

Volume 11, Issue 2 May 2025

CareerTEC Chronicle

Partnering to Prepare Students from Dakota, Durand, Freeport, Orangeville, Pearl City, and Pecatonica for Tomorrow's Professions in Career and Technical Education (CTE).

Last Day of School!

 WEDNESDAY, MAY 28: Last day of classes at St. John, Freeport H.S. & Construction
 (Students do not need to return to CareerTEC after home school semester exams.)



- ^^TUES., AUG. 12:
 Orientation for CareerTEC classes at Highland College (6 p.m., HCC Student Center, second floor)
- ^^THURS., AUG. 14:
 Orientation for Careers in
 Auto Tech (6 p.m., Freeport
 High School shop)
- MON., AUG. 18: First day of classes at Highland College
- ^^WED., AUG. 20:
 Open House for classes at
 St. John & Construction (5
 p.m.-6:30 p.m., St. John,
 Freeport); Orientation
 (6:30 p.m.-7 p.m., chapel)
- AUGUST 21: First day of classes at Freeport H.S., St. John UCC, and Construction Trades

^^^ - Orientation & other key information will be mailed to students during the summer.

Best of Best

Overall Outstanding Student Award



BRAYDEN ZISSLER, Pecatonica

CareerTEC is proud to announce Brayden Zissler as the 2024-25 CareerTEC Overall Outstanding Student.

Utilizing information provided by nominating teachers, CareerTEC director Brian Greene (pictured above) interviewed the 19 outstanding students in order to select the overall winner.

Zissler, a Pecatonica High School junior, is a student in the Careers in Business 1 program.

"Brayden is a driven, self-motivated, and academically conscientious student," CIB instructor Elizabeth Hazzard wrote. "... He naturally assumes a leadership role in the classroom, consistently helping other students. He has a quiet confidence about him."

Active as the FFA chapter president while also working at Farm & Fleet, Zissler has his own lawn care business with 20 clients and serves another 10 clients when they vacation.

Zissler, who is taking CIB 2 next year, was awarded \$225 in cash awards and a plaque for being named the top overall student.

- Outstanding Student pictures, see page 7
- Outstanding Students by school, see page 8

Karen Johnson Scholarship Award



PAIGE HILLE, Pearl City

CareerTEC is proud to announce Paige Hille as the 2024-25 Karen Johnson Scholarship winner.

Hille is a Pearl City
High School senior in
the Early Childhood
Education 1 program.
Hille will receive a
\$300 scholarship
upon submission of
her first semester
grades from Illinois
State University,
where she is attending
this fall to major in
elementary education.

"Paige is engaged, responsive, and nurturing — building meaningful connections with the children while actively supporting their

development through intentional and thoughtful interactions," wrote ECE instructor Melissa Johnson, who also named Hille the Outstanding ECE 1 student of the year. "In our Year 1 class, which tends to be reserved during discussions, Paige consistently leads by example."

The Karen Johnson Scholarship is awarded each year to a student who demonstrates determination in the pursuit of career goals initiated through a CareerTEC program. Johnson was a past director of CareerTEC.



HEALTH OCCUPATIONS 1

February

Over the past two weeks, the students have completed their state-mandated dementia training. We have had a lot of fun with this unit during different hands-on activities. Each class created an appropriate activity for those with dementia, and we went to Liberty Village or Parkview nursing home to perform the activity (pictured right). Activities included Bingo, coloring, cards, crafts, listening to music, and dancing.

HOYA organized a bake sale with proceeds going to Liberty Village and Parkview's dementia units. We were able to raise over \$270! The students were able to experience what it is like to live with dementia through our dementia world simulation. Looking forward to the next few weeks: We are starting CPR training and clinicals!

March

During the past few weeks, the students learned basic life support (BLS) interventions and about mental health.

