



Connects students, parents and educators to career opportunities through business partnerships, training and resources.

MEBA's Educator Field Studies Really Add Up

5 events held.

40 business partners involved.

50 careers and educational programs introduced.

200 educators engaged.

MEBA's Educator Field Study Series equals connections and results, with more still to come.

Each field study allows teachers, counselors and administrators to spend a day exploring various career clusters by visiting Midlands worksites and meeting with local business leaders to gain a broader understanding of the skills students need today for tomorrow's careers. The knowledge and contacts participants gain provide valuable support as they help students see the connection between the classroom and the world of work.

An important resource for educators, MEBA's field studies are valuable for businesses as well. "Businesses are very eager to bring educators in and to work side-by-side with them to strengthen the link between curriculum and workforce," says **Samantha Ericson Turner**, MEBA's workforce development coordinator. "With today's workforce shortages and economic challenges, business leaders see this collaboration as vital."

Here are highlights from a few field studies held so far this year:

MEBA's Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics Field Study was held on October 22nd and highlighted a range of possible careers from line workers to nuclear power operators to quality control engineers. Participants toured the facilities of **Allied Air** and **SCANA** to learn about daily responsibilities, workforce needs and the importance of safety.

Participants also learned about **Midlands Technical College's Engineering Department** and an exciting new partnership between SCANA and MTC to create a nuclear operator career program. The program will be a two-year, certification program and may begin this spring. Special thanks to **Tiffany Peake** and **Steve Wolfe** with Allied Air, **Charles**

See **Field Studies** Page 2



Tiffany Peake with Allied Air talks with educators at MEBA's Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics Field Study.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MEBA, Midlands REC and Midlands Workforce Development Board, Joint Board Meeting
Featuring Dr. Marshall (Sonny) White and Dr. Harris Pastides
February 4, 2009, 11:30 am – 2:15 pm
MTC Northeast Campus

Transportation, Distribution & Logistics Alliance
February 5, 2009, 9:00 – 10:30 am
MTC Airport Campus, AC 115

Business, Management & Information Systems Alliance
February 11, 2009, 9:00 – 10:30 am
Heyward Career & Technology Center

Public Service Alliance
February 11, 2009, 1:00 – 2:30 pm
MTC Airport Campus, AC 139

Executive Committee
February 13, 2009, 7:45 – 9:00 am
MTC Northeast Campus

Business Matters Seminar
February 13, 2009, 8:30 am – 2:00 pm
MTC Northeast Campus
[Click here to register online by February 5th](#)

Middle College Field Study
February 16, 2009

Architecture & Construction Alliance
February 18, 2009, 9:00 – 10:30 am
Heyward Career & Technology Center

Finance Alliance
February 19, 2009, 9:00 – 10:30 am
MTC Airport Campus, AC 115

Hospitality Field Study
February 25, 2009
FULL



www.mebasc.com

From **Field Studies** Page 1

Ambos with SCANA and **Michelle Eargle** with MTC.

MEBA's Architecture & Construction Field Study on October 29th began at **Mashburn Construction** where **Lynn Shealy**, president of Mashburn Construction, provided an overview of career opportunities, required skills and workforce needs in the field of commercial construction.

Christy Buchanan and **Michelle Eargle** with **Midlands Technical College's Engineering Department**

delivered a presentation to answer the question, "What is Architectural Engineering?" Participants were then able to see these careers in practice at a local Mashburn Construction site. The day continued with a stop at **Lowe's Home Improvement Center** where

educators learned how Lowe's supports residential and commercial consumers in the construction arena. Lunch and a special **Parade of Homes** tour sponsored by the **Greater Columbia Homebuilders Association** highlighted advanced technology, energy efficiency and the importance of "going green." A special thank you **Pete Williams** with **Atherm Remodeling** who helped organized MEBA's field study.

MEBA's Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security Field Study took place on November 5th and featured career presentations by the **City of Columbia's Police and Fire Departments, South Carolina Law Enforcement Division**

(SLED) and the **South Carolina Army National Guard**. Presenters participated in a Q&A segment with attending educators that provided suggestions and insights related to their respective careers. An event highlight was a trip to **McCrary Training Center** at **Fort Jackson**, where educators enjoyed lunch sponsored by the Army National Guard and participated in three training simulations designed to prepare guard members for challenges they may face during a convoy transport including enemy fire. A special thank you to **Rochelle Tindal** for helping MEBA coordinating this great event.

Look for highlights from more MEBA field studies including **Automotive Industry** and **Uptown Businesses** in the February issue of eConnections. ■



Miranda Blocker, a career development consultant with Richland One, talks with a Mashburn Construction job superintendent.



Karen Ruff, a career specialist at Blythewood High School, talks with soldiers at McCrary Training Center.

We Want To Know: How Is MEBA Making Making A Difference For You?

