National Manufacturing Day
UCS students learn about STEM careers from industry professionals

In Utica Community Schools, we build on our students’ sense of discovery by creating a wide array of academic opportunities that begin to provide clarity to a question they started asking in elementary school: “What do I want to be when I grow up?”

We believe it is never too early for families to begin planning their children’s unique academic pathway toward becoming educated, capable adults.

Nearly 200 UCS high school students explored possible career paths as part of the October 3 National Manufacturing (MFG) Day to promote interest in modern manufacturing jobs and the industry’s value to the U.S. economy.

Engineers, software designers and other professionals at several local companies took part in the event, offering students first-hand exposure to viable STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) careers related to manufacturing – everything from

Please turn to page 2 to review the non-homestead renewal ballot proposal
Utica Community Schools

NON-HOMESTEAD MILLAGE RENEWAL

What’s on the NOVEMBER 4 ballot?

RENEWAL OF NON-HOMESTEAD MILLAGE

This proposal would renew the existing authority of Utica Community Schools to levy 17.9316 mills on non-homestead property (such as rental, industrial and commercial property) for general operating purposes which expired with the 2014 levy. Owner occupied homes and qualified agricultural property are exempt from this levy.

As a renewal of existing authority which expired with the 2014 levy, shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be imposed on taxable non-homestead property in Utica Community Schools, County of Macomb, Michigan, be increased by 17.9316 mills ($17.9316 per $1,000 of taxable value) for ten (10) years, the years 2015 to 2024, inclusive, to provide funds for operating expenses of Utica Community Schools?

If approved, this millage would generate an estimated $27,000,000 for the School District in 2015.

The Non-Homestead Millage Renewal will appear in the proposals section near the bottom of the Nov. 4 General Election ballot.

More information about the UCS non-homestead millage renewal is available at www.uticak12.org/renewal or by calling the UCS millage renewal hotline 586.797.2800.

University and business partners expand career-based learning

Ford Motor Company, UM–Flint, OU and MCC partner with UCS to propel students forward

Utica Community Schools recently became one of the first metro Detroit districts to partner with Ford Motor Company in the automaker’s initiative known as Ford Next Generation Learning, which enables Utica Center for Science and Industry students to job-shadow Ford employees in a school to work program.

Ford also will begin offering internship opportunities and mentoring programs to qualifying UCS students. In addition, corporate representatives will speak in district classrooms about career development.

Also expanded this year is the district’s cooperative agreement with University of Michigan-Flint which offers UCS high school students the opportunity to take college-level classes in engineering or medical science from the globally-recognized U of M network.

UCS has also joined with Oakland University and Early College of Macomb to offer our students opportunities for college credit or to experience a university setting long before they earn their high school diplomas.

In UCS, education now reaches well beyond the typical K-12 classroom.

AP Scholars honored

Students who successfully pass their exam(s) with scores of 3, 4 or 5 (on a 1 to 5 scale) may be eligible to receive college credit.

Specifically, the College Board granted:

• AP Scholar status to 170 UCS students who earned scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP exams.

• AP Scholar with Honor status to 59 students who attained an average score of at least 3.25 on all AP exams taken and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams.

• National Scholar status to 10 students who attained an average score of at least 4 on all AP exams taken and scores of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams.

UCS offers 27 Advanced Placement course choices at its secondary schools. Last year, 1,782 students took a total of 2,852 AP exams.

Manufacturing Day

skilled trades to engineering, sales and human resources.

At KUKA Systems North America LLC in Sterling Heights, CEO Larry Drake explained the company’s focus on robotic simulation, robotic programming, fabrication and machining to the visiting students.

He outlined more than ten related career tracks and possible salary ranges. “We want you to say this is a pretty cool business and maybe I should take a look at it,” he told the students.

Drake added that students graduating from UCS high schools are developing the analytical skills that will enable them to successfully advance in his global company. “Your background and knowledge fit our business perfectly,” he said.

The students broke into groups to learn about the company’s business model and training programs and to tour its production area. “This experience really opened up career opportunities for us,” said Stevenson High School junior Trevor Stanek.