BLS information learned included the following: 1.) Importance of high-quality CPR and its impact on survival, 2.) Describe and apply the concepts of the chain of survival, 3.) Recognize when CPR is needed, 4.) Perform high-quality CPR on an adult, infant, and child, 5.) Describe the importance of using an AED as soon as possible, 6.) Demonstrate use of an AED, 7.) Provide effective ventilation by using a barrier device, 8.) Importance of teams in multi-rescuer CPR, 9.) Perform as an effective team member, and 10.) Describe the techniques for relief or foreign body



obstruction for adult, infant, and child.

All students completed the BLS course and are now CPR certified!! I am so proud of all their hard work and they are ready to save a life!

During the mental health unit, the students worked in groups to identify the following: 1.) Identify seven characteristics of mental health, 2.) Identify causes for mental health disorders, 3.) Distinguish between fact and fallacy concerning mental health disorders, 4.) Explain the connection between mental and physical wellness, 5.) List guidelines for communicating with residents who have a mental health disorder, 6.) Identify and define common defense mechanisms. 7.) Describe types of mental health disorders, 8.) Explain how mental health disorders are treated, 9.) Identify important observations that should be made and reported, and 10.) List the signs of substance abuse.

In March, the students will learn about different acute and chronic conditions of the various body systems, rehabilitation, restorative care, and how to take care of individuals who are dying and have passed.

We have also started clinicals, and the students are doing well. Clinical sites include Liberty Village, Parkview, Medina, and FHN. I enjoy watching the students grow and increase their confidence in their skills!

April

During the week of March 9, the students learned about death, dying, and Hospice. The chaplain from FHN came to speak to the students about his experience in the hospital setting and his personal story. We learned how a chaplain provides not just religious support but also spiritual and emotional support to the patient and their family.

This week, the students learned about rehabilitation, restorative care, and surgical interventions, including preoperative and postoperative care. The students performed skits demonstrating their skills and knowledge of how to use assistive devices, walking aids, proper patient positioning, and range of motion exercises. We are continuously practicing our patient care skills in the lab and on residents/patients during our clinical rotations.

After we come back from break, we will learn about home care and review infection prevention practices. Everyone is doing great and I am proud of all their hard work!

May

We have had a busy April. The students have been working in the skills lab, refining and checking off on skills, and continuing their practice at clinicals. The last clinical was April 29, and everyone has now

(**HOYA I** continued on page 7)

HEALTH OCCUPATIONS 2

February

This past month, our HOYA 2 students have been diving deeper into Medical Terminology, an essential part of their curriculum. They've been breaking down medical terms by learning prefixes, suffixes, word roots, and combining forms, giving them the ability to define unfamiliar words through analysis. Mastering these word parts will serve them well as they continue their journey into healthcare.

In addition to sharpening their medical vocabulary, some HOYA 2 students played a key role in our Dementia Training for first-year students. Through our Virtual Dementia experience, the newcomers stepped into the shoes of individuals battling daily challenges, giving them a deeper understanding of the struggles patients face.

In February, students will begin team-teaching projects on Medical Terminology related to body systems. These lessons will not only cover disease processes, medical specialties, and diagnostic tools but also will explore rare diseases they may encounter in their careers. As we progress through the body systems, students will also have the chance to participate in hands-on dissections.

HOYA 2 students continue to make an impact beyond the classroom. Their latest Community Education Bulletin Board projects focused on **Human Trafficking Awareness** and Stalking Awareness, bringing attention to serious issues that often go unspoken among teenagers. By addressing these topics, they are helping educate their peers while also gaining confidence in having difficult but necessary conversations - an important skill they will carry into their future healthcare careers.

March

February was a normal, busy month. Students are having fun learning their medical terminology words. They have designed Blooket games for their



medical terminology word part quizzes. They completed the musculoskeletal system with our chicken wing dissections.

As March has come in like a lamb, HOYA 2 will have the March lion spirit. They are continuing working at their internships. They will be using their knowledge of the medical terms that they have mastered thus far and will be completing critical thinking worksheets as well as some case study of some of their residents/patients they are caring for during their internships. We will also be dissecting beef and venison hearts and venison lungs as we continue with our cardiovascular and respiratory units.

