

Career Connected

Career Technical Education Program Spotlights

April-June 2025 – Issue No. 14

Mock Interviews at FPU

Duncan Polytechnical High School

Juniors in the Rehabilitation Therapy pathway visited Fresno Pacific University, explored the campus with a guided tour, and had an Q&A with a panel of FPU students, along with FPU students supporting Duncan with individual mock interviews! This gave the junior class the opportunity to learn about college life, expand their readiness to conquer an interview, and prepare them to be college and career ready.

Thanks to our Health Pathway Partners!

McLane High School

The Medical Education & Research Academy (MERA) was recently able to participate in a Job Shadow Day generously hosted by the Fresno County Department of Public Health. The experience included a tour of various clinics at the site as well as presentations from their staff on several careers operating within the governmental department. Of particular note was planned time to review the Community Health Assessment and discuss major concerns with students. In combination with the Growing Health Leaders Conference at California Health Sciences University and the Valley Children's Teen Fair, MERA students and staff have been incredibly pleased with local work-based learning opportunities and look forward to future collaboration.

Gnomon College Open House

McLane High School

Pathway students from the Art Venture Production Academy (AV) were recently invited to attend an open house event at Gnomon, a college in Hollywood with specialized academic programs to build the necessary artistic and technical skills expected for careers in the entertainment industry. This opportunity began earlier in the school year through a presentation introducing the college in pathway classrooms, and lead to an invitation to be the first high school cohort ever invited to Gnomon's annual event. During a tour, students were able to see first-hand the many samples of student-work decorating the campus while learning about technical skills, areas of study, and industry partnerships.

Internship Students Showcase Projects

Roosevelt High School

Two students have been interning at the CCSPCA this year, and were tasked with doing a project of value. Each student came up with their topic and made a display that is being showcased at the CCSPCA.

Alexa Lopez's project is about overpopulation of pets. The goal of the board is to educate the community about the importance of spaying and neutering, and encourage adoption.

Yoselin Martinez's board correlates to adopting pets and specifically how to care for a hamster. It's important to know how to take care of our pets since they become such an integral part of our lives and families.

Salad Bar Lunch

Hoover High School

In March of 2025, Tacu Vang, the Farm to School Coordinator with FUSD Nutrition Services, offered many sites an opportunity to get a hydroponics unit on campus for students learning, which they received through our CDFA Farm to School Incubator Grant.

"I hope that you all can put this into great use at your school sites", he said.

Hoover did! The weeks leading up to spring break, the students in Ms. Demaree's Natural Resource 2 class put the unit to work planting lettuce and basil. Over spring break, they both flourished. During the block testing week, the class brought in different salad toppings and enjoyed a salad bar lunch with the fresh, organic, pesticide-free lettuce and basil. It was a great way to enjoy something they actually planted.

One student said, "I have never eaten something I helped grow."

We hope to be able to continue this with the district in the coming years. Thank you, Tacu, for this wonderful learning opportunity.

DeWolf's First GRID Alternatives Certifications

DeWolf High School

In April, teacher Samuel Laplaca facilitated DeWolf's first class of GRID Alternatives solar training. With such great partners, 11 students were able to graduate the GRID Alternatives Certification program for solar.

The program allows students to learn all about installing solar electric systems and the impact it has on their own community.

Annual Public Service Expo

Roosevelt High School

The final event for of the year for the Public Service Pathway is their expo. Students in their cohorted classes work in teams to research a community topic and display their findings to share with industry personnel.

This year the freshmen decided to create a rehabilitation center for youth when they have gotten into trouble, so that they can rehabilitate both mentally and physically, and presented their ideas of how to work with these type of minors to visiting officers.

The Tech Interactive

Roosevelt High School

Health pathway students learned about the process conducted that produce the plastinated bodies. The bodies are preserved using a combination of formaldehyde, acetone, water, and plastic in combination with a change of heat and pressure. Students used a ritz cracker and marshmallow to represent the human body. They were also introduced to physiology which they will start in the fall.

Buddy Benches

DeWolf High School

Students from Mr. LaPlaca's construction class at DeWolf High School designed and built 12 custom buddy benches for Columbia Elementary. On May 9, Mr. LaPlaca, alongside three talented students, visited the school to install these thoughtful creations, providing a lasting impact on the school community. Columbia students were very excited to see that they had a place to sit under the trees!

