

Logistics Engineering Technology Work Study: Year 1 Interim Evaluation Report

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Executive Summary

The emerging logistics operations industrial sector in the Central Ohio Region is driving a rising demand for employees with strong integrated technical skills in supply chain management, engineering technology, and information technology. In response, a team at Columbus State Community College (CSCC), with support from a National Science Foundation Advanced Technology Education (NSF ATE) grant, has created a Logistics Engineering Technician Work Study (LET WS) offering that provides an academic pathway option for students and adult learners. The current NSF ATE-funded project adds a Work Study component option to the LET Pathway that will replicate the successful NSF ATE-funded Modern Manufacturing Work Study program which is currently in its second year.

The LET WS project team has identified four regional industry employers who have expressed support for the program indicated have indicated an interest in partnering with CSCC. One of the students currently enrolled in the newly launched LET degree program has been placed in a three-month LET WS internship position with Spartan Logistics which will start in early May 2018. The project team members are encouraged by the student's interest in the LET WS program and have become more aware of potential barriers that might prevent other students from taking advantage of the LET WS opportunity.

The project team organized and led many outreach activities designed to increase awareness of LET careers and specifically, the LET WS program among prospective students. The project team has already provided information about LET careers and pathways to more than 190 students and more than a dozen parents. Twenty-five individuals including, principals, assistant principals, directors, coordinators, teachers, career specialists and other educators representing 14 school districts in the central Ohio region participated in an interactive bus tour. The tour provided an opportunity for decision-makers and influencers from regional high schools to learn more about the growing fields of advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, logistics, and alternative energy automotive service/repair. Among other benefits, the bus tour increased participant awareness regarding the level of employer demand, the availability of 2-year degree programs, and starting pay in these fields. Two additional outreach events are planned for the current project year. The LET WS program will be featured as part of the Supply Chain Management Program Spotlight on April 26, 2018. CSCC's Spotlight on Academic Programs is a series of events that gives current and prospective students an opportunity to learn more about individual career programs at Columbus State through interactions with program faculty and demonstrations. In addition, the LET WS program will be part of the Smart Columbus, Smart Careers event being planned for May 21, 2018.

Key recommendations for the coming year include: selecting a pilot partner who can offer the best work experience in terms of providing a role that will require and build knowledge and skills in as many of the LET areas as possible; assessing student fit with the work study model as part of the recruitment and selection process; build in more opportunities for discussion at outreach events to gain a better sense of the drivers and barriers to pursuing these fields as a program of study and career.

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Background

The emerging logistics operations industrial sector in the Central Ohio Region is driving a rising demand for employees with strong integrated technical skills in supply chain management, engineering technology, and information technology. In response, a team at Columbus State Community College (CSCC), with support from a National Science Foundation Advanced Technology Education (NSF ATE) grant, has created a Logistics Engineering Technician (LET) Pathway that provides academic pathway options for students and adult learners. The current NSF ATE-funded project adds a Work Study component option to the LET Pathway that will replicate the successful NSF ATE-funded Modern Manufacturing Work Study program which is currently in its second year.

The plan for the development of the LET WS component includes the following four (4) project objectives:

1. Develop a Work Study Model in Logistics Engineering Technology - The proposed expansion provided through this proposal will integrate a work study component into the career pathway for Logistics Engineering Technicians.
2. Develop a Logistics Engineering Technology Work Study Summer Institute for high school graduates on careers in logistics engineering operations, with a classroom component and site visits/shadowing to regional leaders in supply chain management.
3. Develop a bridge Program with Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) for adult learners to identify knowledge gained outside of the traditional classroom and evaluate it for college credit
4. Develop a Logistics Engineering Technology Laboratory for hands-on application - The PIs will develop an automated work cell to simulate a smart conveyor used in regional warehouses

This report provides an evaluative summary of the LET WS project in its initial year of development.

Purpose and Design of the Evaluation

The Rucks Group, LLC began working with the CSCC project team in 2014 as the external evaluator on the LET degree program project (NSF Award Number 1400452) and joined the LET WS project in 2017.