Students have started their community/public health surveys and will now compose a Google Slide presentation on those findings. Community/public health will always affect any healthcare provider, so it is important to not only know what citizens of their community find important but also to know what types of healthcare each community offers.

Next week the students will be updating their educational bulletin board to address another pertinent health issue. February was Heart Health month and Children's Dental Awareness month. I am looking forward to the newest board as the students have done such an amazing job on each of the previous ones.

As March hopefully changes to warmer weather, please remember to work on some relaxing outdoor activities.



April

The HOYA 2 students are on the downhill slide before they reach the ultimate goal post of high school graduation!! They are keeping busy and avoiding the plague of senioritis.

HOYA 2 students are continuing to use their critical thinking skills by doing situational assignments where they interact as CNAs and potential healthcare professionals via their online workbook. This allows a much more accurate illustration of what they can expect as they progress through their career paths.

We have completed our cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive system units with student presentations of different cardiac disease processes next week. This has been an interesting unit as we were able to dissect three venison hearts, livers, lungs, trachea and esophagus that were donated (pictured above left) by HOYA students Kendra Kuhlemeier and Caily Richardson, and St John's Director of Congregational Life Pam Wessel and her husband Dan. Students were a little squeamish at the beginning of the activity but then the fun began. Not everyone realized the size and toughness of the trachea, which we were able to witness during the dissection. Students were able to view the pericardium, the four chambers of a heart as well as the valves. They also found food in the esophagus and a bit of bile in one of the liver ducts.

The students are working on this month's Community Health

Bulletin board, which will focus on Stress Awareness and Management.

May

The students are down to the last hours of their senior year. It has been such a delight to watch each of them grow this year. They have battled with their next steps in life, which isn't easy. The College Choice research project opened their eyes to the pros and cons of each university. I believe they have made amazing choices for their next step in their career paths.

They have worked diligently at their internships while maintaining their school life as well as their social life. While each student is required 288 hours per year for this course, several students have over 700 hours! Some have changed their career choice as they undertook their internships, finding a passion that will lead them into the next step of their lives.

Students did a fantastic job during our integumentary system unit. They utilized common household items and made phenomenal simulated wounds. HOYA 1 assisted in voting for the most realistic wounds. Students used their medical terminology with the correct terms for their chosen wounds, described how the injury occurred, as well as first aid measures.

 Lori Steele, Health Occupations
 Coordinator and Year 2 instructor





CULINARY ARTS 1

February

In January, the first semester ended with Culinary Arts conducting a practical final. Students had to prepare a protein, starch, and vegetable, and they were graded on the flavor and texture or each.

Semester two began with a week dedicated to potato cookery, during which students prepared homemade gnocchi, pierogis, and picadillo. Next, students focused on baking with yeast, one of the most popular units of the year. To practice baking with yeast, students prepared cinnamon rolls, homemade pizza, khachapuri, baguettes, and soft pretzels.

March

In the second half of February, students in Culinary Arts focused on the Pasta and Egg Cookery units. During the pasta units, students made all the pasta dough from scratch, preparing dishes such as ravioli, chicken alfredo, and carbonara. During the egg unit, students prepared dishes such as quiche and huevos rancheros.

In the first half of March, Culinary Arts will focus on international cuisine. After choosing a country, each student will do a presentation about that country's cuisine. Then, the entire class will prepare a recipe of that student's choice from their chosen country.

April

In late March, students learned about egg cookery while developing practical skills through lab activities, such as huevos rancheros.

In April, students will continue to develop their culinary skills. Their instruction will focus on advanced baking, including



recipes such as pastry cream, macaroons, and eclairs.
Additionally, students are attending a field trip to Blackhawk Technical College in Janesville, Wis., in the beginning of April, where they will see first-hand how culinary school functions.

May

In the second half of April, students focused on practicing and preparing the Principal and Counselor Breakfast (pictured above left), which took place on April 24. The class served breakfast burritos, cinnamon rolls, quiche, breakfast potatoes, and fruit salad. The meal was

served buffet style and the food was well-received.

