



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 3, 2019.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico
Program Title: Partnership with Roofing Professionals Gives Students a Broader Career View
Program Category: Community and Economic Development

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Anthony McDowell
Title: Deputy County Manager for Public Safety
Signature: *Anthony E. McDowell*

Program Overview

As with other skilled trade professions, the roofing industry is experiencing a national shortage of skilled labor. Many businesses would love to hire a recent high school graduate and help them grow into a successful employee in a rewarding career. Henrico County Public Schools' (HCPS) Department of Career and Technical Education (CTE) paired with an industry group to help find solutions to this dilemma with a high school program in Henrico County, Virginia. On the momentum of a successful event in spring 2018 – “Career and Technical Letter-of-Intent Signing Day” – CTE entered into a partnership with the Virginia Association of Roofing Professionals, or VARP, to create meaningful experiences and help educate students about opportunities in the roofing industry.

VARP has been able to educate HCPS students, teachers and parents about the opportunities in the roofing industry. In addition, VARP has been able to create internship opportunities enabling students to experience the roofing industry firsthand. These opportunities allow students to realize the potential in an industry they may have not otherwise known about and possibly put them on a successful career pathway.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

In Virginia, the roofing industry struggles to fill vacancies each year. For high school students to consider entering the roofing profession, they need an opportunity to learn about all aspects of the roofing industry. Merely talking about careers related to roofing does not sufficiently promote the profession to a high school student. HCPS' CTE program is always seeking ways to better align students' instruction with industry needs. The roofing industry's shortages, caused by an aging workforce and a lack of skilled-trades laborers, led to a natural partnership between VARP

and CTE in order to make meaningful connections in the classroom. This partnership exposes students to, and prepares them for, relevant career options in the roofing field.

How Program Was Carried Out

HCPS' CTE program received a successful boost from its first annual "Career and Technical Letter-of-Intent Signing Day." The event, held in March 2018, emulated ceremonies that have become common for high school athletes signing letters-of-intent to play for NCAA programs. Students and representatives of their future employers signed symbolic employment agreements, as families and members of the media looked on from the audience.

On the heels of national media and social media coverage of the event, new businesses began calling HCPS to become involved in the signing day program. Roofing industry representatives relayed information about HCPS' programs to members of the Virginia Association of Roofing Professionals. One of the members of the state industry group attended a meeting of CTE's Business Advisory Council in September 2018, and expressed an eagerness for the industry group to form a partnership with Henrico Schools.

The goals of the partnership are symbiotic. CTE programs in Henrico County aim to ensure its industry certifications and programs are relevant and meet the demands of local industry. In connecting with VARP, the school division can teach students about career paths in the roofing industry and provide them with meaningful internship opportunities. In exchange, VARP can fill its industry vacancies with qualified employees and meet the challenges of a limited workforce.

During the 2018-19 school year, VARP is educating students, teachers, and parents about the benefits of careers in the roofing industry. Starting in summer 2019, students will be able to begin internships coordinated through VARP, getting students on track for a meaningful career.

First, representatives from VARP talked with students at a career day about the array of opportunities in the roofing industry and the value of such a career. While this gave students basic information about career opportunities, it was important for students to develop an understanding of the career path and the type of work involved. To that end, VARP created a hands-on learning conference for students interested in the roofing profession. Students were able to work on mock roofs and learn about the various types of roofing and techniques through hands-on learning experiences.

After the conference, students have the opportunity to apply for full-time and part-time job opportunities with members of VARP, and then they participate in interviews to gain employment. The selected students are recognized in the Career and Technical Letter-of-Intent Signing Day held each April.

Financing and Staffing

The partnership between VARP and CTE has no associated costs. The members of VARP donate their time and resources to provide students with knowledge and applicable experiences.

Program Results

As a result of personal connections made through the first Career and Technical Letter-of-Intent Signing Day, VARP has made guest presentations to students at HCPS' technical centers – the Advanced Career Education Centers at both Highland Springs and Hermitage High Schools. In addition, commitments for internship opportunities have already been made for the summer of

2019, and continued interaction with members of VARP will help students and their parents make informed decisions about career paths.

Students have had the opportunity to apply for good-paying jobs they didn't even know existed. Some students have had the opportunity to gain part-time employment to help them pay for college.

In the long term, the program will also benefit Henrico County. As Henrico continues to grow in population, so does the need for workers in skilled trades. If this need isn't met, the county's economic health could suffer.

VARP's original goal was to expose students to career opportunities in the roofing industry and to begin to build its future workforce. This partnership has been a "handshake, not a handout", with students and the industry benefiting.

Brief Summary

Employers in many industries are struggling to fill their workforce needs. In industries like roofing, public perceptions can often make it difficult for employers to fill these positions as needs grow and workers retire. Early exposure to an industry can help students develop a career-path plan, projecting the students' opportunities after high school over a four-year period.

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