



# CAREER CONNECT NW

Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom counties

Hosted at



**Northwest Educational  
Service District 189**

*Together We Can*



Catalyst.



Connections.



Careers.



## Celebrating an amazing year of connecting students to family wage/high demand career opportunities

With new and expanded services, Career Connect NW (CCNW) had a tremendously successful year in connecting students to family wage/high demand career opportunities. Work ranged from systems-change efforts around CTE Dual Credit to educator professional development opportunities to career programming for students. A few highlights include:

### Communities of Practice:

The **High School & Beyond Plan Community of Practice** offered a valuable opportunity for educators to delve deeper into specific subjects relating to college and career readiness as well as the High School and Beyond Plan.

Each quarter, CCNW concentrated on a particular topic pertaining to the High School and Beyond Plan, including financial aid, career pathways, and connecting students to pathways (aligned with Washington STEM's Career Pathways Readiness System framework). The series culminated in May with an in-person event, including speakers from Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), Stand for Children, and regional community colleges. We also held the inaugural Education Legislator Roundtable with regional representatives from the Washington State Legislature. Read more about our in-person session below!

The **Computer Science Community of Practice** provided a series of workshops aimed at building a strong learning community to share resources, experiences, and strategies that align high school computer science courses with college-level standards. This effort was supported by the Boeing Foundation as well as the CTE Dual Credit proviso that CCNW is project managing in partnership with the SBCTC to expand dual credit opportunities in career pathways that lead to family wage, high demand opportunities in the Northwest region. Partners included lead faculty from Everett Community College and Skagit Valley College.



## About Us

The Career Connect NW Network connects industry, education, and community partners to collectively meet the career development needs of Northwest Washington's youth in an equitable and accessible way.

Our Network creates a coordinated effort with planning partners and local stakeholder organizations in Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom communities to serve as a catalyst for initiatives, leveraging resources and programs and building community.

The Career Connect NW Network has three goals:

- Catalyze Regional Stakeholder Partnerships, Collaborations, and Strategies
- Increase Equity and Access to High Wage/High Demand Career Opportunities
- Support Coherent Career Pathways and Workforce Readiness

We are dedicated to equity through attention to data and focus on those historically underrepresented in STEM fields, including students of color, women, students living in rural areas, and students living in poverty.

We foster and promote innovation in approaching how to connect young people to careers, exploring new ways to advance opportunities for students and make them accessible and relevant in their world.

## Contact Us

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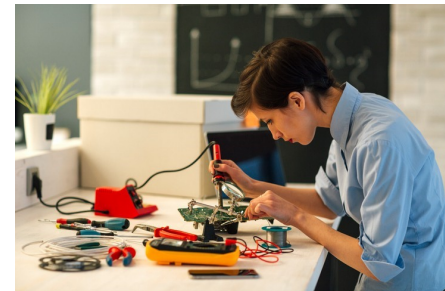
#### Career Exploration Tours and Events:

The **WAVE Tour (Washington Apprenticeship Vocational Education)** was hosted by CCNW in October at the Northwest Carpenters Institute (NWCi) in Burlington, thanks to funding from HF Sinclair. There were 384 students who participated from 23 high schools and programs from all 5 counties; 85% of students surveyed indicated that their knowledge of careers in the construction trades increased, with 87% indicating a notable likeliness to apply for an apprenticeship in the construction trades!

The **ECHO Tour (Exploring Careers & Healthcare Opportunities)** was piloted by CCNW in Snohomish County at Everett Community College in March. Of 422 students from 23 high schools, and programs who attended, 92% of students surveyed indicated that their knowledge of careers in the healthcare sector increased, with 84% of respondents indicating a notable likeliness towards pursuing a career in the healthcare sector.

**Eight STEM Like ME!® events** were facilitated in middle schools and high schools across the region, with one specifically designed for teacher professional development. At each event, participants rotated in small groups to employer stations and participated in hands-on activities related to specific career paths. At these events, both teachers and students learned more about career opportunities in the region that are in high-demand and that offer a family living wage. More information on our spring events can be found in articles below.