SwedeFest Jr

Roosevelt High School

Swede Fest Junior was held on Friday, May 2 at Fresno High School. Background on what a "Swede" is: The idea is based on the Jack Black movie called "Be Kind, Rewind." In the movie all the VHS tapes in a video store accidentally get erased and Jack Black and his friend recreate the movies but in a very low budget way.

This year the high school video production teachers in Fresno Unified organized and created this opportunity for students and it was a huge success and the kids had fun!

We are proud to say the following students persevered and got the project done while Mr. Ruiz was out on paternity leave and received an award. Please congratulate: Carolina Delgado, Fabian Gutierrez, Hector Gil, Josiyah Ealey, Juan Cruz, Juan Martinez, Mairany Cordoba, Ricky Thao, and Yaritza Salaiz.

Thankful for the 3 students pictured who accepted the Swede Award on behalf of Sam Ruiz's students last week at the first annual Swede Fest Jr.

Stop the Bleed

DeWolf and Design Science High Schools

DeWolf and Design Science students received certification in the life-saving Stop the Bleed program, equipping them with essential skills to respond effectively in real-world emergencies.

Mock Interviews

Design Science Early College High School

In an effort to better prepare for their future careers, students at Design Science took part in mock interviews with industry professionals. The event provided valuable hands-on experience, allowing students to develop essential interview skills, receive constructive feedback, and build confidence for the next step in their professional journeys.

Career Fair

Hoover High School

Hoover High School's annual Career Fair was on April 4, 2025. With over 50 vendors and industry partners in attendance, approximately 2,000 students took advantage of networking opportunities with recruiters, received information about internships, learned about various company cultures and values, and were given the opportunity for on-the-spot interviews. A huge thank you to Fresno City and Clovis Community Colleges, UC Merced, Fresno Metro Ministry, Community Health System, Saint Agnes Medical Center, Workforce Connection, Superior Court of California, The Academy Barbershop, Caltrans, Community Medical, the Department of Public Works and Planning, Sam's Club, the Fresno County DA, City of Fresno PARCS, the AFROTC, the Federal Bureau of Prisons, National University, California Health Sciences University, the Fresno State Army ROTC, the YMCA Camp Sequoia Lake, the African American Coalition, Cal Fire, Grand Canyon University, the California Highway Patrol, the Fresno County Superintendent Mobile Health Unit, Dragados Flatiron Joint Venture, Lyle's College of Beauty, the Fresno Fire Department, Gurnick Academy, the FUSD DPI and A4 Departments, and the United States Army, Coast Guard, Marines, Air Force, and Army National Guard for serving our students! We also want to thank the Hoover staff and administration for their unwavering support.

Careers in Agriculture

This school year the Fresno Unified CTE Department has been working together with Rizpah Bellard at NOVA Farming to expand experiences for more TK-12 students to learn more about Careers in the Agriculture Industry as well as gain valuable knowledge around animal husbandry and sustainable agriculture.

Rizpah brings a variety of animals along to sites (sheep, pig, chickens, pony, goat, or cow) and provides a combination of classroom, hands-on activities, and experiential learning to students. Recently, she was able to provide a sheep shearing demonstration for students at Kratt Elementary School. George the Goat and Beyonce the Chicken have also been well received by students and staff alike.

Toys for Tots

Duncan Polytechnical High School

Sophomore students in the Duncan Innovative Design and Applied Technology Academy 3D printed toys for the of "IC3D's Toys for Tots program", a non-profit that donates toys to children in the central valley. The students were able to choose from multiple designs and programed the 3D printers to make the toys. The following students spearheaded the project: Wade Roelse, Luis Esteban, Owen Moua, Ethan Xiong, Joseph Yang, Nathan Vang, and Jose Figueroa.

DeWolf CTE Champion

DeWolf High School

DeWolf honored Staff Sergeant Jeremy Williams as a CTE Champion at the final CTE Advisory Board meeting. SSgt Williams consistently demonstrated a commitment to mentoring and guiding students as they explore their future careers, both in and out of uniform. His professionalism, insight, and encouragement have made a lasting impression on our students, helping them build confidence and gain valuable real-world experience. SSgt Williams is appreciated for his service, his leadership, and his continued investment in the development of our future leaders.

