



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2020.** 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: "CTE NOW" Podcast Explores, Promotes Career and Technical Education

Program Category: Communications

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Victoria Davis

Title: Public Relations Specialist

Department: Public Relations

Telephone: 804-501-4933 **Website:** www.henrico.us

Email: dav127@henrico.us

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Brandon Hinton

Title: Deputy County Manager for Administration

Signature: 

Program Overview

The “CTE NOW” podcast was created as another venue to promote and elevate Henrico County Public Schools’ Career and Technical Education program. Parents, guardians and students have not always viewed career and technical education as a viable option for college and career preparation. Through a podcast, we hope to promote career and technical education as another educational option.

Every student learns differently. A single educational style should not govern every student’s outcome. We believe our podcast is a tool. With this tool and others, we hope to reach as many people as possible and help the most students, no matter their ultimate goals.

Our podcast seems to be unique, as we have not found another podcast focusing on career and technical education. CTE Now has so far focused on a range of topics: from interviewing industry leaders seeking to hire CTE students, to students working toward college or starting careers right out of high school. We have created 18 episodes between our December 2018 launch and January 2020. Most episodes contain 15-30 minutes of content. Each month we have added new subscribers and listeners — from Henrico County, Virginia, from across the U.S. and in nine other countries.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

CTE Now was created to give more exposure to career and technical education, globally and in Henrico County. Families have not always viewed career and technical education as a viable option for students’ college and career paths. In addition, the podcast aims to continue to educate others about career training and options.

Mac Beaton, director of Henrico County Public Schools’ Career and Technical Education Department, came up with the idea for the CTE Now podcast. He asked two Career and Technical Education employees to create and host the show. They researched and arranged to purchase the equipment needed, including microphones, headsets and a sound mixer. Their radio broadcasting experience and technical knowledge were well-suited to get the podcast started, and their personalities led to a great on-the-air team for the show. Their presence helped calm some nervous guests. The podcast was designed as a proactive way to promote and educate people about an important aspect of modern education and workforce development.

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

The unique CTE NOW podcast is an innovative way to add exposure for career and technical education, and to help explain and “sell” it as an option for some students, parents and guardians. It also helps integrate Henrico County Public Schools with the business community. The program publicizes many local Henrico County employers and raises awareness of educational offerings in Henrico County Public Schools.

How Program Was Carried Out

The podcast gives us another tool to promote career and technical education and educate the public of its importance. It joins our various engagement efforts like the “Big Red Bus” mobile classroom, RV mobile classroom, our eighth-grade recruitment program, 10th-grade recruitment program, “Summer Building Trades,” “Summer Polytech,” and many others.

The CTE Now podcast has already interviewed parents, teachers, business leaders, politicians and industry insiders. Those interviews have informed listeners and have begun to counter past perceptions that career and technical education is just for students who have no plans for college.

With today’s college debt crisis not showing signs of abating, and the inability of companies to fill skilled, highly paid positions, it is obvious that educating the public with the CTE Now podcast is crucial in Henrico County and the nation.

In November 2018, Mac Beaton assigned two employees to create and host the show. They researched the cost of equipment and how the program could be available on the internet. One was chosen because of his background in radio and communications; the other has 25+ years in website development, computer technologies and social media. They researched what equipment would be needed, as well as reasonable quality levels for the hardware. It was determined that we would need to have enough equipment to handle at least four people involved in an interview. Once we started, we quickly upped the equipment to five and are already looking to expand further so we can accommodate more guests. We began with headphones, microphones, microphone booms, a mixing board, cables and adapters, and a wheeled box to make the equipment easy to move. We anticipated that it would be easier if we could come to our guests and set up on-location rather than them coming to us. The business leaders and politicians, particularly, have taken advantage of our mobility. It is much easier for them to give us some of their time if they don’t have to travel to us.

The first estimate for equipment came in at \$1,090 but grew another \$268 when we expanded to accommodate more guests. We already see the need for expansion in the future, since we have had to share mics and headsets on multiple occasions with six or more guests.

After getting the podcast up and running, we held our first interview in December 2018. Every month since we have posted two interviews each month on a regular schedule to make it easy for our listeners to know when new content is available.

The two podcast hosts have shown themselves a good team. Their familiarity with the radio business gave the program a professional polish right from the start. Their work in editing the program has given the podcast a level of professionalism needed to attract listeners and attract fans.

The director of Henrico County’s CTE program had a significant influence on the show, helping to acquire high-quality guests such as Virginia Del. John McGuire and Pierre Tulowitski, a professor from Ludwigsburg University in Germany. Tulowitski visited in summer 2019 and was able to experience many of our summer programs. Tulowitski teaches an international education leadership and management program and is currently a professor-in-residence at the University of Richmond. We talked with him about his CTE visit, about the German educational system as it relates to career education, and how it compares to Henrico's Career and Technical Education.

We have been able to speak with CTE teachers, restaurant owners, representatives of “SwimRVA,” and many parents of CTE students. Students participating in our “CTE Letter-of-Intent Signing Day” were interviewed about the excitement of starting their careers, being onstage and getting recognized by their peers. We have also interviewed representatives of the Virginia Asphalt Association and the Virginia Association of Roofing. We interviewed the lead supervisor at James River Exteriors, the service manager at Richmond Ford West and the owners of Smoke Pit Grill restaurant. We also talked with a professional development specialist in the Professional Learning and Leadership Department at Henrico County Public Schools, discussing the unique needs of CTE instructors making the transition from the business world to the classroom.

From the podcast’s launch in December 2018, we have interviewed 32 people in 18 interviews through January 2020, and we have guests scheduled for the future.

Financing and Staffing

The cost of equipment for the podcast was about \$1,300, which paid for the soundboard, microphones, headsets, cables and incidentals. We used existing computers and software when possible. Web hosting of the podcast is done through a free service called anchor.com.

Program Results

The CTE NOW podcast has become popular, as evidenced by the data we have collected. As of January 2020, the podcast had been played 1,525 times. While 68% of our listeners are in Virginia, 30 states have been represented in our audience, along with around 20 countries. In addition, much qualitative data has also been received from listeners who have told us that they have enjoyed the program. One listener called and left a message with the CTE director to tell him how much he enjoyed the podcast and was looking forward to listening to many more.

Brief Summary

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<https://henricocte.com/parents/cte-podcast/>

**“CTE NOW”: Podcast Explorers, Promotes Career and Technical Education
Supplemental Material**