Other businesses taking part in Manufacturing Day included R&E Automated Systems, RAVE Computer, JB Cutting Incorporated, Elite Mold and Engineering and DASI Solutions.
Ten UCS seniors named among top high school students in National Merit Program

Ten UCS students are among 15,000 students nationally to be named as semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship program. Merit semifinalists comprise the top one percent of all U.S. students taking the Preliminary SAT.

UCS merit semifinalists are: Amil Mahida and Dylan Plummer of Eisenhower High School; Jacob Burns, Saumeel Desai, James Montgomery, Katelyn Schram, and Nicholas Weingartz of Stevenson High School; Marisa Hocking of Utica Academy for International Studies and Trevor Macks and Alexander Will of Utica High School.

Burns, Desai, Mahida, Macks, Montgomery, Plummer, Schram and Weingartz also attend Utica Center for Mathematics, Science and Technology.

More than 1.5 million students in the class of 2015 entered the National Merit Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test as juniors.

To reach semifinalist status, students must fulfill the requirements to enter the next round of the scholarship program, which includes having a record of consistently high academic performance, being endorsed by an official at their high school, earning SAT scores that confirm their PSAT/NMSQT performance and writing a qualifying essay.

Superintendent’s message from page 1

Establishing early partnerships between home and school can only enhance a child’s learning.

As we approach parent-teacher conferences, I want to encourage UCS parents to continue taking an active interest in their son or daughter’s classroom choices and experiences at every level.

My message today is focused on the more than 5,600 students in grades 7, 8 and 9 in UCS schools who are at a pivotal point along their academic path. This is truly a time of transition and self-discovery for students who start the journey as children leaving the elementary world and later emerge as independent young thinkers beginning to see their place in the college and career world.

We can gauge how well we as educators, parents and community members are preparing them for their next level by feedback from the largest universities and the smallest workplaces. It is feedback that tells us they see in UCS graduates the very basis of what they seek in their recruitment process – students who have challenged themselves, are proficient problem solvers and most importantly, have already completed a wide range of rigorous experiences in their K-12 education.

The fact that UCS students have these skills validates our ongoing commitment that a diploma from Utica Community Schools will continue to open doors for graduates. From their first day in kindergarten, UCS students receive rigorous academic experiences; pursue choices in the arts, athletics or community service and are provided multiple options to explore college and career interests.

For example, junior high is where, in addition to rigorous required classes, our students first experience the district’s comprehensive Career and Technical Education (CTE) curriculum. Here they can begin to explore diverse career pathways that show them the connection between academics and future professions – “connecting the mind and the hands,” as our CTE educators say.

No matter a student’s ultimate career goal, these experiences are wholly beneficial. One such example is our secondary mechatronics robotics program where, in addition to technology and engineering content, students also gain knowledge of physics concepts embedded in the course curriculum.

Beginning in eighth grade, UCS students develop an individual four-year career plan with the goal to explore potential work interests well before starting postsecondary education. This year, our focus has expanded to tie this planning more directly to a student’s course selection throughout high school.

Parents also have a major role in guiding their children. To assist families in these important dinner table conversations, the district will host the annual UCS Academic Blitz on January 29 from 7-9 p.m. at Henry Ford II High School.

The Academic Blitz offers information about the district’s specialized high school options, Advanced Placement, early college and dual enrollment, CTE choices and much more in a single evening designed to help form a student’s academic ‘game plan’ for success.

Secondary students and families are also invited to learn more about college and career options and academic preparation at two other yearly UCS events: our Career Expo on March 19 and UCS College Fair scheduled in April at Henry Ford II High School.

Students who are beginning their junior high journey are encouraged to start your Game Plan NOW for success after high school!
Six Board of Education candidates are on the November 4 ballot

Six candidates seek to fill two positions on the Utica Community Schools Board of Education in the November 4 general election. The terms of office are six years each, beginning January 1, 2015.

