

Local Professionals Encourage Students at Career Event

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By Junette Reyes Staff Writer



Students at NSU University School got a sneak peek into their potential futures.

The school's Career Connections event brought eighth, ninth and 10th grade students together for a chance to learn from and interact with local professionals.

Stefanie Gillman, the Middle School student and counseling programming coordinator, said the event was meant to expose the students to a variety of career paths.

"It works to really engage dialogue between students, alumni [and] community members to really encourage the kids to become active participants in their future," said Gillman.

Gillman said the idea is to have students think about how their experiences and choices in school affect what they'll do later on.

The eighth grade students sat through a moderated session with the professionals and learned about their careers. The session also acted as an open forum for the students to ask about the paths they took to get where they are today.

"We talk about career as a journey and not like a destination," Gillman said. "We really try and pose questions that foster those conversations."

A networking event followed the moderated session.

Eighth grade student Ella Marshall, for example, came to the event without a dream job in mind but said the event opened her eyes to the various possibilities. Marshall turned out to be most interested in psychology and business at the end of Career Connections.

"I learned that there are more job options than you realize, so the perfect job for you is out there," said Marshall. "You need to be in the job for the right reasons and have a passion for it."

Mia Internoscia came out feeling confident in her chosen career path. The eighth grade student hopes to one day work in film as a director or actress.

"Career Connections did reinforce this dream because it allowed me to see people locally achieve my passion, which showed that it was possible," said Internoscia. "I know if I stay determined, I can make my dream a reality."

Gillman said Career Connections is typically organized just for the eighth grade students, but a separate networking event was hosted for the first time including students in ninth and 10th grade. These students were able to talk with the professionals for opportunities involving community service, mentorships and internships, as well as research.

"Our school is a college preparatory school. For us, we believe that it's never too early to start thinking about the future", Gillman said.

Shornam Gandhi, a student in the ninth grade, hopes to be a successful engineer one day. She said it can be a little discouraging at times thinking about how she might have to compete for a place in college alongside her exceptional peers. The networking event helped her realize she needs to believe in herself and not give up on chasing her passions.

"Talking to these professionals, it was a real confidence boost to hear that I was on the right track to becoming a great engineer," said Gandhi.