How has MEBA made a difference for you? We want to know! Please take a moment to let us know how MEBA is helping you as an educator, student, parent, business or community member. Has one of our educator field studies helped provide a valuable resource for your school? Maybe a student has become excited about his or her future because of a MEBA job shadowing experience? Is MEBA helping to address the workforce needs of your business? Please help us celebrate our successes and work to serve the Midlands better in 2009. E-mail us at ashleythomas@mebasc.com. ■

Save THE DATE

Midlands Focus on Poverty Seminar

March 16 – 17, 2009
Midlands Technical College
Airport Campus

Featuring **Rita F. Pierson, Ed.D.**, nationally recognized consultant with **aha! Process, Inc.**, and associate of **Dr. Ruby K. Payne**.

Sponsored by
Bank of America, MEBA,
Midlands REC and
Midlands Technical College.

More information to come soon!



Personal Pathways to success™
**MIDLANDS
REGIONAL EDUCATION CENTER**

UPDATE

On December 2, 2008, the **Midlands Regional Education Center (REC)**, along with the 11 other regions, led a regional team meeting and the charge for dropout prevention as part of **South Carolina's Dropout Prevention Leadership Summit**. Sponsored by the **South Carolina Department of Education, AT&T, State Farm Insurance, America's Promise Alliance, Palmetto Horizon, Personal Pathways to Success** and the **National Dropout Prevention Center/Network**, the summit aimed to serve as a catalyst for new efforts to prevent dropouts.

Studies indicate that every 26 seconds a student drops out of school. And, according to **Pamela Lackey** of AT&T, for the first time in decades, our nation is approaching a time when the labor market growth will slow to virtually zero, and we will face a shortage of 45 million workers in the next 25 years. In an effort to

develop solutions to this startling reality, summit participants took part in sessions on best practices, early warning signs and systems, and the roles of schools and businesses in dropout prevention.

The summit concluded with regional meetings led by the 12 REC Coordinators in which participants from each region met to discuss specific topics and solutions. While Midlands educators and participants met, students from **Swansea High School**, who also attended the summit, were engaged in their own discussion on what they could do in their school and community. The students eagerly shared ideas they planned to take back to school to show their peers the real impact of the problem and to convince those at risk to stay in school.

*Studies indicate
that every 26
seconds a student
drops out of
school.*



Midlands summit participants discuss strategies and solutions for the region.

“We were shocked by the statistics we heard today,” said student **Sarah Scott**. “We realized the dropout problem affects all of us and that we all must get involved if we are going to be able to make a real difference.”

Summit participants will continue to convene by region to develop and implement action strategies. Look for related news and results in future issue of *eConnections*. ■

For the latest Midlands REC news and information, please visit our Web site at <http://www.scpathways.org>.

In honor of School Board Recognition Month, MEBA would like to salute the members of all Midlands school boards for their hard work and dedication to our greatest resource—our students. *Thank You!*

Fairfield Students Attend Enterprise Systems Management Forum

On Tuesday, January 13, 2009, seven **Fairfield Central High School** students attended the **Enterprise Systems Management Forum: A Pipeline of Talent to Manage IT as a Business**. Held at the **South Carolina Archives & History Center**, the event was sponsored by **BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina** and the **University of South Carolina**.

Students attended a keynote address by **Lonnie Emard**, director, staff resource management for BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina, on the Consortium for Enterprise Systems. A panel discussion followed and existing initiatives and strategies were discussed. Panel participants included a high school student, guidance counselor, university student, university professor, IT manager and a recent college graduate new to the workforce.

FCHS students were given the opportunity to participate in several small group discussions addressing ways to connect students to IT careers. ■

*Special thanks to **Stacey Gray-Feaster**, career specialist at Fairfield Central High School, for contributing this article.*



Fairfield Central High School students at the Enterprise Systems Management Forum.

LOCAL HOSPITALS' SUMMER PROGRAMS

It may be cold outside, but now is the time for students to make plans to participate in local hospital's health career development summer programs.

- **Partners** is **Lexington Medical Center's Summer Health Career Awareness Program** designed to introduce the healthcare industry to bright, enthusiastic rising high school juniors and seniors in Lexington County with a genuine interest in a healthcare career. Partners is a three-week program that will include a three-day clinical training and hospital orientation and exposure to various healthcare fields such as nursing, pharmacy, respiratory therapy, urgent care, radiology and more. For more information or an application, please visit <http://www.lexmed.com/CommunityPrograms/Partners.htm> or call Kelli Bennett at (803) 936-4104. *The deadline for all applications is February 1, 2009.*
- **Sisters of Charity Providence Hospitals' Camp Med** is a two-day career exploration program for rising seventh and eighth grade students in the Midlands. Participating students will be exposed to life in a hospital and provided an opportunity to consider healthcare professions as part of their future through clinical rotations and instructional time. *The deadline for all applications is March 6, 2009.*
- **Sisters of Charity Providence Hospitals' Pursuit** program is a two-week summer career internship program for rising high school juniors and seniors in the Midlands. The program is designed to give interested students a firsthand look at the possibilities, daily experiences and future opportunities of a career in healthcare. *The deadline for all applications is January 30, 2009.*

