

Workforce Development Exploring – 2016 Highlights

Below please find some program highlights from our Posts and Clubs in 2016! Many of our long-term Exploring posts had a successful year. All are operating quality programs and many saw membership increases.

Eight Local Students Compete in International Underwater Robotics Competition at NASA's Johnson Space Center.



Eight local high school students and their underwater robot competed against teams from around the world at the International Marine Advanced Technology Education (MATE) Competition at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas.

Team Vector Robotics, as the students call themselves, is part of the Exploring program- a coed career-focused affiliate of the Boy Scouts of America. The team comprises one student from Lyons Township High School and seven from Lemont High School.

Vector Robotics won a regional competition last month, which earned them a spot at the international level against 38 other teams representing sixteen countries.

The MATE competition, which ran from June 23rd through June 25th, required students to design and build an underwater remote operated vehicle (ROV) capable of exploring Jupiter's moon, Europa. The students spent more than 3,500 hours developing and implementing their vision.

Over the course of the three-day competition, the robots were put through several assessments at NASA's Buoyancy Lab. And the robots weren't the only ones being tested. Each team also created a business strategy, marketing plan, safety plan, schematics and financial report that they presented to the judges.

While the students didn't walk away with a trophy, they wrote on their Facebook page that they still felt like they won. "We won... The ability to collaborate... The desire to seek out new solutions and new experiences... New friendships... The opportunity to compete in an international arena and know that we earned that right. We didn't walk away with a trophy, but that doesn't matter, because in so many other ways, we won."

Exploring Youth to Help Revive Highland's Historic Town Theater:



The Town Theatre, the iconic Highland arthouse theater that was famous for its intermissions with coffee and cake, hasn't shown a film since 2008.

That means many of today's young people never saw a film at the single-screen downtown theater, which also was known for the knights mounted on the wall.

Organizers of the Town Theatre revival project hope to get youths involved in bringing it back, so they feel invested in it. A newly launched Town Theatre Exploring Post will let kids between the ages of 14 and 20 participate, such as by working with architects, engineers, marketers, publicists and archivists. "This is your chance to help make the theater your own, to be sure the theater is serving everyone, including the youth of our community," Town Theater Board President Dawn Diamantopoulos said.

Local Explorers will be involved behind-the-scenes in the effort to redevelop the 70-year-old theater, which is now owned by the town government after deteriorating since its closure in 2008.

Explorers, for instance, could help set up the acoustics for both movies and live shows, organize film festivals and help book bands.

"We are excited to help build an Exploring program where young people who want to help bring the Town Theatre back to life may have an outlet for their interests and enthusiasm," said Cecile Petro, director of redevelopment for the town of Highland. "This is once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see what it takes to renovate a theater and what it can mean to the spirit and livelihood of our community is happening right now. It is a great way for young people to learn about real-world challenges." Volunteers will decide exactly how they will participate, and would, for instance, have the opportunity to trail Morris Architects of Chicago and watch as the designs get updated, Exploring Director Andy Pierce said.

"Instead of handing the youth a finished product, we can get them invested from the start," he said. "They can help make it happen."

Hoffman Estates Police Department Runs Junior Police Academy Camp:



The week of June 20th through June 24th, the Hoffman Estates Police Department ran and coordinated the Explorers at the Junior Police Academy Camp (JPAC). There were 50 + fifth, sixth and seventh graders who participated in this week long camp. We had 7 group leaders assisting and cheering on their team to events such as: Bicycle Obstacle course, traffic stops, crime scenes, physical agility course, tours of the police station and vehicles to name a few. On Friday there was a graduation of all the participants that included their families to celebrate a great week at the camp.

Changing Lives Through a Skilled Trades Post at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 134:



The 13 young men and women of our local IBEW – NECA (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers – National Electrical Contractors Association) Technology Institute Exploring Post are doing hands-on activities to learn about the careers of union electricians.