The evaluation has a two-fold purpose: 1) to capture information regarding the activities of the project (i.e., formative evaluation); and 2) to assess the outcomes of the project (i.e., summative evaluation). The logic model in Appendix A provides a pictorial description of the project regarding inputs, planned activities, and expected outcomes.

The evaluation is guided by the following four (4) evaluation questions:

1. How effectively is the project being planned and implemented? How have challenges been addressed?
2. How effective are the outreach strategies that are designed to increase awareness of LET careers and pathways among high school educators, students & parents, and veterans?
3. To what extent has the PLA module effectively correlated attainment of learning outcomes to PLA credit?
4. In what ways have students benefited from the Work Study component? In what ways have industry partners benefited from the Work Study component? To what extent has the Work Study component contributed to students' knowledge and skills needed for positions in LET? To what extent has it improved their ability to find employment?

In this initial year, the LET WS project team has been addressing the many project planning and implementation activities, and several team members have been conducting outreach activities to inform students, parents, and educators about the LET field, CSCC's LET/LET WS programs. This evaluation report describes the important successes and challenges related to these efforts, as well as recommendations for building on these successes and addressing key challenges.

Findings

Evaluation Question #1 - How effectively is the project being planned and implemented? How have challenges been addressed?

The team has either completed or is on track to complete, each of the activities that were planned during this initial year. A full list describing each planned activity and its status is provided in Appendix B. Three of these activities served as anchors for the successful planning and implementation of the LET WS program including: 1. efforts to identify potential employer partners and clarifying the Work Study job description with them; 2. the recruitment of potential candidates for the LET WS program; and 3. the engagement of the Industry Advisory Committee. The status of these activities, including notable successes and challenges, are described in more detail below.

Identifying pilot employer partners and clarifying the LET WS job description

The LET WS team has identified four regional industry employers who have indicated an interest in partnering with CSCC to provide students with a work study experience which includes Spartan Logistics, Boar's Head, Abercrombie and Fitch, and FST Logistics. Some of the LET WS team members have

established relationships with key representatives at each of these companies and effectively initiated the conversation by providing them with a single-page summary that concisely described the LET WS program regarding its importance, its components, and its potential benefits for both students and employers. A copy of this document is provided in Appendix C.

Initial discussions with these companies regarding the nature and description of the LET WS academic pathway has been promising; the organizations have expressed support for the program and a strong willingness to partner with CSCC.

The conversations have also revealed some challenges to implementation. It has become clear that no single employer will be able to fully integrate each of the LET elements (i.e., supply chain management, industrial engineering, and information technology) into the work study position. However, the project team would consider an internship opportunity successful if at least two of these LET elements were included in the work study position.

While it might be difficult to provide students with a work experience that incorporates every LET element, it does provide an opportunity for educators, employers, and students to shape the emerging LET field and to continually build alignment between education and industry.

Recruiting potential candidates for the LET WS position

One of the students who enrolled in the new LET degree program that launched in August 2017 has been placed in a three-month LET WS internship position with Spartan Logistics which starts in early May 2018. The student was identified through a process that began in November 2017 with efforts to contact each student enrolled in the LET degree program and inviting those interested to participate in a one-on-one interview with the project coordinator.

The purpose of these conversations was to assess student interest in - and readiness for - the pilot LET WS opportunity. Four students responded to the invitation with a clear indication of interest and a willingness to engage in further discussion.

While enthusiasm for the opportunity was clear to all four students, three already held full-time positions, and all mentioned the cost of giving up their current positions as a barrier. The potential decrease in pay was a shared concern, and one individual also mentioned the loss of promotion opportunities based on the seniority that had been built. The remaining student, however, is currently working in a part-time position and expressed no reservations about leaving that position to start the work study opportunity in May. The student's only constraint is an intended August graduation which would require some modification to condense the Work Study position from a year to three months. A full summary of the de-identified interview results is provided in Appendix D.