**34 Career Connected Learning events** were held to connect schools, organizations, and businesses. This includes bringing employer presenters from local businesses to schools to share information about their careers and their companies. If you are interested in being a presenter and you work in computer science, Information Technology, maritime, construction apprenticeship trades, healthcare, clean energy, or advanced manufacturing, continue reading to the end of the newsletter to find out how to get involved!



**CTE Dual Credit Proviso Leadership** was provided through CCNW to kick off a pilot program in partnership with the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges to increase career and technical education dual credit participation and credential attainment in professional technical programs.

This regionally focused initiative is working with participating regional colleges to create shared practices, policies, and systems to streamline CTE Dual Credit articulations, registration, reporting, transcription, and credit portability. In addition, this initiative focuses on practices to align pathways between K-12



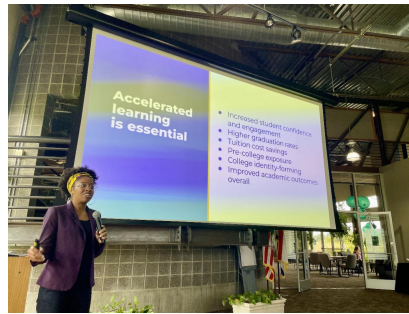
and community colleges and address equity in access and participation.

"With big plans already underway for 2024-25, we look forward to another successful year of connecting students to family wage/high demand career opportunities in the NW region," said Jenny Veltri, CCNW Network Regional Lead.



### High School & Beyond Convening packed with information, updates, & connection

Career Connect NW (CCNW) hosted the second High School and Beyond Community of Practice In-Person Convening on May 23. Over 120 participants attended the event, held at the Northwest Educational Service District 189.



Throughout the day, attendees participated in networking opportunities and a series of sessions designed for counselors and administrators at our K-12 partner districts. Each session was built to provide up-to-date information on topics that impact how we work with students as they work on their High School and Beyond plans starting in 7th grade.

**OSPI Update: High School & Beyond Universal Platform and Next Steps** - Kim Reykdal, Director of Graduation and Pathway Preparation, and Dr. Jill Diehl, High School & Beyond Plan Program Supervisor, presented an overview of the implementation timeline for the Universal High School & Beyond Plan (HSBP) platform. They highlighted data-related possibilities that could guide and inform districts and partners, as well as opportunities to participate in platform demonstrations and provide feedback on its features and goals.

**CTE Dual Credit Proviso Work Group Update** - Participants had the opportunity to hear from the CTE Dual Credit Proviso Work Group, which includes leadership from CCNW, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Everett Community College, Skagit Valley College, Whatcom Community College, and Bellingham Technical College. The team is dedicated to regionally aligning processes and procedures as well as redefining the intent of CTE Dual Credit. This initiative collaborates with participating regional colleges to establish shared practices, policies, and systems that streamline CTE Dual Credit articulations, registration, reporting, transcription, and credit portability. Additionally, there is an emphasis on aligning pathways between K-12 and community colleges, addressing equity in access and participation. Computer Science and IT pathways have been the focus of 2023-24 efforts.

**CCNW hosts inaugural NW Education Legislative Roundtable** - CCNW was thrilled to host the first Education Legislative Roundtable, facilitated by Lynne Varner, CEO of Washington STEM. The event featured a bipartisan group of legislators, including Rep. Carolyn Eslick, 39th Legislative District, Rep. Dave Paul (D), 10th Legislative District, and 42nd Legislative District Rep. Alicia Rule (D) and Joe Timmons (D).

These legislators from across the region joined us to share their passion and support for diverse students and learning experiences along with their interests and insights into school funding, student mental, health, social emotional learning, and post-secondary pathways, including





**Operationalizing Beyond: Increasing Access to Advanced Coursework and Creating a System that Serves and Sees Students** - Kia Franklin, Executive Director for Stand for Children, was the event's keynote speaker. Stand for Children aims to be a unique catalyst for education focusing on high school success, safe and equitable learning environments, and restorative education justice.

