

Cougar New Tech Entrepreneurial Academy Student Expo

By Mandy Hathcock

Cougar New Tech Entrepreneurial Academy hosted its very first Student Expo on Tuesday, February 25. Cougar New Tech is a progressive school where learners use technology to complete group projects as they would in a professional work environment. Courses are taught in double classrooms by pairs of facilitators who integrate subject content to create projects that are both standards-based and relevant to learners' lives. Dr. Melissa Crosby, Dean of the program along with parents, students, facilitators and business leaders gathered in the mini-auditorium of Colleton County High school to find out what our New Tech students have been up to this year. An opening speech was given by Tevej Rhodes and Colleton County High school principal Cliff Warren spoke about what the New Tech program means to CCHS. A video presentation was presented by Eric Long, Ernest Rivers and Shalynn Hutchinson, that included the voices and faces of New Tech students answering various questions about the program and what a day in the life of a New Tech student is all about.



In the hallways guests were greeted by businesses and organizations with tables and booths set up giving their support to the program. South Carolina Bank (SCBT), Colleton County Economic Alliance, Colleton Medical Center, Coastal Services of SC, Palmetto Rural Telephone Cooperative, Eat Smart, Move More, Walterboro-Colleton Chamber of Commerce, Colleton County Arts Council, Valentine's Driving School, Gear Up, Transform SC, Colleton County Vocational Rehabilitation, The Colletonian, Lowcountry AHEC, Girl Scouts of America and visitors from the Colleton County Business Alliance were some of the supporters present.

In classrooms, students, guided by their facilitators, gave presentations of various projects they have completed this school term. "I am impressed with the level of maturity demonstrated by all the students involved in the CNT Expo. Each project based module provided the students an opportunity to learn and have hands on experience in each educational discipline. It is how the real world works. I am excited that my daughter is getting the opportunity to merge theory with practice in her



educational experience. It is the type of educational model that is offered in large urban technical-based communities. We are so fortunate to have this world class curriculum in Walterboro. We sent the educational materials to our daughter's top college picks before she entered the program. The higher education institutions were impressed with the merger of honors program with lay experience. Overall, the Expo reaffirmed our decision to go with New Tech and gave each of the students a chance

to shine. I am a proud CNT Mom," said Dee Medlock. Guests were given the opportunity to experience the culture, teaching and technology that empowers, engages and enables New Tech students to be well on their way to greatness. Linda Hudson is another proud CNT parent," The classroom demonstrations the students performed in the classroom were wonderful. The kids were all very informative and very well spoken. The introduction of the new facilitators was the highlight of the introduction."

For more information about the Cougar New Tech program, you may contact Dr. Melissa Crosby at mcrosby@colletonsd.org or Jean Nettles at jnettlles@cougarnewtech.com.