Inaugural Be the Change Teen Leadership Summit Event

Fresno Unified's CTE Department partnered with Impact Drivers, Safe Kids Central California, the CHP Central Division, and Fresno Unified's Leadership and Teacher Development Staff to host the very first "Be the Change Teen Leadership Summit." At this one-day event, students from Bullard, DeWolf, Design Science, Duncan, Edison, Patino, Roosevelt, and Sunnyside learned all about reckless and distracted driving, graduated driver's license, and the consequences of driving reckless and distracted. They then participated in hands-on, interactive sessions with all industry partners to strengthen their learning.

At the end of the day, the students and their teacher mentors created action plans on how to take what they learned back to their high schools and feeder middle/elementary schools to share this important message. The students were given the tools to be able to host their own educational sessions and community events before completing the day. May is Safe Kids Month and by hosting and participating in events like these, we train and empower the next generation of safety professionals to help keep Central California safer from preventable injuries.

We would like to thank and shout out these amazing agencies for their support and participation providing enrichment opportunities for our students in this inaugural leadership event: Valley Children's Hospital, Impact Teen Drivers, CHP Central Division, Fresno Sheriffs, Healthy Fresno County, the Sanger Police Department, and Safe Kids Worldwide. Through a generous grant from Safe Kids Worldwide and Impact Drivers, all participating CTE students, teachers, and volunteer staff received awesome cups full of swag, Be the Change T-shirts, binders, and other fun take-aways.

Packed with Purpose

Farber Educational Campus

In a powerful demonstration of compassion and collaboration, the Farber Logistics program has wrapped up the school year with a remarkable service project that provides invaluable support to Fresno Unified families. Students and staff joined forces to assemble over 600 food packages filled with essential staples, which will be distributed to Del Mar, Webster, and Winchell Elementary Schools.

This culminating project is part of an ongoing effort that has delivered more than 2,200 food packages and backpacks throughout the year, making a meaningful difference in the lives of families facing food insecurity. Led by 2025 High School Educator of the Year Jonathan Hinojosa and supported by CTE Coordinator James Obermire and Principal Carson Wood, Farber's Logistics program is more than a career pathway: it's a model of purpose-driven education.

The initiative not only equips students with hands-on job skills in inventory, supply chain management, and logistics, but also instills core values like service before self, community support, and excellence in both academics and relationships. Farber's pantry project proves that when students are empowered with tools, trust, and heart, they don't just prepare for the workforce, they help transform their community.

Mock Interviews for CTE

Farber Educational Campus

Students in the CTE programs at Farber worked on resumes, cover letters, and interview Q&A. Industry partners from our partners throughout this year came out and supported CTE students.

Career Fair

Farber Educational Campus

The first Farber Career Fair had 25 vendors show up to offer important information regarding their specific industry sector and job demands. Military, Public Services, postsecondary educational institutions, electrical, sheet metal trades, and the Fresno Unified Mental Health team helped students explore amazing possibilities.

WBL Leads to Job Offer

Farber Educational Campus

This year at Farber Educational Campus has been filled with many firsts. The Logistics and Warehouse Management CTE program has had the pleasure of having amazing industry partners who are dedicated to the growth and success of Fresno Unified Students. This year, GAP Inc supervisors spent many hours mentoring students and building 21st century industry skills with our Farber Students.

Operations Supervisors Freeman Vang, Jabari Taylor, and Ashley Shoaf came out to supervise the classes during the Farber's Market inventory process of receiving, sorting, storage, distribution, and shipping processes. These individuals have invested many hours to mentor the class with current warehousing strategies.

Andres stood out this year, showing leadership skills that GAP looks for in aspiring leaders within their organization. During mock interviews, Andres interviewed with Mr. Taylor and Mr. Vang. It was a complete surprise to Andres when Mr. Hinojosa came up to him and said how impressive his interview was, standing well above the rest. During the Logistics CTE Award ceremony, Andres received the GAP Excellence in Achievement Award, modeled after a company award for employees who go above and beyond.

Andres has applied to the GAP, Inc. Distribution Center, Fresno Campus, and has accepted a position within their company, with aspirations of moving into their supervisor leadership cohort program. Congratulations Andres, Firebirds Rise Above!

NOVA Farms

Phoenix Secondary

Rizpah Bellard of NOVA Farms was honored as Phoenix Secondary's CTE Champion at the final CTE Advisory Board meeting. Rizpah gave invaluable contributions to our students' growth and learning. Through her expertise in Agriculture, Rizpah has created meaningful, hands-on learning experiences—bringing classroom lessons to life with real-world applications, especially through working with animals. Her passion for agricultural education, combined with her dedication to mentoring students, has made a lasting impact. Rizpah's guidance has inspired curiosity, responsibility, and a deeper appreciation for the vital role agriculture plays in our world.

