

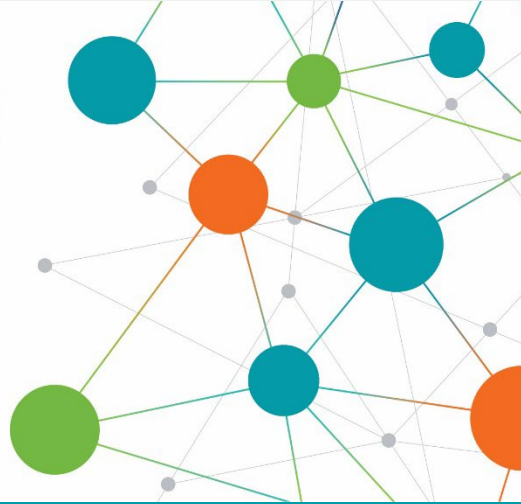
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# CONNECTED

Career & Technical Education News



Illinois  
State Board of  
Education



JULY 2022

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in Illinois prepare students by teaching authentic knowledge and skills.



***As we look to revive our state's economy, we need to utilize every available opportunity for our students. Career and Technical Education programs graduate 94 percent of students and provide them with the opportunity to begin working in a career at a much earlier time. The emphasis on career-connected learning allows students to develop the confidence they need to thrive in college and in their career.***

— State Superintendent of Education Dr. Carmen I. Ayala

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## Five Illinois Students Named 2022 U.S. Presidential Scholars

U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona recently announced the 58<sup>th</sup> class of U.S. Presidential Scholars, recognizing 161 high school seniors for their accomplishments in academics, the arts, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) fields.

The following Illinois scholars were honored for academics:

- **Henry L. Xie**, Naperville North High School, Naperville
- **Jui Khankari**, Hinsdale Central High School, Hinsdale

The following Illinois scholars were honored for CTE:

- **Rishi Patel**, Waubonsie Valley High School, Aurora
- **Jaisnav Rajesh**, Waubonsie Valley High School, Aurora
- **Piya Shah**, Waubonsie Valley High School, Aurora

“Our 2022 Presidential Scholars represent the best of America and remind us that when empowered by education, there are no limits to what our young people can achieve,” said Secretary Cardona. “... I join President Biden to celebrate a class of scholars whose pursuit of knowledge, generosity of spirit, and exceptional talents bring our nation tremendous pride. Throughout one of the most trying periods in our nation’s history and amid our recovery from the pandemic, our students have once again demonstrated their strength and that they have so much to contribute to our country. Thanks to them, I know America’s future is bright.”

The [White House Commission on Presidential Scholars](#) selects scholars annually based on their academic success, artistic and technical excellence, essays, school evaluations and transcripts, as well as a demonstrated commitment to community service and leadership.

There are 3.7 million students expected to graduate from high school this year. More than 5,000 of those students qualified for the 2022 awards determined by outstanding performance on the College Board SAT or ACT exams or through nominations made by chief state school officers, other partner recognition organizations, and [YoungArts](#).

As directed by Presidential Executive Order, the 2022 U.S. Presidential Scholars are composed of one young man and one young woman from each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 chosen at-large, 20 scholars in the arts, and 20 scholars in CTE.

The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was created in 1964. More than 7,900 of the nation’s top-performing students have been honored. The program was expanded in 1979 to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, literary, and performing arts. In 2015, the program was again expanded to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplishment in CTE fields.

Members of the Presidential Scholars Class of 2022 will be recognized for their outstanding achievement this summer with an online recognition program.

A complete list of 2022 U.S. Presidential Scholars is available at <http://www.ed.gov/psp>.

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## Education Symposium



*State Superintendent of Education Dr. Carmen I. Ayala; Marci Johnson, director of CTE and Innovation at ISBE; and Chris Tennyson, superintendent of Regional*

Regional Office of Education (ROE) 47, in partnership with Sauk Valley Community College (SVCC), held an education symposium on April 29. The event, the first of its kind for the area, allowed area high school students to explore the field of education.

ROE 47 serves Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside counties. Grade 9-12 students from area districts who are interested in pursuing a career in education attended the event on the SVCC campus in Dixon.