In the first half of May, students will be practicing and preparing for the Mock Restaurant event (pictured above), which will take place on May 9. Students are able to invite two to three family members to the event, during which they are served a five-course meal prepared entirely by the students. The menu consists of sliders, bistro salad, French onion soup, honey garlic chicken, and chocolate lava cake.

Steve Konefes,
 Culinary Arts
 instructor



CONSTRUCTION TRADES

February

We have finished the framing and drywall on the rooms we are building in the shop. The roof shingles and accessories are being installed now (pictured right). When the roofing is completed vinyl siding will be installed. Around the end of the February, we should be ready to start learning about plumbing.

March

We have finished the exteriors of the rooms that the students built in the shop. The aluminum soffits and vinyl siding are installed. This month we will be learning about finish carpentry and plumbing.

Finish carpentry in construction refers to the final stage of woodworking on a building

project, where detailed trim, moldings, doors, windows, and other visible elements are installed to create a polished aesthetic and complete the space. Finish carpentry focuses on precision and visual appeal rather than structural support like rough carpentry does; essentially, it's the "finishing touches" on a building's interior and exterior that enhance its appearance and functionality.

April

The students have worked through the various plumbing stations. They have learned how to sweat copper, thread steel, and use crimp or expansion pex fittings for water and gas supply lines. They also hooked up the drains and vents with pvc for several sinks and toilets linked together. They learned how to repair toilets, replace faucets,

drain traps, and about the different tools needed to complete those tasks.

We are currently working on constructing a truss or ark type bridge. This will educate the students about how the triangle and compression techniques are used in everyday construction. Each student is building his own bridge, everyone has the same amount of material. We will strength-test when everyone is finished. This has been a popular lesson, all of the students have embraced the challenge.

May

The school year is winding down. Keeping the students engaged this time of year is always a challenge. We've been fortunate to receive some new equipment to allow us to learn about cabinetry. The students have been making drawers and



doors, and learning the intricacies of cabinet making. It's a slower process than we are used to, but overall they seem to enjoy it.

— Jim Shaw, Construction Trades instructor



CAREERS IN BUSINESS 1 & 2

February

In January, we've been learning Excel, about the banking industry, and learning how to invest for the purpose of playing the Stock Market Game, which ends mid-April. The Stock Market Game explored types of companies, stocks, reading a stock quote, risk, and what metrics to use when doing stock analysis. It's early and the teams are doing well with one in the top 50. Sometimes the students are thrilled and other times they are completely exasperated with their portfolio's performance. It's a fun and worthwhile learning lesson for all of them.

After learning about banking, checking, and savings accounts, and everything related to it, the students will volunteer in late February at the Mall of Life. It involves helping area seventh-grade students navigate check writing, balancing their checkbook registers, and making simulated life choices based on circumstances and financial constraints. It is a worthwhile event for everyone.

A special "Thank you" to the CIB II students who have been helping update all of the "stores," banking, careers, and salary information for the Mall of Life. They've made quick work of it and we appreciate the help!

As the third quarter winds down in March, most of the CIB II students will have completed their internship hours, and are continuing to work while putting the finishing touches on their portfolio. Additionally, they will work on the PowerPoint presentation they are giving to their respective mentor and the CIB I students at the end of April. It's a great chance for the CIB I juniors who are taking the class next year to learn about future options and opportunities.

March

The students are still tackling Excel and have mixed feeling about it. Some love it and others ... not so much. Since 95% of the business world uses it, we will keep at it so the students are prepared.

The Stock Market Game has been wild this year and the student's portfolios can rank 50th one day and 500 the next, literally. It's a great life experience for the students, especially those who like the idea of investing.

Taxes took their toll on this year's class, and I think it's safe to say there were mixed reviews about it. Half of the class loved learning about them and the other half hated it. Sadly, it's one of those areas we have to deal with when adulting so I commend them for their perseverance.



They've never been so relieved to start a new unit: Credit! Credit basics, credit reports and scores, and understanding credit cards make up that unit, which will be followed by insurance and then housing.

On February 26, the students (pictured right) volunteered at the Mall of Life, a seventh-grade CareerTEC-sponsored event. I'm proud of the students who did well assisting the younger students, while having fun too!