The project team members are encouraged by the student's interest in the LET WS program and have become more aware of the various life circumstances that might hinder students' ability to work in a new position that is part-time but also requires full-day commitments several days per week.

Input and guidance from the Industry Advisory Committee

The CSCC SCM Advisory Committee Meeting met on February 6, 2018. The meeting included six advisors, an SCM student at CSCC, and fourteen members from CSCC. An overview of all current CSCC SCM programs was provided including Supply Chain Management, Logistics Engineering Technology, and International Commerce.

The Industry Advisory Committee expressed strong support for the direction of CSCC's SCM programs in general, and the LET WS program specifically.

A few key issues directly related to potential implementation challenges for the LET WS program were discussed. As the project team continues to implement the LET WS program, an area that members on the Advisory Committee identified for improvement was that students and younger employees were usually most in need of "soft skills" such as better communication and interpersonal skills. Additionally, in a discussion regarding the nomenclature for the work component, one advisory board member suggested that the use of the word "internship" might create the false impression that these individuals lack technical skills. Interestingly, this kind of false perception makes it more difficult to sell to potential industry partners.

Another discussion raised the issue of negative perceptions among parents and other student influencers regarding careers in SCM which stem from the decline of manufacturing job opportunities that occurred from the 1970's through the 1990's.

The next meeting will be held via teleconference in the fall of 2018. After a debriefing discussion regarding the Advisory Committee Meeting, the LET WS project team has suggested that this meeting should include a more structured discussion approach with specific discussion question prompt to ensure that input on a broader range of issues is obtained.

Evaluative Question #2: How effective are the outreach strategies that are designed to increase awareness of LET careers and pathways?

The LET WS project engaged in student, parent, industry and educator outreach activities. These activities are reported in more detail below.

Student and Parent Outreach

The project team organized and led many outreach activities designed to increase awareness of LET careers and the LET WS program among prospective students. A few of the events also included parents because the project team recognizes their influence on the career and college choices their children make.

At this point, the project team has already provided information about LET careers and pathways to more than 190 students and more than a dozen parents.

Approximately 60 students from fourteen high schools in the Columbus region who participated in an event called "We Are STEM" hosted by CSCC on October 27, 2017. The event was designed to provide information about high-growth STEM careers and the college pathways offered by CSCC through its many degrees and programs including LET.

The LET team reached more than 120 additional high school students, and some of their parents, through informational and discussion sessions at several regional high schools and career events including the Delaware Area Career Center open house and the CareerXpress Junior Career Conference. A full breakdown of outreach events, locations, and participant numbers is provided in Appendix E.

High School Industry and Educator Outreach

The project teams' outreach activities are also being directed at regional high school administrators, teachers, and guidance counselors. Providing accurate and current information about educational pathways and career opportunities in advanced technology is critical given their role in the decisions that students make when deciding about what educational and career options to pursue after graduating high school.

