basic cooking skills and rotating them to different stations with the guidance of an experienced chef.

Under the direction of Alberto Sangiorgio, the company is currently celebrating 25 years of serving the community. The inclusive practices of the business create a positive working environment and produce great food.

Wildflour currently maintains a large waitlist of perspective employees. They are excited to expand their business to producing dog biscuits for Amazon and Whole Foods. They are also creating a dinner-to-go option that will open up even more employment opportunities. When walking through the kitchen of Wildflour, you can feel the positive energy and see how each employee is valued, supported and loved.

student engagement highlight

LITTLE RIVER ELEMENTARY PTA BRINGS IN THE CHILDREN'S SCIENCE CENTER

The Children's Science Center, operating out of Fair Oaks Mall, is known for their support of STEM activities. Through the support of the PTA, Little River Elementary students were able to visit STEM stations and get hands-on experience during their annual Science Night. The Children's Science Center is currently working on an expansion to a Loudoun County location in the next 5 years. Their partnership with LCPS includes events like this one, as well as school assemblies, field trips and hosting Job for a Day students.
EDGE Plus Academy: Experiences Designed for Growth and Excellence

EDGE Plus makes its mark in LCPS

The EDGE Plus Academy is growing in Loudoun. Students at Forest Grove, Sully, Guilford, Sterling, Meadowland and Sugarland Elementary Schools have the opportunity to participate in the EDGE program.

The program has expanded this year to include EDGE Level Up, which provides STEM opportunities to middle school students. This year, Sterling and Seneca Ridge Middle Schools are offering the program.

The Loudoun Education Foundation was instrumental in supporting the program from the beginning. A grant from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation kickstarted the program and it is supported through financial means and volunteer commitments by the following partners: HSBC Bank USA, N.A., Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Northrup Grumman, SalesForce and the Bill Merritt Foundation.

Students involved in the program are given time to explore STEM challenges with the support of teachers and business partners. EDGE Plus focuses on ways that students can develop a growth mindset, work collaboratively, and get exposure to real-world challenging problems.

In a letter to the Jack Kent Cook Foundation, Ashly from Sugarland Elementary writes, "Even though I don't know you, I know that you have changed the thinking of many kids, I thank you for that." What Ashly and her classmates now know is that having a growth mindset and showing a strong commitment to a project will lead to success. The EDGE Plus and EDGE Level Up programs are preparing students for rigorous coursework in advanced classes in middle and high school.

How can YOU be more involved?

SCHOOLS, BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

To learn more about Partnerships out in the field:  http://bit.ly/2PhYr34

To register your business or organization:  Click Here

Recognize a partnership by tagging us and following us on Twitter:  @CommunityLcps