CTE Ambassador Recognition Ceremony

The CTE Ambassador Recognition Ceremony was held on May 19, 2025, at Bullard High School Theater to recognize outstanding Career Technical Education (CTE) ambassadors from all nine comprehensive high schools: Bullard, Duncan, Edison, Fresno, Hoover, McLane, Patiño, Roosevelt, and Sunnyside. They played various essential roles including leading campus tours, advocating for CTE pathways across their campuses, mentoring peers, presenting at middle school recruitment events, participating in CTE subcommittee and advisory meetings, and engaging with industry partners. The CTE department celebrated and recognized not only their dedicated work as CTE ambassadors but also their student leadership in driving positive changes. CTE deeply honors these ambassadors for their commitment to being the student voice in creating positive changes in the CTE programs.

FBLA State Conference

Patiño School of Entrepreneurship

Five students from Patino's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) club qualified to compete at the State Leadership Conference in L.A.. They participated in 3 different events: Entrepreneurship, Sports & Entertainment Management, and Business Communication.

These students applied skills and knowledge they had gained from their Entrepreneurship and Marketing courses at Patino as they prepared for the events. We're proud of their hard work and the professional experience they gained through this opportunity!

10th Grade Client Showcase

Patiño School of Entrepreneurship

As part of our Web and Online Marketing 10th grade course, students complete an internship with Quiq Labs where they create a website for a local business. After a semester of hard work, collaboration, and creativity, our students proudly presented custom-built websites to their real-world business clients.

Each student team was matched with a different business, requiring students to apply their web development skills to design and deliver functional, client-ready websites tailored to the unique needs of local businesses. The final presentations gave clients a chance to see the students' work in action and provide valuable feedback.

Congratulations to our sophomores for their professionalism, innovation, and dedication. Your work has made a real impact!

Introducing Innovative AI Workshops

Work ED and Fresno Unified School District joined forces to launch a series of forward-thinking workshops focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI) designed to equip both students and educators with the knowledge and tools to understand how AI can support learning, everyday problem-solving, and career readiness. These workshops introduced students to real-world applications of AI and how the technology is already present in their academic lives. From organizing their schedules to assisting with research, studying, and creativity, students explored how AI tools can support their educational journey. The sessions encouraged them to reflect on the benefits, limitations, and ethical considerations of using AI responsibly.

One of the most powerful outcomes of these workshops was the way students engaged with the content and connected it to their own lives. They were encouraged to explore how AI tools are already integrated into their daily routines, through voice assistants, translation apps, homework help tools, and even personalized learning platforms. These discussions helped students recognize that AI isn't a far-off concept, but a growing part of how they access information, study, and communicate.

Students reflected on the challenges and possibilities of AI, identifying ways it could be used to make schoolwork more manageable, enhance creativity, and fill in learning gaps. They also learned about the importance of using AI ethically—understanding the difference between using it as a support tool versus relying on it to replace critical thinking and original work.

Throughout the sessions, students demonstrated strong digital awareness and curiosity. They asked thoughtful questions, analyzed how AI tools might impact future job opportunities, and considered what skills would be most important in an AI-integrated world. By giving students space to lead conversations and share their experiences, the workshops helped foster a sense of ownership over their learning and digital futures.

Growing More Than Crops

Sunnyside High School

In Sunnyside's Agriculture Summer Internship programs, students teamed up with Fresno Metro to build both traditional and regenerative farming spaces right on campus. They learned how to care for the land in sustainable ways—like soil health, crop rotation, and water conservation—while gaining firsthand experience that textbooks can't teach.

The Ag Welding students also stepped up in a big way. They designed and built a custom service body for a campus golf cart, which will help transport tools and supplies around their ag facility. They also lent their skills to the school's "Mare Motel," a small animal and horse facility that will play a key role in expanding student opportunities in Sunnyside's Ag Education.

As they prepare for a new season of FFA (Future Farmers of America), these students are sharpening leadership skills, planning community events, and getting ready for competitions. In addition, Sunnyside's Special Education students joined in the agricultural fun—helping to water the wildflower garden and care for other green areas on campus, fostering a shared sense of purpose and inclusion.