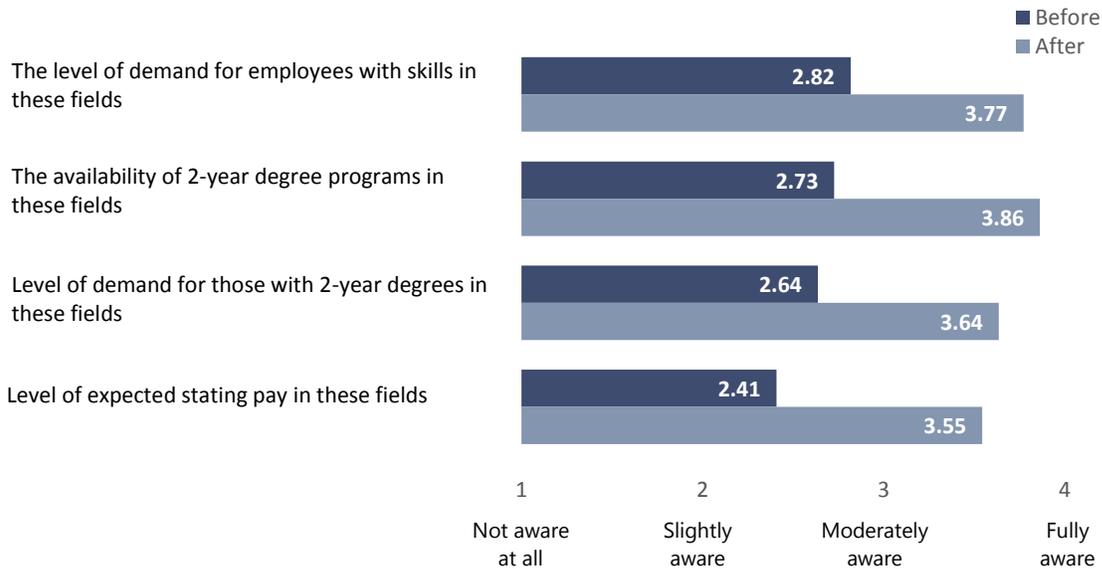
Members of the project team were actively involved in the design and facilitation of a full-day interactive bus tour sponsored by CSCC to provide an opportunity for decision-makers and influencers from regional high schools to learn more about the growing fields of advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, logistics, and alternative energy automotive service/repair.

Twenty-five individuals including, principals, assistant principals, directors, coordinators, teachers, career specialists and others representing 14 school districts in the central Ohio region participated in the bus tour.

Participants received tours at Cardinal Health, City of Dublin Fleet Management, and Honda Manufacturing and engaged in discussions with industry representatives at these facilities. A copy of the agenda for this event can be found in Appendix F.

A brief survey (see Appendix G) was disseminated to attendees to evaluate various aspects of the bus tour. The items reported below used a counterfactual design to assess changes in awareness levels regarding facts related to the fields highlighted during the bus tour (Mueller, Gaus, & Rech, 2014). With this design, participants were asked to first consider and rate their level of awareness before the bus tour, and then rate their level immediately after the tour. Data from such counterfactual designs is believed to be of higher validity compared to traditional pre- and post-designs because individuals tend to overestimate knowledge levels in the absence of a defined standard (Kruger & Dunning, 1999).

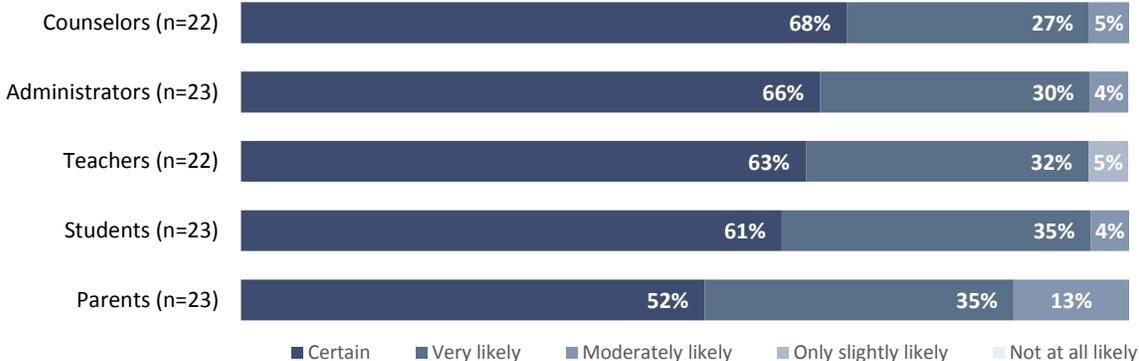
The bus tour increased participants' awareness regarding the level of employer demand, the availability of 2-year degree programs, and starting pay in these fields.



