

Impact Report 2013-2014

1 OVERVIEW

This year the Rural Scholars Program supported 35 seventh and eighth grade students across six local school districts and provided Junior Achievement programming to 275 sixth graders. A total of 46 scholars participated in our summer workshops.

Workshops included: BOC Water Hydraulics, Heritage Thermal Services, Asthma and Lung Anatomy, “Makers and Mechanisms” Ninth Grade Summer Workshop, and “Soil and Water Explorations” Middle School Summer Workshop.

Mentors met with Rural Scholars for a total of 1000+ hours individually and in small groups, assisting with homework, and guiding scholars through the completion of career profile presentations and aspiration essays.

275 sixth graders in four local districts received classroom instruction through Junior Achievement’s highly rated “Economics for Success” program. The bulk of this 114 hours of financial literacy programming was conducted by our undergraduate mentors.

Lisbon ninth grader Morgan Briand tests a catapult of her own design. Students later charted the parabolic trajectories of their catapults and calculated the probability of hitting targets.



What are they learning?

- *“I learned you can start a small business and then build it over time. Don’t get big machines until you know it’s going to be worth it.”*
- *“Before this workshop I thought resource management careers were lame. Now I think they’re pretty interesting.”*
- *“Farming chemicals can be hazardous to the environment and should be disposed of at a hazardous waste place.”*
- *“Everything matters. You have to work hard because one small mistake could mess up your business.”*
- *“I learned not to let your cows near streams because they can mess the water up.”*
- *“Hydraulic systems use liquids or gases to move heavy objects. They are in lots of everyday things we use.”*
- *“I want to try extracting DNA from multiple different things now that I have done it with a strawberry.”*
- *“You should find something you enjoy and make that your career or your business.”*

2 ASSESSMENT INDICATORS

This year we focused on translating our assessment plan into action. With the help of our assessment committee, we identified measures of our outcomes for the middle school cohorts of Rural Scholars. Below are some of the results based on those measures.

Successful Students

- 3.33 was the average GPA, 8th grade in 2013-2014.
- All but three eighth grade scholars met or exceeded the program minimum GPA of 2.5.
- 2.99 was the average GPA for 7th grade in 2013-2014.
- Average year-to-year change in GPA for 2013-2014: + 0.22
- 72% of ninth grader scholars are enrolled in Accelerated Algebra or Geometry for 2014-2015.
- 61% of eighth grade scholars are enrolled in Algebra 1 for 2014-2015.

Engaged Learners

- 66% of scholars report **positive interest** in learning more about chemistry and biology after attending Rural Scholars workshops.
- Ninth grade scholars demonstrated their ability to **persist** by producing catapults, battery-powered gliders, bricolage machines, and inventions, all of their own design, spending an average of three hours every afternoon at these open-ended and challenging math/design tasks during their summer 2014 Makers and Mechanisms workshop.



KSU Faculty Paul Pfeifer assists students in identifying trees at the Draime Estate Gardens.

Workforce Ready

- 275 sixth graders participating in our Junior Achievement Economics for Success programming demonstrated a gain of 11% in their **knowledge about insurance, credit, and financial planning.**
- 50% of scholars reported a **positive change** in their attitudes toward manufacturing careers after workshops at local manufacturing shops. 75% reported an interest in learning more about careers in manufacturing.

Socially Savvy

- Counselors, teachers, and mentors report **improved behavior** for all scholars identified as at-risk.
- Eighth grade scholars learned about **interviewing and business etiquette** this year as part of our Career Explorations curriculum. They learned to shake hands, dress appropriately, use good phone etiquette, and write thank-you notes.
- Scholars themselves report that the program has changed their understanding of themselves in positive ways, helping them find a **supportive peer group** and connect to supportive adults at school and in their communities.

I WOULD CONSIDER A CAREER IN MANUFACTURING BECAUSE THEY USE MATH A LOT AND I LIKE MATH.

- EIGHTH GRADE SCHOLAR, BOC WATER HYDRAULICS WORKSHOP

Committed to Community

- Scholars committed more than **162 hours of community service** through Rural Scholars events at soup kitchens and in wildlife areas during 2013-2014.

- On their own time this summer, eighth and ninth grade scholars committed **more than 476 hours of service** in their communities.
- Scholars and mentors are participating in the Educational Service Center's Youth Leadership initiatives.
- Scholars report that community service is one of their highest priority activities, and in response to their expressed interest in doing more, the Rural Scholars program has adopted the Youth in Service to America Service Project Toolkit as part of our ninth-grade academic year curriculum.

"I think what connects our cohort to each other is friendship and caring for our community. That's who we are and what we want the kids coming behind us to learn from us."