Each year, thousands of qualified students are missing from advanced courses and dual credit classrooms in Washington, disproportionately affecting those historically furthest from educational opportunity. Adopting — and implementing — policies and best practices around equitable enrollment drives shifts in student access, opportunity, and achievement. Kia shared how districts across the state are working to increase access by adopting academic acceleration policies.

The CCNW High School & Beyond Community of Practice will kick off in the 2024/2025 academic year with the first meeting on **September 19, 2024** in partnership with OSPI. Register below – we look forward to seeing you there!



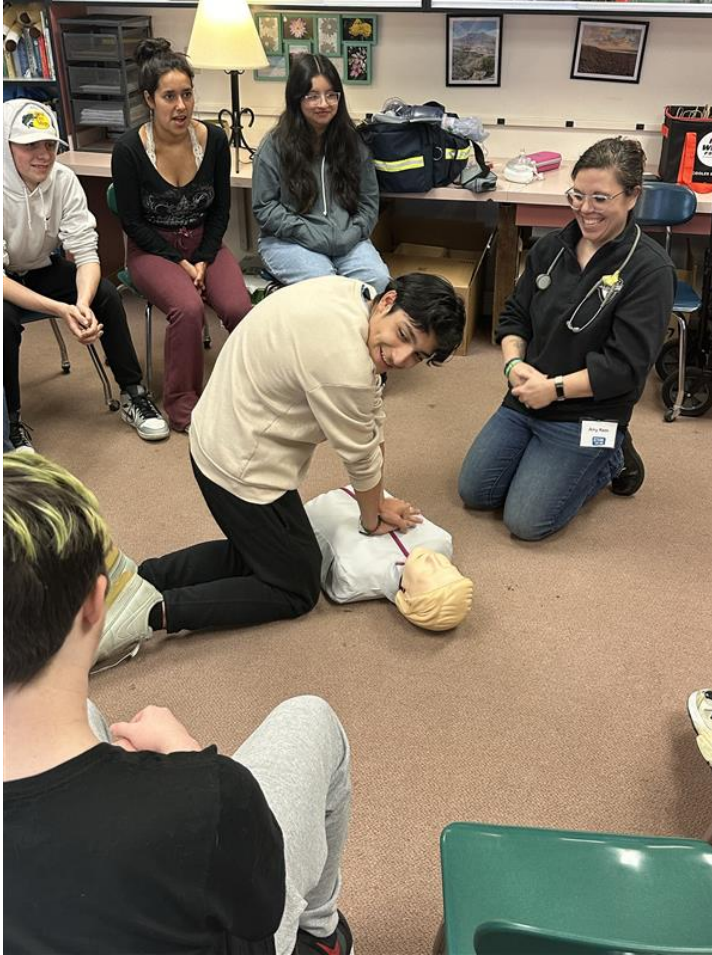
The CCNW team, from left to right: Donovan Tate, Jenny Veltri, Vanessa Allen, Sinead Plagge, Alyssa Jackson, Megan Benzing, and Mary Powers.

### **STEM Like ME!® makes the rounds in Snohomish County**

Career Connect NW (CCNW) and Snohomish STEM created two STEM Like ME!® experiences and a presentation on robotics, modern manufacturing, and clean energy to students in Snohomish County before the end of the school year.







### Marysville Pilchuck High School

Four employers on May 30 shared STEM careers through STEM career-related activity station rotations. Stations included Healthcare Career with NW Ambulance, Clean Energy Careers with Zap Energy, Environmental Science Careers with Harmsen, and Urban Planning Careers with Core Design, Inc.