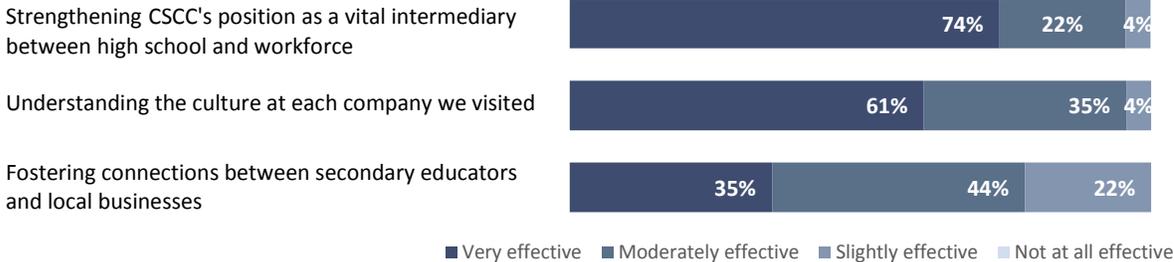
The level of industry demand and need was the theme of nearly every response to an open-ended question asking participants to identify the fact that most surprised them most.

Theme	Comment
Level of industry need/demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The gap in jobs/workforce • The number of job openings across all industries • Logistics job openings • The many job opportunities available in the logistics field. • The vast gap between job growth & population growth • The amount of need in the area • The demand for 2-year degree holders
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of electric cars on the horizon in Columbus

Most bus tour participants indicated that they were **Certain or Very likely to share what they had learned with staff, teachers, students, and parents.**



Most participants regarded the bus tour as being **Very or Moderately effective at achieving its goals.**



Bus tour participants were also asked to suggest one or two impactful improvements to the bus tour experience. Most suggestions were related to specific aspects of some of the site visits that could be improved, but several participants mentioned that they would like to have had more opportunities for interaction and discussions with the industry representatives and each other.

Recommendations

The project appears to be on track and moving forward as expected. These recommendations have been discussed in collaboration with the project team.

Industry Partner Recruitment – Continue to build relationships with potential industry partners. Select the pilot partner who can offer a position that incorporates knowledge and skills in as many of the LET areas as possible. This type of position would maximize the value for students would provide employers with a more accurate assessment of the benefits and challenges of incorporating LET positions into their setting.

Student Recruitment into LET WS – The interest in LET WS among some LET students is encouraging, but it seems clear that current life situations – particularly when it comes to current employment commitments – is preventing them from taking advantage of the opportunity. We recommend that interest in - and readiness for – the Work Study program be assessed as part of the recruitment and enrollment process for the LET degree program. CSCC would then have the opportunity to select – and perhaps provide incentives to – the most promising LET WS candidates. Also, it would also provide lead time for CSCC to either provide assistance or tailor the Work Study opportunity for an interested student.

Outreach Activities – Continue the active efforts to schedule outreach activities that provide an opportunity to share information with students, parents, and educators towards enlarging the pipeline of potential students. We believe it is important to capture feedback regarding the effectiveness of the outreach activities both regarding participant reactions and any impact the activities might be having on recruitment into the LET degree program. Also, we recommend obtaining information from incoming LET students to identify the factors that contributed to their decision including the impact of any outreach activities they attended.

