Career Pathways

Spring Newsletter 2025-2026



Spring is shaping up to be another busy and exciting season for Mt. Diablo Unified School District's College & Career Readiness Department. We've continued building on a strong start to the year with events like our Transportation career exploration trips, the annual Allied Health Fair, and the 27th Annual BEST Day.

Alongside these events, we're also looking ahead to upcoming opportunities like our Expanded Learning Summer Internship Program and Campus to Commerce - Pathway student showcase. All of these experiences continue to support our goal of helping MDUSD students graduate college and career-ready, made possible through the ongoing support of our industry partners.



MDUSD CAREER PATHWAYS
Preparing Today's Students for the Jobs of Tomo

Upcoming Events!

- **April 20, 2026**– MDBEA @ Mt. Diablo High School (Serendipity Serendipity Restaurant)
- **April 30, 2026**– Campus to Commerce Showcase @ John Muir Health, Concord
- **April 1 - April 22, 2026**–Summer Intern Applications Open

CAREER PATHWAY HIGHLIGHTS!

- Transportation Pathway Work-Based Learning experiences
- B.E.S.T Day (Business & Educators' Shadowing for Tomorrow)- Professional Development
- Industry Spotlight - Joybound People & Pets
- Summer Academies/Fall Dual Enrollment

B.E.S.T Day



During the 27th Annual BEST **(Business & Educators' Shadowing for Tomorrow)** Day, held on March 16, 2026, Career Technical Education teachers and Work-Based Learning Coordinators from MDUSD stepped into the role of learners as they visited local industry partners. Educators had the opportunity to observe workplace practices firsthand, ask questions, and gain insight into the skills and expectations employers are looking for in today's workforce.

The experience continues to serve as a valuable professional development opportunity, helping educators bring real-world connections back into their classrooms and better prepare students for future careers. Many participants shared that the day sparked new ideas for instruction and strengthened their understanding of industry trends. Overall, feedback from both educators and industry partners was positive, with many expressing interest in continuing to be part of this experience in the future.



We extend our appreciation and thanks to our industry partners for hosting and supporting this experience, including **CTWI (Local 342, Future Build, & partners), Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery, DVC, Rocketship, Eagle Peak Montessori, Caltrans, Loaves and Fishes, Joybound People & Pets, Your Small World & Bay City News, and Patelco. Thank you, Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce & Marathon Petroleum for sponsoring lunch!**

Industry Partner Spotlight! *Thank you!*



We'd like to highlight and thank our incredible partner, **Joybound People & Pets**, for their continued support of MDUSD Career Pathways. They've been such a valuable partner across multiple events this spring, creating meaningful, real-world experiences for both our educators and students.

During BEST Day on March 16, 2026, Joybound hosted educator Dr. David Pintado, Patient Care teacher at Mt. Diablo High School, who had the opportunity to observe a live feline surgical procedure. He shared that the experience was amazing and incredibly beneficial, especially since many of his health pathway students are interested in veterinary careers. Opportunities like this help connect classroom learning to what's happening in the field.



Joybound also joined us at our districtwide Allied Health Fair on March 19, 2026, where they tabled during the Expo session and connected with students interested in animal care and veterinary pathways. Their team took the time to talk with students, answer questions, and share insight into careers in the field.

We're also excited to have Joybound serving as a Summer Internship host, continuing to support our students through hands-on learning and career exploration.

We're so grateful for Joybound People & Pets and their ongoing partnership. Their support truly makes a difference for our students and programs.

Transportation Pathway







Transportation Pathway students from Mt. Diablo High School and Concord High School recently participated in an engaging career exploration experience, coordinated by College & Career Work-Based Learning Coordinator Daisy Romero-Briceno, MDHS teacher Neil Bertson, and CHS teacher Greg Golsan. Students explored a wide range of career and educational pathways within the transportation industry through visits to local businesses.

On March 26, Mt. Diablo HS students visited **Concord Auto Service**, **owned by 2005 MDHS alum Ken Barasabal**, where they learned about his journey to business ownership and gained insight into how smaller auto mechanic shops operate. On March 27, MDHS and CHS students visited **Costco,** where they connected with technicians, supervisors, and managers who shared their experiences, certifications, and career growth opportunities. One student was even connected directly with **hiring manager Gina Molina**, opening the door to employment opportunities.

Students also visited **Pacific States Aviation**, where they heard from industry leaders, including **CEO Rashid Yahya**, and experienced behind-the-scenes access to the flight school and runway. They observed aircraft inspections, student pilot training, and daily operations, gaining valuable insight into careers in aviation.
Overall, these experiences provided students with meaningful exposure, valuable industry connections, and a broader understanding of career pathways within the transportation field.





Allied Health Fair 2026

High School Patient Care Pathways students explore careers during hands-on Allied Health Fair

MDUSD's annual Allied Health Fair on March 19 brought together about 130 students from College Park, Mt. Diablo, and Ygnacio Valley high schools for a hands-on career exploration experience. The event was hosted at Loma Vista Adult Education in collaboration the with Patient Care Pathway, Coordinated by College & Career Work-Based Learning Coordinator, Demetra Hufford. Students rotated through six sessions, including: Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Dental Assistant, Medical Assistant, Diablo Valley College (DVC), and an Exhibit Hall, where they learned about healthcare certificate programs and connected with industry professionals. In the Exhibit Hall, students participated in “speed interviews" with employers, gaining a real-world look into healthcare careers and the training pathways to get there.