*Office of Education 47, pose with students who received education endorsements.*

Students participated in mock interviews with school administrators, heard from State Superintendent of Education Dr. Carmen I. Ayala, talked to college representatives from across the state, investigated various roles in education, and collected wisdom from retired teachers.

A ceremony to honor area students who have earned education endorsements during high school capped off the day. School districts partnering in this work include Dixon PSD 170, Rock Falls THSD 301, Morrison CUSD 6, River Bend CUSD 2, Amboy CUSD 272, Sterling CUD 5, Ashton-Franklin Center CUSD 275, Prophetstown-Lyndon-Tampico CUSD 3, Forrestville Valley CUSD 221, and ROE 47

In a 2021 survey of superintendents in Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside counties, 87% of respondents stated that their districts were experiencing a teacher shortage and 18% of local positions went unfilled or were filled with less-than-qualified hires. ROE 47 and Sauk Valley Community College are partnering to build Education Pathways for students to fill those gaps.

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## High School Students with College Degrees?

The tradition of dual degrees in Vienna continues with the Class of 2022. For a decade, Vienna High School has had multiple students who have marched to pomp and circumstance in back-to-back ceremonies. Class of 2022 seniors Payton Catherine Bennett, Ava Marie Goines, Eliza Shane Goines, Caleb Dean Johnson, Lily Catherine Moore, Maron Lynn Penrod, Jessa Rayne Shoemaker, Riley Jayne Slife, Maelee Annalice Lou Sparks, and Madelyn Elizabeth Thornton have completed not only their requirements for high school graduation, but have also completed their associate degrees either at Shawnee Community College or Southeastern Illinois College. The Vienna High School Class of 2022 celebrated the scholarly achievements of its members, including valedictorians, salutatorians, four-year honors students, Illinois State Scholars, and numerous scholarship recipients.



*These students recently achieved dual degrees. From left are Payton Catherine Bennett, Madelyn Elizabeth Thornton, Maron Lynn Penrod, and Riley Jayne Slife, all of Shawnee Community College; Eliza Shane Goines, Caleb Dean Johnson, and Ava Marie Goines, all of Southeastern Illinois College; and Maelee Annalice Lou Sparks, Jessa Rayne Shoemaker, and Lily Catherine Moore, all of Shawnee Community College.*

These impressive achievements are only enhanced by the 10 students graduating who earned their college degrees.

“The career planning and early college initiatives that Vienna has worked in cooperation with its college partners over the last decade have been not only fruitful for those graduating from high school and college at the same time, but has also drastically increased the college readiness rate for all students, opened up better career exploration,

and has allowed many high school students to at a minimum get started on their college transcript,” said Vienna Superintendent Joshua Stafford.

Shawnee Community College held graduation May 13, and Southeastern Illinois College held graduation May 14. Vienna High School held graduation May 20.

Further discussion with Stafford revealed that there is a great deal of research that demonstrates early college programs increase postsecondary enrollment, retention, and completion rates, along with improved long-term career placement.

Vienna is a career-connected early college high school offering over 125 dual credit college opportunities, 12 career pathways, four ISBE-approved college and career pathway endorsements, and a comprehensive career framework that provides a career road map for all students. More information about Vienna’s career connection work can be found at [www.viennahs.com/cc](http://www.viennahs.com/cc).

Pulling all of the resources together has been key to opening opportunities for students in Vienna. Some of the components include dual credit, dual enrollment, articulation, remedial curriculum, credit recovery, extension center services, GED classes, and numerous other points of cooperation between institutions. Stafford shared that all parts of the cooperation are vitally important to student success but emphasized the importance of remedial course work.

“Students graduating with their associates is great; however, another win that is not as easy to bring attention to is the remedial course work that we have made accessible to students while they are in high school. Thirteen years ago we had only 40% of the graduates reading and writing ready at the college level. Due to the hard work of our instructors and those at the colleges, we have now brought that college readiness number to over 85%. This has major implications for students as they move into the future of college and careers,” he said.

The Class of 2022 at Vienna has collectively completed over 2,000 credit hours toward their college degrees through the dual credit/enrollment partnerships. These hours have been earned not only through dual credit offerings at the high school, but also by students attending classes at the college, both online and at the colleges’ campuses.