Ninety-eight students from Mr. Marcus' class and Ms. Carter's class did hands-on activities with the employers to explore career paths. Students did CPR compressions on Rescue Annie, learned about wetlands through live plants, planned buildings on a traveling neighborhood simulation station that included forested areas, and assembled energy packs using instructions. Student survey feedback showed a 71% increase in knowledge of STEM careers and 55% increased desire to pursue a STEM career!



Two weeks later on June 12 the CCNW staff created another STEM Like ME!® adventure for Explorer Middle School in Everett for students in Sam Surowiec and Heidi Cooper's 8th grade classrooms.

Harmsen featured Environmental Science Careers, Stage 2 Studios shared how to create video games and virtual reality interactive media, Sno-Isle TECH Skills brought a matching game for students at the Education STEM Station, and Northwest Maritime Apprenticeship for Marine Technician had students learning nautical knot tying. Student survey feedback showed an 85.19% increase in knowledge of STEM careers and a 55.55% increased desire to pursue a STEM career.

"I want to extend a huge thank you to all the teachers and counselors that made these events possible, especially Heidi Cooper, Explorer Middle School and Andrew Santos, Marysville Pilchuck High School. It's so fantastic when teachers want their students to experience STEM Like ME!® by making time for us so close to the end of the school year. Instead of a field trip, we brought the field to the school!" said Mary Powers, CCNW Career Connected Learning Specialist.

Megan Benzing, Career Connected Learning Specialist with CCNW and Snohomish STEM, said "These statistics aren't just numbers; they reflect the passion and dedication of educators and employers who are helping to guide students towards rewarding STEM pathways. We are grateful for their commitment to inspiring and empowering students through STEM education!"



### **Port Susan Middle School Welcomes "Dancing Ladies" to Robotics Classes!**

On June 6, CCNW brought Silfab Solar to Grace Gale's class at Port Susan Middle School in Stanwood to talk about careers in robotics, modern manufacturing, and clean energy.

Senior HR Manager Samantha Calkins and Research and Development Engineer Neil Wiens from Silfab Solar graciously stayed for two class periods to make sure all 48 students in both robotics classes in 7th and 8th grade could participate. Students asked many questions about floating solar panel farms, the 6-axis articulated robots called the "dancing ladies" that gently lift solar panels and place them on the assembly line, and ideas on how to access clean energy. Neil brought a model to pass around that explained how solar energy works and shared several laminated solar panel samples.







### **Jacqueline Rodriguez-Mendoza, Nooksack Valley High School, named 2024 STEM Rising STAR**

Career Connect NW is excited to announce that Jacqueline Rodriguez-Mendoza, Nooksack Valley High School (NVHS), has been named 2024 STEM Rising STAR representing Island, San Juan, Skagit and Whatcom Counties.

"Jacqui is a remarkable force for change, skillfully using technology to spotlight underrepresented voices in our community," said Owen Craig, Director of Technology at NVHS. "Her projects not only showcase her technical prowess but also her deep commitment to inclusivity and cultural heritage, making her an inspiring example of how STEM can serve as a bridge to understanding and unity." Jacqueline serves as the Director of Productions for the Technology and eSports clubs at NVHS in Whatcom County.

The Rising STAR program is organized by Washington STEM, with each Rising STAR recipient selected through a regional STEM network. Washington STEM Rising STARS are high school freshmen, sophomores, or juniors who identify as young women or transgender/nonbinary and who explore STEM in ways that will support their education, career, personal development, and the development and needs of others.