MDUSD extends special thanks to our industry partners: **Alameda Health System, CareBuilders at Home - East Bay, Contra Costa County Health, Coliseum Dental Concord, Donors Network West, DVC, Global Medical Response, Gurnick Academy, Joybound People & Pets, Mt. Diablo Adult Education, Pacific Home Care Services, Precision Chiropractic and VEG Veterinary.**

Campus to Commerce

Campus to Commerce is coming up on **April 30, 2026 at John Muir Health in Concord**, and we're excited to bring together our MDUSD Career Pathway students and industry partners for a meaningful day of connection and learning. Students will be showcasing their projects and sharing the work they've been doing, giving you a chance to see their creativity, skills, and growth firsthand.

We'd love for all of our industry partners to join us, not only to support our students, but to see the impact your collaboration has on our pathways and to connect with future employees. The day will include student booths, networking, and a short lunch program.

Please take a moment to register using the QR code or link on the flyer, lunch will be provided! We hope to see you there!



Summer Internships

Applications are open for our MDUSD Expanded Learning Summer Internship Program for Summer 2026! This is an awesome opportunity for students to get real-world experience, build new skills, and explore different career paths, all while **getting paid and earning college credit.** The program runs from June 8 to July 24, starting with a training week and then moving into internship placements at school sites and with our industry partners.

Summer Schedule:

- **June 8–12** – Training Week (with MDUSD team)
- **June 15–18** – Interns begin at sites
- **June 22–25** – Interns at sites
- **June 29–July 2** – Interns at sites
- **July 6–9** – Interns at sites
- **July 13–16** – Interns at sites
- **July 20–23** – Final week (most internships wrap up)

All interns will also be enrolled in a DVC class on Fridays and can work up to 120 hours (with a minimum of 108 hours required to earn college credit).

Applications are open April 1–April 22, and spots are limited, so we encourage students to apply early. It's a great way to try something new, gain confidence, and start building your future!





DVC Summer 2026 Career Academies

DVC's Summer 2026 Career Academies are a great way to try something new this summer while earning college credit. These short classes are great for high school students and give you hands-on experience in areas like trades, coding, cybersecurity, robotics, healthcare, business, and more. You'll learn from college instructors, try out real-world skills, and get a feel for what college classes are like, all in a supportive environment. It's a great way to explore your interests, build confidence, and get a head start.

Important Dates & Steps:

- Apply to DVC: Now
- Submit Special Admissions Form: March
- Enroll in your class (through InSite): May

Program Dates (vary by academy):

- Start as early as June 8 (Survey of the Trades)
- Classes run throughout June and July
- Final academies end by July 31

Spots fill up quickly and are first come, first served, so don't wait too long to apply!

Reminder: You can also take Dual Enrollment classes through DVC in **Fall 2026 and earn college credit while still in high school.** Classes will be offered at different high school sites and include options like Communication, Business, Sociology, Nutrition, Early Childhood Education, Engineering Technology, and Ethnic Studies.

These classes are a great way to try college-level work, build your skills, and get ahead. If you're interested, talk to your counselor or pathway teacher to learn more and sign up.





Meet Our Team (left to right):

Jorge Salinas-Tognetti – Career Pathways Counselor salinastognettij@mdusd.org
Isaiah Harper – Work-Based Learning Coordinator harperi@mdusd.org
Demetra Hufford – Work-Based Learning Coordinator huffordd@mdusd.org
Dr. Heather Fontanilla – Director, College & Career Readiness fontanillah@mdusd.org
Amanda Witczak – Career Pathways Counselor witczaka@mdusd.org
Anna Ramos – Manager, Youth Development & Support Services ramosai@mdusd.org
Daisy Romero-Briceno – Work-Based Learning Coordinator romerobricenod@mdusd.org
Alicia Navarrete – College & Career Transition Specialist navarretea@mdusd.org
Susan Hartwig – Administrator College Now & Career Pathways/Linked Learning hartwigs@mdusd.org (Not Pictured)



SAVE THE DATES:

- **April 20, 2026** – MDBEA Meeting
  (Serendipity Restaurant Mt. Diablo HS, Concord)
  - 4:00-6:00 PM
- **Now until April 22, 2026** – Applications for: MDUSD Summer Expanded Learning Internship Program
- **April 30, 2026** – Campus to Commerce Showcase
  (John Muir Health, Concord)
  - 9:00 AM-2:00 PM
- **June 8 - July 24** – MDUSD Summer Expanded Learning Internship Program

@PATHWAYS_MDUSD

SCAN ME

For more information regarding MDUSD Career Pathways Visit Our Website:
College & Career Readiness Department

Heather S. Fontanilla, Ed.D.
Director, College & Career Readiness
fontanillah@mdusd.org
925-682-8000 x4011

MDUSD CAREER PATHWAYS
Preparing Today's Students for the Jobs of Tomorrow