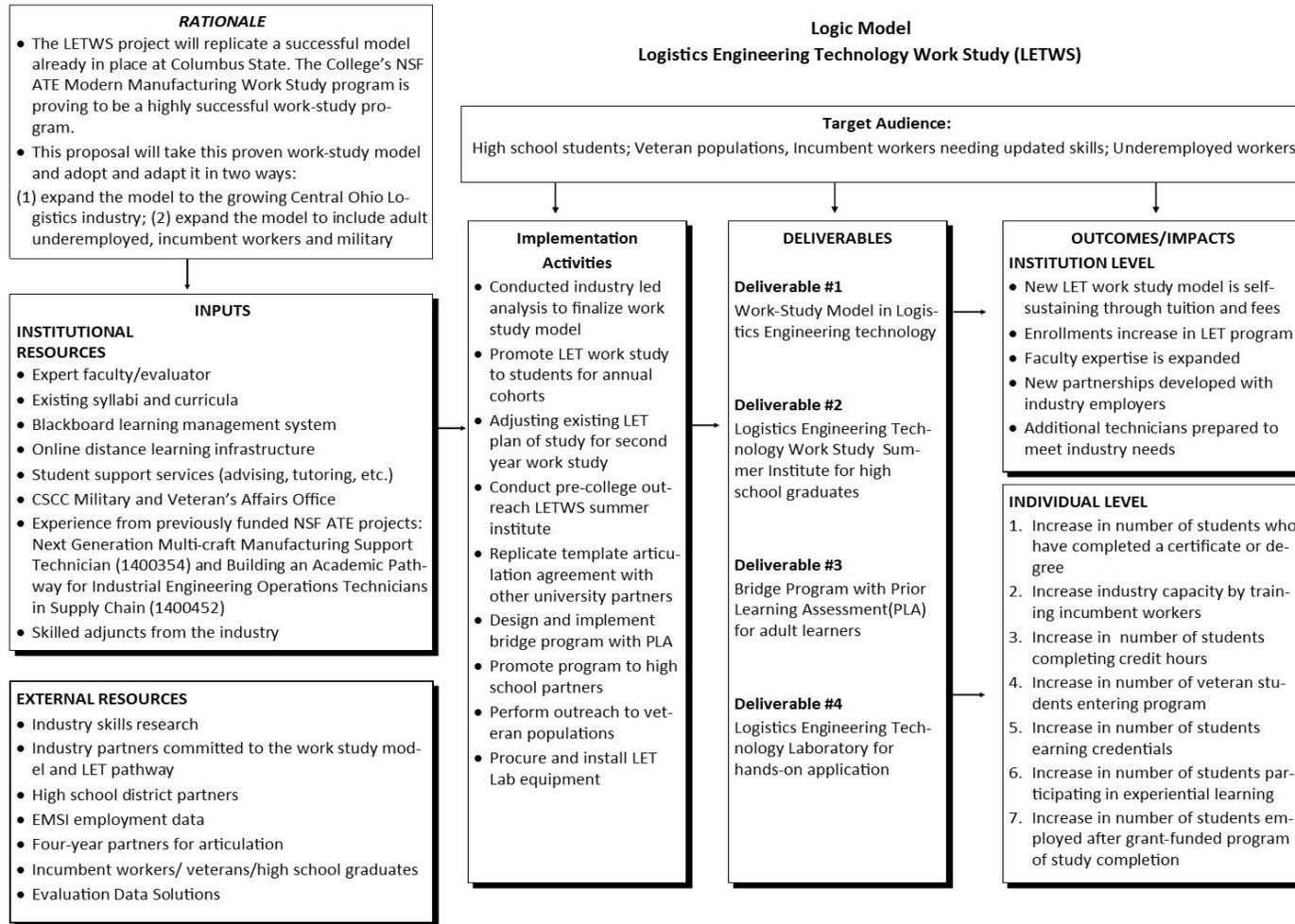
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Appendices

Appendix A - Logistics Engineering Technology Work Study (LET WS) Logic Model



Appendix B - Major Project Activities and Status

Major Implementation Project Activities for Year 1	Target time frame	Activity Status
Focus existing Industry Advisory Committee on work study model	7/1/2017 to 9/30/2017	Committee fully briefed at kick-off in July 2017. LETWS update provided at February 6, 2018 meeting.
Recruit potential WS candidates from current pool of students enrolled in the LET degree program	9/30/2018 to 3/31/2018	Interviews were conducted, and one student has been selected.
Leverage experience from manufacturing grant to design for logistics work study students	7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018	On-going
Establish pilot employer partners	1/1/2018 to 9/30/2018	In-process
Develop articulation agreement with Ohio University	7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018	Completed
Design and deliver the LET Summer Institute and Student Summer Camp	10/1/2018 to 6/30/2018	Both will be delivered during summer of 2018.
Create outreach strategies to promote the LET pathway to new students	7/1/2017 to 12/31/2018	Many activities have taken place (see data under evaluation question 2). Additional activities already scheduled for remaining of 2018.
Design PLA protocol and determine PLA assessments	7/1/17 to 6/30/18	In-process
Pilot PLA module	7/1/17 to 6/30/18	On-target
Procure equipment – Conveyor, Photo recognition, RFID, etc.	7/1/17 to 6/30/18	Conveyor has been acquired. Rest is in-process.
Align project to DOT Smart Cities Project	7/1/17 to 6/30/18	Most team members have attended SMART cities presentation

