

Mentoring Day

Rocketing into the Future

March 15, 2012
Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College

What is Disability Mentoring Day?

Mentoring Day is a local version of the National Disability Mentoring Day which is organized by the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). It has occurred regionally as “Rocketing into the Future”, under the leadership of the Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative (NLSEC) since 1992. In October of 2008, with a grant from the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), the NLSEC was asked to host Minnesota Disability Mentoring Day at the DECC. The 2008 event was so successful that the AAPD made the 2009 event their 10th Anniversary National Kick-off event. More than 800 students, parents and teachers from regional schools as well as more than 70 area businesses participated in that event.

Though the grant dollars are gone, Mentoring Day remains in its original form as “Rocketing: A Transition Conference for Students with Disabilities”. Though the scope and venue are smaller; the positive outcomes remain large.

Mentoring Day will be held at the Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College on March 15, 2012. We anticipate 300-400 high school students with disabilities from regional school districts will attend. We plan to have 40 business people from a wide variety of career fields to present to small groups of students in informal break out sessions. These career awareness presentations would occur every half hour from 9:30 to 11:30 A.M. The afternoon sessions will be of a similar format but the focus will be on community participation and good citizenship. The opportunity for students to engage in a mock interview will take place through out the day. Representatives from regional colleges will also be present to discuss post-secondary educational options. Additionally, we will provide an informational strand for parents.

Please consider being a part of this remarkable day.

What are the goals?

- To dispel employers’ fears about hiring people with disabilities;
- To help to make employers aware of the valuable and skilled labor pool people with disabilities represent;
- To help make students be aware of the knowledge, skills, behavior and attitude employers require of the workers;
- To provide students with first person information on specific careers;
- To assist students with making the necessary connections with post-secondary educational and training programs;
- To allow students the opportunity to meet directly with individuals who work in an area of the student’s interest;
- To serve as a launching point for year-round efforts to foster career-orientated mentoring opportunities;
- To make students aware of the skills necessary and to connections they need to become positive influences in their communities;
- To make parents of students with disabilities aware of the employment potential and necessary student programming;

For additional information contact:

Steve Schoenbauer
Transition Coordinator
Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative
302 14th Street
Cloquet, MN 55720
(218) 879-1283 x6018
FAX (218) 879-1285
sschoenbauer@nlsec.k12.mn.us