Year II students are writing and preparing a presentation for the year I students and their mentors in late April. I'm so excited to see how they turn out!

April

CIB I students have been job shadowing (JS) on Thursdays and will continue until the end of the school year. Students have been welcomed by the community in the following areas: accounting, finance, entrepreneurship, real estate, project management, banking, investing, and marketing, just to name a handful.

The goal of shadowing is to help students learn about various career paths in an effort to solidify their choice or perhaps remove it as an option, therefore, saving them time and money in the future. The academic end of JS includes students polishing their communication skills in a variety of ways: using proper email etiquette with their mentors, researching and writing pre-job shadowing memos, post JS thank you letters, and making PowerPoint presentations to share with the class about each experience.

Often, students find a business they would like to intern for. Several of the current juniors have chosen to take the second year of the program, which means having an internship next school year. In fact, some begin in May of the current year. It is my sincere belief that having an internship elevates the student from other students; in particular, when "selling"



yourself to colleges and trying to obtain scholarships. The internship is also dual credit, which is an added plus!

Lastly, a very sincere "Thank You!" to the area businesses for supporting our CIB program! This is an immeasurable experience for the students, and we are always very appreciative of your time.

May

During the last month, CIB II students finished their internships, some with 300 to 400 hours over the required 240 hours, which is amazing and a testament to their work ethic. Then, they presented about their internship and future plans to the CIB I class (pictured above). CIB I are working on resumes, interviewing skills, and finishing Excel as well as finding an internship (for those who are taking the second year of the program).

On a more personal note, over the past two years, I've had the privilege of getting to know my CIB II students, watching them grow, make decisions about their future, apply to colleges/trade schools, and prepare to take the next steps in their life. It's been so rewarding.

Class of 2025, I'm very proud of each of your accomplishments and who you have become! I will miss each of you so very much. Specifically, your intelligence, wit, teasing, stories, sports events, humor, and silliness that always makes me laugh ... even when I don't want to.

Please stay in

(CIB continued on page 8)























CareerTEC

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Follow us on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com /CareerTEC61032

2025-26 Apps Still Being Accepted

- 1. Go to www.careertec-il.org
- 2. On bottom of the home page, choose Quick Links and then 2025-26 Course Enrollment Catalog for complete information about each CareerTEC program.
- 3. Please talk to your school counselor about your interest in a program.
- 4. When ready to apply, either in Course Offerings or in the Student Application at the top of the home page, select the application link.
- 5. Applications should be done with a parent/guardian in order for proper consents and information to be received.

Looking Back at the 2024-25 School Year ...

CareerTEC Outstanding Students



Marijose Avila, Nail Tech



Alexia Beck, Interactive Design



Lilyana Blakely, CJ 2



Lillian Boyer, Culinary Arts 1



Rudy Diduch, Cosmetology 1



Dylan Evans, Construction 1



Damien Gardner, CATS 1



Angela Gautam, HOYA 1



Keagen Gilson, CAD



Jaidon Hastings, HOYA 2



Jacob Mitchell, Ag Science



Braxton Neidermeier, Welding



Ryan Potter, CATS 2



Saige Simmons, ECE 2



Liam Swiss, CIB 2



Serenity Tuell, NJROTC



Olivia VanNatta, CJ 1

Outstanding Student winners are chosen by their program instructors. Each Outstanding Student receives a certificate and a \$25 cash award.

The Overall Outstanding Student winner is selected by CareerTEC System Director Brian Greene after interviewing each Outstanding Student. The award is based on students'

abilities to participate in these interviews as if they are applying for a job; dress, poise, communication skills and attitude are important. Students are also scored based on their teacher's nomination letter and grade in the class.

The Overall Outstanding student receives a plaque and \$200 cash.

(HOYA 1 continued from page 2) completed their state-mandated 40-hour training!

This past week, the students worked on resumes, cover letters, filled out applications, and performed practice interviews with management from surrounding nursing homes. Over the next two weeks/final days, we will be reviewing and preparing for the state CNA exam. I am confident that by the end of the year, everyone will be prepared and do well on their exams!