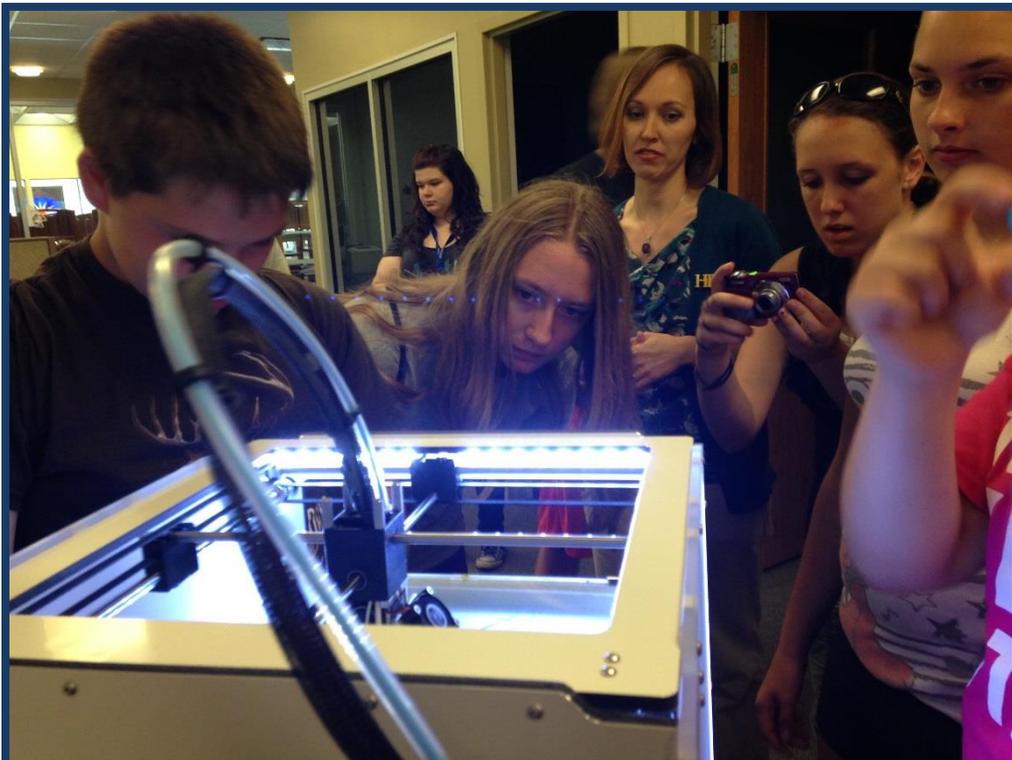
3 FUNDING

Funding that has been requested includes:

- A \$50,000 proposal to the Frank Mangano Foundation
- A \$25,000 proposal to the Hancock County Savings Bank Foundation
- A \$25,000 proposal to Freshmark Inc.
- A \$25,000 proposal to the Columbiana Foundation
- A \$15,000 proposal to the Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation

Other gifts to the Rural Scholars Program include:

- Endowed fund for scholarships (one of which is the Rachel Boyce Lang Charitable Trust, Friends of East Liverpool campus and Tri-State Casting Club (Shriners) at East Liverpool - \$50K)
- A \$30,000 endowed fund for scholarships/programming from an area manufacturer
- Consumers National Bank gift \$25,000 over five years
- Salem Community Foundation - \$18,000 over three years
- Giant Eagle in-kind contribution of lunch foods every year (app. \$3000)



Visiting the 3D printer at the Kent State University Multimedia Studio.

2014-2015: LOOKING AHEAD

We continue to build our assessment strategy. For the 2014-2015 year we will formalize plans for our high school assessment measures. Our oldest cohort, the class of 2018, contributed to the process, offering ideas for their own goals and for how they wish to be held accountable.

Targeted support. In response to last year's data, we have decided to increase explicit instruction on organization, time management, and study skills for scholars. We have partnered more closely with our campus counseling office to create presentations specifically addressing concerns raised by mentors and scholars about mental health wellness, and we will continue to communicate with counselors in the schools throughout the year as needed. We are also creating more academic workshops to offer a greater variety of choices for scholars during the school year. Next year's summer workshop for tenth graders will include an intensive focus on critical thinking and writing, as many of our mentors, scholars, and their parents have noted with concern their lack of preparation in this area. Similar programs report that intervention in this area plays a key role in student success through the first two years of college.



Family workshops. This summer we surveyed scholars and parents through focus groups to identify areas of priority interest to them as we build and improve the program. Ninth graders and their families identified a need for further information about financial preparation for college as well as training in leadership/character development, so the Rural Scholars Program is partnering with Consumers National Bank to offer workshops to the scholars and their families in these areas this year. Parents are interested in improving their ability to help their students study and use computers effectively, and scholars are interested in practical life skills workshops (ex: car repair, professional clothing and

etiquette).

In the schools. Scholars also asked us to find more ways to support their peers and teachers through the programming we offer. They would like to see the benefits they experience in the program conveyed more broadly throughout the districts. We will continue actively looking for ways to fund the Rural Teacher Fellows programming we have always hoped to offer in tandem with our existing summer and academic-year workshops. This year Rural Scholars mentors have been trained by the Ohio Humanities Council to offer Justice Talking facilitation to all schools participating in the CCESC Youth Leadership initiative.

Scholars also mentioned the benefits they see specifically through mentoring in programs like Rural Scholars and Southern Local's Project More. They would like to be mentors in their own schools for younger students, so we are looking at ways to get them connected to existing mentoring programs. Many of them suggested that they could talk to younger students in elementary school about the opportunities available through Rural Scholars if they stay focused on academics.

Overall, we will look to improve on what already seems to be working and expand our reach where possible in areas identified as important by the community and our scholars.