Residents should direct all voting or election questions to the Macomb County Clerk’s office or their local municipal office. The following information was provided by the candidates:

Ron Albers of Sterling Heights attended Lawrence Technology University, Detroit Institute of Technology and Macomb Community College. He studied architectural engineering and business administration. He is a U.S. Army veteran and a retired operations and purchasing manager, sales director and business owner.

Albers and his wife Eileen have three children who graduated from Stevenson High School. He is a member of American Legion Post 326 Sterling Heights, former president of Sterling Heights Parks and Recreation Baseball and Society of Automotive Engineers associate editor.

Carolyn Gammichia of Shelby Township has associate degrees in applied science, general studies and applied arts. She also holds behavioral science certification.

Gammichia is co-founder and executive director of the organization L.E.A.N. On Us (Law Enforcement Awareness Network). She and her husband Andrew have two children who graduated from Utica High School.

Six Board of Education candidates are on the November 4 ballot

She is a volunteer and advocate with several local organizations including her church, domestic violence shelters and child abuse centers. Her affiliations include several state and national board committees as a professional advisory member on disability-related issues.

Denyeal Nesovski of Shelby Township holds a bachelor of science degree in business administration from Oakland University. She is a data analyst for United Health Group.

She and her husband Steve have three children, two attending Morgan Elementary School and one attending Roberts Elementary School. She was appointed to the UCS Board of Education in July 2014 and is assigned to the capital projects and human resources Board subcommittees.

Nesovski is a member of the Macomb Intermediate School District Parent Advisory Committee. She teaches Sunday school at St. Lazarus Church. She is founder and president of Stefan’s Hope.

Jennifer L. Prybys of Sterling Heights holds both a master’s degree in counseling and a bachelor’s degree in marketing from Central Michigan University. She is employed by Chrysler LLC as a commodity specialist – fluid management purchasing.

She and her husband Marc have two children – one attends Stevenson High School, the other is a Stevenson graduate.

Prybys has been a UCS Board of Education member since 2006. During her tenure, she has served on Board subcommittees for finance, curriculum and human resources. She is a member of the Macomb County Republican Party.

Paul Romanczuk of Sterling Heights attended Macomb Community College and Wayne State University. He is a machining department supervisor at Chrysler Corporation.

He and his wife Kathleen have four children – three graduated from Henry Ford II High School and one is a Utica High School graduate.

Romanczuk is affiliated with Sterling Heights baseball and basketball clubs, St. Lawrence Catholic Community, travel softball, A.A.U. and C.Y.O basketball and coached girls’ basketball at Eppler Junior High and Henry Ford II High School.

Mary K. Thomas of Shelby Township has both a Ph.D. and a master’s degree in counseling from Oakland University. She also has a bachelor of arts degree in behavioral science from the University of Michigan – Dearborn.

Thomas is employed by Oakland Community College, where she has a position on the counseling faculty. She is a member of the Michigan Education Association.

She and her husband James have one child who attends West Utica Elementary School.

Notice of Nondiscrimination – In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Olwin-Larson Civil Rights Act and the Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act, it is the policy of Utica Community Schools that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, age, disability, height, weight, or mental status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination during any instructional opportunities, programs, services, job placement assistance, employment or in policies governing student conduct and attendance. Any person suspecting a discriminatory practice should contact the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources at Utica Community Schools, 11303 Greendale, Sterling Heights, MI 48312 or call (586) 797-1000.

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Focus updates from Utica Community Schools on:

Access all sites via www.uticak12.org

586.797.1000

UCS District Calendar 2014-2015

Eight Board of Education candidates are on the November 4 ballot

October 31
Half day for elementary
November 4
No school – professional development
November 13
Half day for all students
November 26
No school – Thanksgiving break begins
December 1
School resumes
December 23
Last day of classes – winter break begins
January 5
Classes resume
January 14
Half day for secondary
January 15
Half day for all students
January 16
Half day for all students
January 19
No school – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February 3
No school – mid-winter break begins
February 23
Classes resume
March 10
Half day for elementary
April 3
No school – spring break begins
April 13
Classes resume
May 22
No school – Memorial Day weekend
May 26
Classes resume
June 10
Half day for secondary
June 11
Half day for secondary
June 12
Last day of school – half day for all students