Picture This: Creativity in Action

The Photography and Video Production summer internships at Sunnyside, Fresno High, Hoover, and Edison gave students a chance to express themselves artistically while building practical career skills. These young photographers aren't just taking pictures and videos, they're learning to think like professionals. Students used high-quality DSLR cameras, practicing composition, lighting, and editing techniques using Adobe Creative Suite programs like Photoshop and Lightroom. But what's especially exciting is that they worked on real projects—most notably, taking senior portraits for their peers and taking needed sports photos for their athletic teams.

This not only helps students build a professional portfolio but also teaches them how to communicate with clients, give direction during a shoot, and meet deadlines. It's real experience in photography, visual marketing, and entrepreneurship all wrapped into one. For many, this is their first step toward a creative career, whether that's in photography, graphic design, film, or content creation. The confidence they gain from capturing meaningful moments on camera is something they carry with them long after the school bell rings.

CTE Summer Internships

In Fresno Unified, students aren't just sitting in classrooms, they're out in the field, in the lab, behind the camera, in hospitals, at police and fire stations, working with industry partners, and stepping into real-world careers through powerful personalized learning opportunities. Thanks to the District's wide range of Career Technical Education (CTE) internships and programs, students are building life skills, exploring future careers, and making an impact on their community.

For some students, summer break means rest and relaxation. But for 800+ students in Fresno Unified CTE programs, summer break meant getting up early every day and hitting the ground running at one of 41 Internships that were taking place in June and July at campuses, industry sites, and colleges across the city, including:

- The paid Teacher Academy Internships, which had 250+ students supporting teachers in Summer Academies at elementary schools throughout Fresno
- The "Fresno Building Healthy Communities" paid youth internship program
- Public Service internships alongside industry partners such as Fresno Fire, Fresno Police, Fresno Sheriff, Fresno K9 Mounted Unit, Fresno Dispatch, Safe Kids California, and Impact Teen Drivers
- Health internships with Safe Kids California, Impact Teen Drivers, Anthem Blue Cross, the California Poison Center, Fresno County Public Health, Community Cancer Institute, local hospitals and doctors, and Fresno State's Sports Medicine Team
- Ag internships with Fresno Metro, Land Together, and WorkEd
- Construction, Ag Mechanics, Welding and Manufacturing internships with Amazon, Fresno Metro, Fresno Unified's District Warehouse Team, Inventory Pro, McQueen's Jobsite, Scout Island, and WorkEd
- Arts and Media Storytelling, Photography, and Video Internships taking senior portraits and sports team photos for their peers, working with 4 local artists from the Artist in Residency program, filming and taking photos of Fresno Unified's Summer Academies and Camps, and working on projects for Fresno State's Athletic Hall of Fame

What ties all these programs together is the value of CTE. Whether students are learning to weld, growing food, saving lives, or capturing memories, they're gaining more than technical skills—they're building confidence, learning how to collaborate, and discovering what it means to take pride in their work. These internships give Fresno Unified students experiences they can't get from a textbook: the chance to solve real problems, contribute to their school and community, and explore careers long before graduation. They're developing life skills, professional habits, and passions that will follow them far beyond high school. In Fresno Unified CTE programs, learning doesn't just happen in the classroom: it happens in greenhouses, at Police or Fire stations, in workshops, at hospitals, and studios. And it's changing lives!

Doctors Academy: Preparing the Healers of Tomorrow

Sunnyside High School

The Doctors Academy at Sunnyside High School is a rigorous and respected health pathway. Designed for students interested in pursuing medical and healthcare careers, the program combines academic excellence with hands-on experience. This summer, students participated in refresher training for CPR, Stop-the-Bleed, and Heimlich maneuver protocols: critical life-saving skills every healthcare professional needs. These trainings weren't just checkboxes, they were opportunities for students to build confidence, respond to simulated emergencies, and practice staying calm under pressure.

What sets this program apart is the access students have to real medical environments. Through visits to Fresno State and local hospitals, they've observed surgeries, toured labs, interacted with doctors and nurses, and shadowed professionals in action. These experiences give students an inside look at the healthcare field and help them envision themselves in those roles. Many students in the program are first-generation college-bound and come from communities historically underrepresented in medicine. The Doctors Academy gives them a head start offering mentorship, exposure, and inspiration that can truly change the course of their lives.

Keep an eye out for our annual Year in Review, coming this fall!

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