Amanda Miller,
 Health Occupations I instructor



Student Comments About HOYA 1 Experience

- "I have enjoyed learning about caring for others. And meeting different people from different schools."
- "I enjoyed learning how to do CPR and becoming CPR certified."
- "I really enjoyed doing skills as a class throughout the year, and I loved clinicals; they were so fun to learn more about each time."
- "Recently in the HOYA program, I enjoyed all the clinicals I had these past month, and I've also loved learning about all the new skills."
- "My favorite part about this class was working with new people from other schools.
 Also, just making new friends. I am excited to get my CNA and start working as a CNA."
- "At first, I was worried that joining this class might drive me away from medicine, but as it progressed, I realized how important this field is to me. I've learned many crucial lessons and skills that will be valuable to me in the future. I've also built new friendships with the students in my class that I will always cherish. Thank you to Mrs. Miller for a great first year in HOYA!"

Looking Back at the 2024-25 School Year ...

OVERALL OUTSTANDING STUDENT WINNER

Brayden Zissler 11 Pecatonica Careers in Business 1

OUTSTANDING STUDENT PROGRAM WINNERS

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NAME	GRADE	SCHOOL	PROGRAM
Jacob Mitchell	12	Dakota	Ag Science & Capstone
Braxton Neidermeier	12	Dakota	Industrial Manufacturing - Welding
Saige Simmons	12	Dakota	Early Childhood Education 2
Marijose Avila	11	Freeport	Nail Tech
Rudy Diduch	11	Freeport	Cosmetology 1
Damien Gardner	12	Freeport	Careers in Auto Tech & Service 1
Angela Gautam	11	Freeport	Health Occupations 1
Serenity Tuell	12	Freeport	NJROTC
Lillian Boyer	11	Homeschool	Culinary Arts 1
Lilyana Blakely	12	Orangeville	Criminal Justice 2
Paige Hille	12	Pearl City	Early Childhood Education $f 1$
Ryan Potter	12	Pearl City	Careers in Auto Tech & Service 2
Alexia Beck	12	Pecatonica	Interactive Design & Animation
Dylan Evans	11	Pecatonica	Construction Trades 1
Keagen Gilson	11	Pecatonica	Industrial Manufacturing – CAD
Jaidon Hastings	12	Pecatonica	Health Occupations 2
Liam Swiss	12	Pecatonica	Careers in Business 2
Olivia VanNatta	11	Pecatonica	Criminal Justice 1
Brayden Zissler	11	Pecatonica	Careers in Business 1

KAREN JOHNSON SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Paige Hille **Pearl City** Early Childhood Education 1

(CIB continued from page 5)

touch and let me know how you are doing. I look forward to seeing all that you achieve! ~ Mrs. H

Congratulations to the following students on their achievements. Simply amazing!

- Overall Outstanding Student and Outstanding Student - Year 1: Brayden Zissler, Pecatonica High School
- Outstanding Student Year 2: Liam Swiss, Pecatonica High School



 Elizabeth Hazzard, Careers in Business instructor



CAREERS IN BUSINESS YEAR II STUDENTS College/Trade Major or Career Area Univ. of Wisconsin-Platteville Finance/Sports Management Brody Black Iowa Lakes Comm. College Accounting & Actuary Jaxon Diedrich Int. Brot. Electrical Workers Electrician Rock Valley College Ava Gasparini Accounting Univ. of Wisconsin-Platteville Finance Cooper Hathaway Univ. of Wisconsin-Platteville Pre-Law Cooper Hoffman Univ. of Wisconsin-Platteville Accounting Brylee Knutti High Point University Sydni Lower Univ. of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Madison Roach Highland Community College Occupational Therapy Universal Technical Institute Automotive / Diesel & Industrial Technology Aurelia Vasquez Highland Community College Accounting/Marketing Samuel Weitzel-Lopez Georgia Southern University Business Management

Collegiate Sports

Baseball

Basketball