



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your 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: Henrico County, Virginia
Program Title: Forging Connections and Exhibiting Skills: Entrepreneurship and Community Days
Program Category: Community Development, Economic Development and Land Use

CONTACT INFORMATION

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1. Summary

As a culminating event for the knowledge obtained by the students, Henrico County Public Schools' Advanced Career Education Centers hold a two-day "Entrepreneurship and Community Days" event. This event affords students the opportunity to display what they have learned by providing products and specialized services for purchase to the community. It also enables local employers to connect with students who are seeking jobs after graduation. In the spring of 2024, the inaugural event welcomed more than 1,500 visitors and took in nearly \$40,000 through the sales of goods and services. In addition, the event provided commerce experience for students through interactions with the public and employers. Students interested in employment were able to connect with employers in their field of study. The event was a major success and is an annual opportunity for students, employers and the community.

2. The Problem or Need for the Program

Parents, guardians, community members and employers have limited opportunities to see firsthand what students are learning. The services and products that students are learning to make are typically limited to their classmates and sometimes their families. As a group, the ACE Center faculty and staff members expressed the idea that student work needed to be shared more widely. The Entrepreneurship Days event enables families, community members and employers to see and interact with students during the school day and observe what they're learning, with transparency.

3. Description of the Program

Henrico County Public Schools' Advanced Career Education Centers strive to see that graduating students become enrolled, employed or enlisted. Many students express an interest in entrepreneurship and starting a business. To assist students on this path, each of the 43

programs of study at the three ACE Centers includes embedded instruction in entrepreneurship.

The Entrepreneurship and Community Days event enables students learning career and technical skills to practice commerce in their field of study. Funds generated through sales assist with competition costs for student organizations and help pay for student activities. In addition, students seeking employment can connect with employers looking for entry-level employees.

Objectives:

- To help students learn skills that afford them the opportunity to generate revenue.
- To help students develop entrepreneurial skills they can use to start a business.
- To foster students' connections with employers and community partners in the students' areas of learning.
- To provide opportunities for employers, the community and parents and guardians to gain a greater understanding of what students are learning in their ACE Center programs.

Development and implementation timeline:

August to March:

- Entrepreneurial lessons taught in each program and to all students.
- Students develop a skill set to provide service or create a product based on their course content at the ACE Center.

February:

- Advertise the event.
- Event committee plans the logistics of the event.

March and April:

- Fine-tune logistics for the event.

- Create a plan for how the schedule will work, including safety of the building and its occupants.
- Prep students for the event, including their roles and expectations.

April and event day:

- Post signs and set up any other necessary items at the school to direct visitors.
- Open the doors and welcome guests.

Clientele:

- Community members, employers and families.

4. The Cost of the Program

The cost of the program is directly related to the volume of products being produced. Organizers spent approximately \$33,000 for materials, which included food for the culinary and baking programs, seeds, soil, fertilizer, potting material, oil for the auto program and metal for welding. Teachers chose how much of their class products to produce and the goal was to sell all products and generate a small profit. This could be replicated at a much smaller scale contingent on the volume of expected commerce. Some services such as blood donation were facilitated by the Red Cross and did not require any operating costs. HCPS auto and diesel services were prescheduled, and costs for parts were purchased before the event. The event took in nearly \$40,000; Profits were used to support students in a variety of ways, including classroom activities, materials and support for student competition costs.

5. The Results/Success of the Program

The program was highly successful, generating almost \$40,000 in sales, with approximately 1,500 community members visiting the three ACE Centers. Funds taken in beyond expenses were used to support students in a variety of ways, including classroom activities, materials and

support for student competition costs. Visitors observed more than 1,400 students practicing the skills they had learned in 43 different HCPS career and technical programs. Students were able to provide products or services to customers and practice customer service skills. The event's success confirmed organizers' desire to make the event an annual occurrence. The second Entrepreneurship and Community Days event is slated for April 2025 at HCPS ACE Centers.

6. Worthiness of Award

The Entrepreneurship and Community Days event provided many opportunities to showcase career and technical education entrepreneurship activities to multiple groups. Students were able to show what they know, employers were able to see what the students know and the community and families were able to understand exactly what students learned. Welcoming guests into the school to see what and how students learn had intended and unintended advantages for all stakeholders. The interactions between the students and the guests were encouraging and uplifting. There was a comfortable environment at the event and the venue was buzzing with excitement. Bringing the community and school together in this manner reaps benefits for everyone from students receiving job offers to the community and employers understanding what and how students are learning in an authentic business environment.

7. Supplemental Materials

Please review the video <https://youtu.be/bJXe0wTXTeY> to hear from patrons during the event at ACE at Hermitage and a WWBT news story: [Talented Henrico teenagers showcase skills, raise money at Entrepreneurship Day](#)