These students have varied plans and ambitions:

- **Payton Catherine Bennett** will attend West Kentucky Community and Technical College and start the nursing program this fall.
- **Ava Marie Goines** will be attending the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, where she will work toward her bachelor’s degree in interdisciplinary health on the pre-med track and then go on to medical school to pursue a career as an anesthesiologist.
- **Eliza Shane Goines** will attend Loyola University New Orleans to major in marine biology.
- **Caleb Dean Johnson** plans on joining IBEW Local 702 and becoming an electrician.
- **Lily Catherine Moore** is attending the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to study political science and/or business
- **Maron Lynn Penrod** will attend the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to major in community health on a pre-med track.
- **Jessa Rayne Shoemaker** will attend the University of Southern Indiana to major in education.
- **Riley Jayne Slife** plans on attending Southeast Missouri State University to major in communication disorders.
- **Maelee Annalice Lou Sparks** will be attending the University of Tennessee at Martin, where she will work toward her bachelor’s degree in elementary education

and be able to teach kindergarten through fifth grade. She then plans to teach at a school in Tennessee.

- **Madelyn Elizabeth Thornton** is attending Shawnee Community College on a full-tuition scholarship for softball to pursue her nursing degree. After earning her bachelor's degree, she plans to serve in the Navy as a nurse.

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## In the Spotlight

Thank you for your nominations of outstanding students, teachers, programs, and business partners from across the state of Illinois. We are excited to recognize these individuals and celebrate their achievements. We love to hear your stories! Submit your nominations at [jsbe.net](http://jsbe.net).

### Student Spotlight

**Jenica Francis**, a senior at Sterling High School, was nominated by school librarian Heather Johnson, who wrote, "Jenica has an incredible knack for connecting with her students. She is insightful about their needs and how best to practice patience with them and work with them to help them experience success. Not only that, but Jenica's rock star personality and willingness to take risks will bring her much success in her future career as an educator. She always jumps into class activities and understands the connections with our classroom content and its application to the classroom of children with whom she works. I cannot wait to see her in her own classroom in the near future!"

### Program Spotlight

School counselor Natasha Schultz nominated **Marengo CHSD 154's Virtual Enterprise International (VEI) program**. She wrote, "Entrepreneurship Enterprise class is part of the business program at Marengo High School District 154. This course was developed by Chad Olson utilizing VEI and in partnership with the local community college, McHenry County College. Students are able to earn high school credit and college credit upon course completion. Even though the program is only four years old, a team made up of Bryden Steele, Ty Sierpien, and Preston Bailey earned the privilege to compete at the national level in multiple competitions -- most notably Quickbooks -- at the National Youth Summit, where these seniors placed first in the nation."





*Jenica Francis works with fourth-grade students as she embarks on what she intends to be a career in education.*

### **Teacher Spotlight**

**Kim Portz** from Marissa Junior/Senior High was nominated by her principal, Dawn Mueller, who wrote, “Kim Portz is extremely dedicated to her students and the programs she advises. Her unique understanding of the agriculture world allows her to offer youth many tools beyond the classroom. Her all-encompassing knowledge allows her to educate about anything from plant seed identities to welding. She instills confidence and has a way of finding a place for every single student to fit in, no matter their background or interest level in ag education. Her greatest attribute is getting kids that don't have a background in ag to join the organization and be highly successful. Many of them go on to college to pursue the ag field because of Mrs. Portz. She spends her extra time preparing her students/FFA members for competitions, traveling to and from contests, arranging for participation in a variety of extracurricular activities, and initiating projects that provide her students with skills for future careers. Her presence in this district brings positivity to our schools and to the community through events like the annual alumni pancake/sausage breakfast, FFA Week petting zoo, and