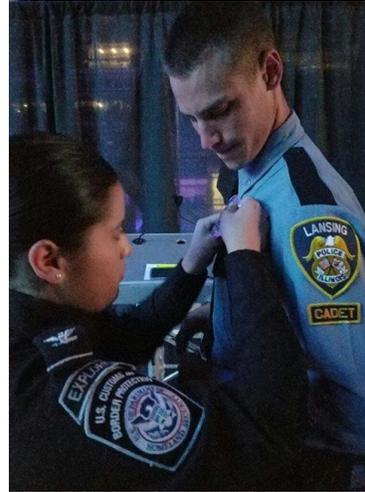
This is the very first trade union exploring post to be chartered in the Pathway to Adventure Council and we are excited about what this partnership can do to build careers and change lives. Since the Post started in January, two of the members graduated high school and have entered the Electrician's apprenticeship program and are beginning to earn a paycheck for their efforts.

2016 National Law Enforcement Exploring Conference:



This past July 11 – 16, we had four Exploring Posts participate in the National Law Enforcement Exploring Conference in Flagstaff, AZ. The conference is conducted every other year and is attended by thousands of Law Enforcement Explorers and adult leaders from throughout the country.

The conference provides a week of team and individual competitions, seminars, demonstrations, exhibits, recreation and fun. For the second consecutive year, a youth member from the Pathway to Adventure Council has been named the National Youth Representative for Law Enforcement Exploring. Tyler Schutt from Post 2950 in Lansing, IN will be responsible for representing the nation's Law Enforcement Explorers at various functions around the country. Additionally, he will work with the National Law Enforcement Committee to manage the program and planning the events.



Career Day at UIC Sponsored by Collins Engineers, Inc.:

On Saturday, November 12th, we held a Career Day at UIC which was sponsored by Collins Engineers, Inc. Over 100 high school students in the Chicagoland had the opportunity to meet with mentors through two, 45-minute breakout sessions in the careers of Aviation, Skilled Trades, Engineering, Law Enforcement, Law and Government, Health, Fire/EMS, and Communications. The students also got an opportunity to learn job skills including resume writing, conflict resolution, digital life, how to dress and communicate in the workplace.

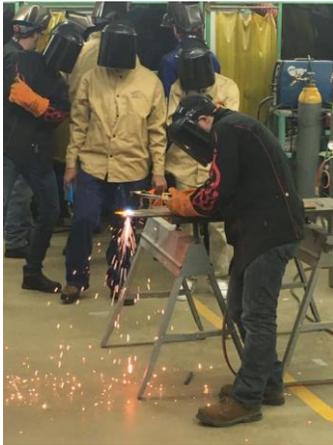


Berwyn Law Enforcement Post celebrates 50 years:

Berwyn Post 94 marked their 50th anniversary this past year. The post invited current and past members, many who are now in Law Enforcement, to a celebratory banquet. They also used the opportunity to recognize Explorers with various awards and achievements. The highlight of the evening was when long-time advisor Carmelita Terry was presented with the prestigious William H. Spurgeon III Award for her outstanding work towards the program.



Oak Forest High School Welding Works Exploring Post:



Thanks to one of our longtime volunteers, we were introduced to a tenured and certified welder who built a team of adult volunteers to provide the know-how for us to offer a welding program in the Bremen High School District No. 228, which serves the communities of Midlothian, Posen, Tinley Park, Markham, Hazel Crest, Country Club Hills and Oak Forest. The program is called Welding Works and it meets each Thursday. The program is more intensive and demanding than some of our career Exploring programs because the students have the opportunity to achieve a certificate of competency in welding so that they may pursue employment immediately after completing the program satisfactorily.

Our support and guidance has led the school district to make significant investments in its on-call lab so that it can again serve students as they consider careers in the trades and prepare for life. In addition to bringing more adults to help mentor youth, the Welding Works program students are learning both important life skills and trade-specific skills that may lead them to successful careers that otherwise might not have been available to them.