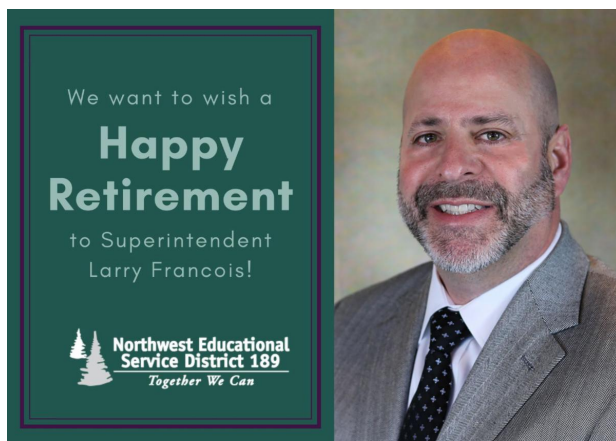
Jacqueline will represent the NW region at the Washington STEM Summit in Fall 2024. The Career Connect NW (CCNW) network region includes two regional STEM Networks, the only region to do so. CCNW serves as the STEM Network for Island, San Juan, Skagit and Whatcom counties, and Snohomish STEM, a CCNW partner organization, serves Snohomish County. Watch for Snohomish STEM to announce their 2024 STEM Rising STAR recipient in the Fall.



### Attention current and interested career presenters!

Career Connect NW staff have begun the process to renew our career presenters for the upcoming year. Over the last 2 years, over 100 presenters have been on-boarded! We want to ensure that our records are accurate for each professional that we bring into schools so we can highlight the amazing work happening in our region.

- If you would like to become a presenter or a volunteer for any of the amazing in-school programming that CCNW coordinates please complete the "Get Involved!" Form for Employers or the "Let's Meet!" Form for Community-Based Organizations at [www.nwesd.org/ccl](http://www.nwesd.org/ccl) to get started!
- If you are an educator and would like to discuss having CCNW bring programming into your school, please complete the "Services Available!" Form for Educators at [www.nwesd.org/ccl](http://www.nwesd.org/ccl) to request a consultation with one of our Career Connected Learning Specialists!
- If you are presenter that has been previously on-boarded, the new Application to Participate document has been sent out by email via Adobe Acrobat Sign and takes most recipients 10 minutes or less to complete. Please check your email and complete yours today!





## Register NOW for the first High School & Beyond Convening of the 2024-25 year: Universal HSBP Listen & Learn Stakeholder Event

**📅 September 19: High School and Beyond Universal Platform Listen & Learn**  
OSPI will be hosting Universal HSBP Listen & Learn Stakeholder Events in partnership with each Educational Service District (ESD) during September and October 2024. Career Connect NW will partner with OSPI on behalf of NWESD 189 to host their stakeholder event on September 19 in Anacortes. If you aren't able to attend in person, there will be a virtual option as well!

Please join us at this informative and engaging event to learn about the new platform and to let your voice inform the implementation process, currently projected to begin in Fall 2025.

Two different sessions will be hosted on September 19<sup>th</sup>:

### **School & Community Partner HSBP Listen & Learn Session**

**1:30 – 3:30 p.m.**

Designed for school staff and community-based organization partners who work with schools.

### **Family, Student, and Community Member Listen & Learn Session**

**4:30 – 5:30 p.m.**

Designed for families, students, and community members (a virtual option to attend and participate will also be provided for this session).

**Location:** In-person at the NWESD 189; there will also be a virtual option

Register [here](#) for this event!

### **📅 SAVE THE DATE! November 13: Computer Science/Information Technology Teacher Community of Practice kick off meeting!**

Are you a Computer Science or Information Technology teacher interested in collaborating with other content teachers in the region? Join us for the kickoff meeting of the Teacher Community of Practice!

This is a fantastic opportunity to connect, share ideas, and work together to enhance our teaching practices and student outcomes.

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## Upcoming professional development events

### **Looking for online clock hours?**

Use our QR code to easily search for upcoming STEM clock hour opportunities. The classes are online via Canvas, asynchronous (so you can take them when and where you want, at your own pace), and between 1 and 10 hours long.



For more information contact: Polly Myers, Online Learning Coordinator, [pmyers@nwesd.org](mailto:pmyers@nwesd.org), 360-299-4031.

Check out all the Professional Learning events [here](#).

Check out all of events that offer clock hours [here](#).

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**Sign up for the Career Connect NW e-news [here](#).**

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To learn more, connect and get involved: [www.CareerConnectNW.org](http://www.CareerConnectNW.org).

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