*Students and Mr. Olson show off their trophy.*

### **Partner Spotlight**

**Project Lead the Way (PLTW)** has been a stable partner in high school engineering education throughout its nearly 25-year history. Project Lead the Way has local chapters throughout the state of Illinois. Recently, the director of CTE in Thornton Fractional High School District 215 independently submitted a grant application to secure funding to start a PLTW program at both Thornton Fractional North High School and Thornton Fractional South High. Within a few months, Project Lead the Way awarded each of the two high schools a \$50,000 grant, for a total of \$100,000, to be used to cover professional development for teachers to receive training on the PLTW curriculum and program activities, equipment, supplies, and materials. This generous grant will allow the district to start two PLTW sites in the fall. Currently, there are over 50 students at each school who are interested in enrolling in the first PLTW course – Introduction to Engineering Design.

plant sales from the greenhouse that she pioneered. Ask any person in Marissa why the ag program has grown into such a successful program and they will tell you it is because of Kim Portz. Agriculture is who she is, it's how she was raised, it's how she supports her family, and it's how she continues to make huge impacts on those around her. We are truly lucky to have her in our district."



*Students work on design elements in a PLTW class.*



*Kim Portz and her students observe as Marissa Mayor Chad Easton celebrates FFA Day.*

**Nominate a student, teacher, program, or business partner to be featured in an upcoming CTE newsletter!**

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## CTE Summer Speaker Series

As part of the Career ConneCTEd Illinois efforts to support high-level Career and Technical Education (CTE) for all students throughout the state, we are launching a [Summer Speaker Series](#) that will focus on ensuring access to and success in CTE classrooms. There will be a focus on “special populations” and “nontraditional careers” of the Perkins V Act. Each topic will include a keynote presentation and a corresponding educator panel. All events will be held online, and links will be sent to those who have registered the day before each event.

- **Family & Community Engagement and Postsecondary Placement**
  - Educator Panel – **July 27**, 9 a.m.
- **Active Recruitment of Special Populations into CTE Programs and Nontraditional Careers**
  - Educator Panel – **July 28**, 9 a.m.
- **Elimination of Barriers for Individual CTE Students**
  - Educator Panel – **Aug. 2**, 9 a.m.

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## CTE Educator Plan Time -- Summer 2022

This summer, the CTE Educator Plan Time series of events will enable educators from across Illinois to plan next steps for state CTE standards. CTE educators will explore the

data from the CTE Industry Feedback Tour and consider it in light of identified best practices nationally in CTE in order to make recommendations regarding our need for CTE standards and supporting professional development in Illinois. The outcome of this work will be to provide teachers, schools, and districts with the tools necessary to ensure that there are high-quality and equitable CTE opportunities for all students across Illinois.

Participation is open to all educators, teachers, and administrators who teach or support CTE programs in Illinois. Educators may choose from the following sessions. Don't worry if you missed June sessions; there are three taking place in July.

- Information Technology - **July 19**, 1 p.m.
- Manufacturing, Engineering, Technology & Trades - **July 26**, 9 a.m.
- General/All Career Pathways - **July 26**, 1 p.m.

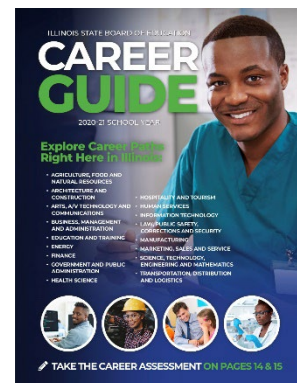
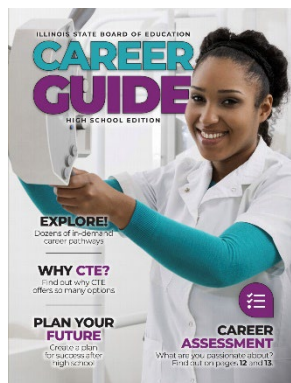
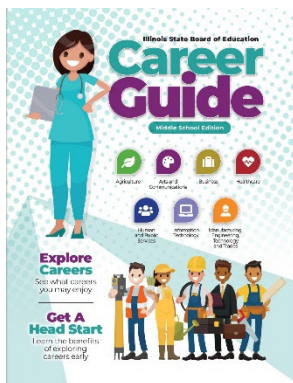
Sessions will take place via Zoom and are expected to last two hours. Zoom links will be sent to those registered the day before each session.

[Register for one of the sessions.](#)

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## Career Guides

Check out our Career Guides, share them, or order printed copies at [llcareerguide.com](http://llcareerguide.com).



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