For more information about both Camp Med and Pursuit, please visit www.CoolCareersAtProvidence.com or contact Sisters of Charity Providence Hospitals Workforce Development at (803) 256-5411. ■

Quick Bytes

- ▶ **The School District of Fairfield County Needs YOU!** The School District of Fairfield County strives to provide students with quality instruction and authentic experiences to prepare them for entry into postsecondary education and/or careers in business and industry. In order to place students in internships at work sites which reflect each student's area of career preparation, the school district needs the involvement of community and business partners like you. Community and business partners are cordially invited to attend a luncheon meeting focused on providing students with career-focused academic preparation, career exploration and work-based learning opportunities.

Two luncheon meetings will be held – on February 4, 2009, and also on February 12, 2009. We hope you will be able to join us for one. Both meetings will be held at 11:30 am at the Fairfield Career and Technology Center on Highway 321 Bypass North. Please e-mail Dr. Patricia Patterson at PPatterson@fairfield.k12.sc.us at your earliest convenience to let us know of your plans to attend or for more information.

- ▶ **Top Honors Go to Midlands Students:** Two Midlands students have achieved top honors in the **National Career Poetry and Poster Contest, Intermediate Poetry Division**. **Summer Rogers**, a fourth grade student at **Lake Murray Elementary** in **Lexington One**, received first place. **Leah Kincaid**, also a fourth grade student at Lake Murray Elementary, received third place. Congratulations to both Summer and Leah for a job well done!

The contest is part of the **National Career Development Association's (NCDA)** annual National Career Development Month, where career development professionals are encouraged to celebrate with career related activities throughout the month of November. For more information, please visit www.ncda.org

- ▶ **The National Hydrogen Conference and Hydrogen Expo** is the largest and longest running annual hydrogen conference in the US. This year, the NHA and its annual conference turns 20, and it's being held right here in Columbia, SC, March 30 – April 3, 2009. The conference will showcase the latest breakthroughs, progress on commercialization challenges and offer networking opportunities with industry leaders. For more information, please visit www.hydrogenconference.org. ■

IRMO HIGH SCHOOL'S "CAREER GO AND SEE IT"

On January 12 and 13, 2009, more than 100 ninth grade boys from **Irmo High School** toured **FN Manufacturing** in Columbia, SC. The students are part of a transition course called Freshman Success that is a requirement of all ninth graders in **Lexington Richland School District Five**.

The students were given a tour of the plant which manufactures 70 percent of all weapons used by the United States military. Presenters offered valuable information on the career opportunities available in the future and also about the soft skills needed to succeed in the real world. Participating students learned about



Irmo Students at FN Manufacturing

careers in engineering, machine tool technology, finance, accounting and human resources. ■

Special thanks to Allison Johnson, career specialist at Irmo High School, for contributing this article.

Midlands Career Fairs

Take a look at the some upcoming career fairs being held at local Midlands schools.

- **Fairfield Middle School Career Fair**, February 5, 2009, 8:30 – 11:00 am For more information or to participate, please contact Xyreese Trapp at (803) 635-4270 ext. 20210 or xtrapp@fairfield.k12.sc.us
- **Eau Clair High School Career/College Expo**, February 26, 2009, 8:30 am – 1:00 pm. For more information or to participate, please contact Stefanie Harrison at (803)735-7600 ext. 2518 or sharrison@richlandone.org
- **Fairfield Central High School Career Fair**, March 4, 2009, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. For more information or to participate, please contact Stacey R. Gray-Feaster at (803) 635-1441 ext. 60214 or sgfeaster@fairfield.k12.sc.us
- **Carolina Springs Middle School Career Day**, March 12, 2009, 7:50 – 10:30 am For more information or to participate, please contact Anedra Kelson at (803) 821-4909.

For more information on how to hold a successful career fair, check out MEBA's Career Fair "How To" Guide online by visiting our Web site at www.mebasc.com/resources. ■



www.mebasc.com

Midlands Education and Business Alliance does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability in its programs and activities.

EConnections is an electronic publication of Midlands Education and Business Alliance. For more information, please contact Ashley Thomas at ashleythomas@mebasc.com.

More Photos From MEBA's Recent Field Studies



Educators visit Lowe's as part of MEBA's Architecture & Construction Field Study.



City of Columbia Police Officers Roane and Martin speak to educators at MEBA's Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security Field Study.



Pete Williams of Atherm Remodeling talks to educators at the Saluda River Club during MEBA's Architecture & Construction Field Study.