

PRESS RELEASE

Great photo and interview opportunities!

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Students to explore career options; prepare to enter tough economy

What options will high school students have in this tough economy upon graduation? Approximately **2,800** high school juniors from **25** high schools in **Kent, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, and Ottawa** counties will soon find out at the **High School Career Fair** to be held on **Thursday, April 17, 2008**, from **9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.** The L.C. Walker Arena and Convention Center, located at 955 Fourth Street in downtown Muskegon, will be teaming with about **100** area business people, professional association representatives, employers, and other industry leaders sharing their personal career experiences and answering students' questions. Another **46** representatives from colleges, technical schools, and the military will be highlighting these opportunities and talking about ways to pay for further education through financial aid, work-study, loan programs, and scholarships. New groups of 11th grade students will arrive by bus at 9:00 a.m., 10:15 a.m., and noon.

Students will climb into an ambulance for a closer look, talk with veterinarians and technicians about their equipment and the live animals on hand, meet with fire fighters and view demonstrations, and learn more about the new Culinary Institute soon to be opened by Baker College. They will also meet radio and TV personalities and learn about some not-so-traditional careers including: horticulturist, youth minister, interpreter, private investigator, crime scene investigator, mortician, massage therapist, interior designer, choreographer, nutritionist, golf course superintendent, web designer, and more.

"In this tight job market it is more important than ever for students to think outside the box in terms of careers," said Mary Kay Simon, chairperson of the committee to organize the event. She added, "The volunteers and sponsors for this event know how important it is to get these students thinking about their future employment now." Mike Carpenter, Principal of the Muskegon Area Career Tech Center, said, "Students are eager to explore the wide variety of careers and talk one-on-one with those who are actually working in their chosen fields. For many students the experience is a turning point that directs their future."

The day is coordinated by the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District, area high school counselors, Baker College, and Muskegon Community College. Students prepare for the day by completing interest surveys and other skill assessments. They are taught how to interview representatives, are encouraged to set up visitations and future job shadows, and will write short essays about their experiences. This is the 31st annual High School Career Fair. Each year its goal is to give students an opportunity to explore career options so they will make their career decisions based on informed choice and not by chance.

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