Appendix C - LET Work Study One Page Summary for Industry Partners

Logistics Engineering Technology Work Study

Thank you for your interest in partnering with Columbus State Community College's Logistics Engineering Technology (LET) Work Study Program. This exciting endeavor will enhance the student experience, create strong partnerships, and strengthen logistics in Central Ohio. The Logistics Engineering Technology degree program began in autumn 2017 as a new multi-disciplinary degree combining supply chain management, engineering, and information technology coursework. The Work Study component is designed to produce future logistics professionals with valuable real-world experience and to provide program graduates with potential employment opportunities. The proven work study program, which first piloted by Honda, matches students with a year-long internship during their second year of study.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

- **Columbus State is expanding the current Work Study program to include logistics this May 2018.**
- In four years, the Modern Manufacturing Work Study has involved over 70 students and 20 employers, including Honda North America, Rimrock, and Worthington Industries.
- Students complete two semesters of coursework in Logistics Engineering Technology and then are paired with local companies to be a work study placement.
- Work study position are similar to a year-long paid internship and typically pay \$11-15 per hour.
- During the work study student continue their studies two days per week and work in the logistics field three days per week for 20-25 hours.
- Students enter their work study position with skills and continue to grow with an assigned company mentor.



EMPLOYER & PARTICIPANT BENEFITS

- Employers have a direct pipeline to an educated and highly-trained workforce.
- At the end of the year-long work study, employers have the opportunity to hire a full-time worker who has received on-the-job training and is acclimated to the company environment and procedures.
- Employers have direct input into the program, ensuring that graduates have the skills needed.
- Students work a high-paying job which includes learning hands-on applications of their studies.
- Students graduate with valuable work experience and have the possibility of being hired full time by their work study employer.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- The LET degree was created to bridge the gap between supply chain management, engineering, and information technology.
- In its second semester at Columbus State, 28 students have declared LET as their major.
- Funding has been provided through the National Science Foundation (1400452 & 1700520).
- The LET faculty continuously interacts with local industry partners to ensure all curriculum and administration aligns with current trends and knowledge.

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Appendix D - Results of interviews with current LET students to assess interest in Work Study

Currently Employed?	Do you see LET as a future possible career?	Interested in WS?	Why did you choose the LET degree?	What are you interested in for a career?
Yes, full-time	Yes	Yes, right now is full time, depending on the pay part time - has a family but would like LET experience before graduating	First wanted IT, CSCC didn't have it, already taken some classes about LET, loved the classes, could see self doing LET.	Logistics Engineering
Yes, full-time	No	Not taking Logistics Engineering - changed major	N/A	N/A
Yes, full-time	Yes	I don't know right now, I'm trying to work way my way up in GAP, but if I could do GAP and work part time at the same time, then I'd be interested	Started in Nursing, realized didn't want to do nursing, changed to Supply chain after talking to Lee. With technology on the rise and needing to know how everything works in a technological sense, it seemed like the right degree to pursue.	At the moment, Logistics Supervisor or some kind of Senior Director of Logistics for a big-name company
Yes, full-time	Yes	Yes, and it would depend on the nature of the job and the pay	Talking to Lee, I have a degree in Supply Chain Management from Africa, when I came here I wanted to pursue the same, I want to be in the same field, Lee says LET is different from what you learned back home. I want to lecture and learn more about logistics and supply chain	I love the managerial aspect and I love managing things, in supply chain one must be proactive, being a SCM for a company pushes my interest, I want to manage things
Yes, part-time	Yes	Yes	Columbus is a distribution hub and there will be lots of jobs	Not specifically, trying to get work experience, prepare for the future.

