

Young Hornets: P-TECH helps high school students work toward degree

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For many high school students, summer is a great time to kick back, catch some rays or earn a few extra dollars. But for students in the Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) program, it's a great time to work toward a college degree.

Students were on campus recently for the annual Summer Institute, which included visits to area employers, hands-on activities and lectures and workshops. [Now in its second year](#), the grant-funded P-TECH program is a collaboration between SUNY Broome, Broome-Tioga BOCES, area school districts and a half-dozen industry partners, and is designed to provide a career pathway for economically disadvantaged students.

The six-year program supports students in earning both their high school diploma and associate's degree from SUNY Broome in health science, computer technology or one of three engineering technology programs. Students are also supported by industry partners, who provide mentorship, guidance and workplace learning during the six years.

This year, the program welcomed 50 new students, who are entering ninth grade this fall in the Binghamton, Chenango Forks, Chenango Valley, Deposit, Johnson City, Maine-Endwell, Owego-Apalachin, Susquehanna Valley, Union-Endicott, Whitney Point and Windsor school districts.

Thirty-six students are entering their second-year of P-TECH and their sophomore year of high school, according to Dawne Adams, P-TECH coordinator with the Binghamton City School District, the lead district in the program. About a dozen each are in the Health Studies, Engineering Technology or Computer Technology tracks. All receive free or reduced lunch at their home districts, and are considered economically disadvantaged.

Freshmen-year students typically stay at their home district and meet twice a month after school for meetings, workshops and field trips to the campus and local employers. Last year's cohort took a SUNY Broome course in the Freshmen Experience; this year, they'll take a college course in their degree program, Adams said. They'll take these as Fast Forward courses at BOCES with an approved instructor.

To increase opportunities for student success, the program also works with SUNY Broome's Learning Assistance Department to provide tutoring.

New this year is outreach to parents, who were invited to campus for a workshop. While there, they also learned about the college's adult learning programs, potentially sparking interest to earn their own degree.

During recent visits, P-TECH students learned about green energy and checked out the campus' solar panels and wind turbine. Health Studies students on one recent day learned about HIPAA from a representative of the Central New York Area Health Education Center, then headed to nearby [Stable Movements](#) – owner Theresa Pedroso is a SUNY Broome graduate – to learn about hippotherapy. Then, they were slated to spend the next two days in area hospitals to learn about healthcare firsthand.

Looking forward, Adams said the program would welcome additional community partners.

“We’re trying to get it right,” Adams said of P-TECH. “We’re focusing on doing well what we’re doing now.”

High school students attended the second annual P-TECH Summer Academy, which included a range of hands-on activities.