Appendix E - 2017-2018 Outreach Activities

Date	Event/Activity	Target Audience	Activity	People reached	Organization
10/27/2017	We Are STEM Day	High School students	Informed high school students about the importance of Logistics, especially in Columbus	~20	Genoa, Lakewood, Upper Arlington, West HS
				~20	Beechcroft, Hillard Darby, MIT, Northland
				~20	Downtown, Northland, Westerville Central, Westerville South, Westland HS
1/10/2018	Class presentation		Disseminated information about the LET program, LET WS and summer camps	8	Gahanna High School
1/11/2018				7	Westerville South High School
1/18/2018	Spring Involvement Fair	Columbus State students	Disseminated information about the LET program and LET WS	12	Columbus State Community College
1/23/2018	Modern Manufacturing Night	High School students & parents		10	Columbus State Community College - Modern Manufacturing Night
1/25/2018	Delaware Area Career Center Open House			14	Delaware Area Career Center Open House
2/9/2018	CareerXpress Junior Career Conference	High School students	Disseminated information about the LET program, LET WS and summer camps	20	Multiple high schools
2/14/2018	High School Presentation			16	Lancaster-Stanberry Career Center
2/15/2018	High School Presentation			46	Westfall High School

Appendix F - 2017 Educator Bus Tour – Agenda



2017 Educator Bus Tour Tuesday, October 31, 2017 Columbus State – Dublin Regional Learning Center

Time	Activity	Speaker
7:30am	Registration & Networking	
7:45am	Introduction & Agenda Preview	Todd Warner Scott Wegeng
8:00am	Columbus Region Workforce Trends	Tim Harman, Columbus 2020
8:30am	Travel to Cardinal Health	Larry McWherter
8:45am	Tour of Cardinal Health and Company Speakers	Cardinal Health Representatives
10:15am	Travel to City of Dublin Fleet Facility	Steve Levin
10:30am	Tour of City of Dublin Fleet Facility and Company Speakers	City of Dublin Fleet Representatives
11:30am	Travel to Honda	
12:00pm	Lunch and Manufacturing/Logistics Overview	Honda Representatives Mark Gerko Jeremy Banta
12:50pm	Tour of Honda Marysville Auto Plant	Honda Representatives
1:45pm	Debrief	Honda Representatives
2:15pm	Travel to CSCC Dublin	

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Appendix G - 2017 Educator Bus Tour – Evaluation Survey

BEFORE THE TOUR				AFTER THE TOUR			
Not Aware	Slightly aware	Moderately aware	Fully aware	Not Aware	Slightly aware	Moderately aware	Fully aware
What current employment fact/trend was most surprising to you? (Could be one from above or something else)							

How likely are you to share what you learned today with the following audiences?

	Not at all likely	Only slightly likely	Moderately likely	Very likely	Certain
Teachers					
Administrators					
Counselors					
Students					
Parents					

Overall, how would you rate the effectiveness of each aspect of the day below?

	Not at all effective	Slightly effective	Moderately effective	Very effective
Agenda Activities	CSCC - Check-in and briefing			
	Travel to Cardinal Health - Overview of CyberSecurity Educational Options			
	Cardinal Health			
	CSCC - Overview of Alt. Energy Automotive			
	City of Dublin Fleet Facility			
	CSCC - Overview of Manufacturing & Logistics Engineering			
	Honda Manufacturing			
Event Goals	The overall flow of activities			
	Understanding the culture at each company we visited			
	Fostering connections between secondary educators and local businesses			
	Strengthening Columbus State's position as a vital intermediary between high school and workforce			
What are the 1 or 2 most impactful changes/improvements you would recommend?				



Evaluation
Plans



Program
Evaluation



Report
Writing



Data Collection
& Analysis

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