

# the Vision

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*Mentor Patti Gendernalik of Kelly Services shares a laugh with her mentee.*

## WINNING FUTURES RECEIVES KUDOS FROM STATE SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

**“Key to Winning Futures’ success is the curriculum and methodology”**

***By: Elizabeth W. Bauer, Member - Michigan State Board of Education***

I am a member of the Education Committee for the RARE Everyday Hero Program, and with the new merger, I wanted to see what Winning Futures was all about. Recently I visited Warren Mott High School to sit in on a session of Winning Futures. The Winning Futures curriculum certainly addresses the skills students need to succeed in the world of work. The small groups working with their mentors over the year offer an ideal structure for skill building. The energy in the room was palpable as Laurie Tarter engaged the students and their mentors in activities that will prepare them to meet life’s challenges both as students

and in their future careers. I observed the session on academic goal setting and improving study skills and found it personally informative.

It is easy to see why Winning Futures has grown exponentially over the 15 years of its existence. The curriculum is solid, the commitment of mentors long term (full school year) and, as a school-based mentoring program it has made a positive difference in student achievement. The testimony of the participants’ teachers about improved attitudes, behaviors, initiative, communication skills, teamwork, and more is the best report card a program could receive.

# SUPPORTING STUDENTS

## RARE EVERYDAY HEROES HONORED

This fall we hosted the 11th Annual “Night of Heroes” event for our RARE Everyday Hero award winners. This prestigious award celebrates the lives of everyday people in the workplace who, through extraordinary commitment, courage, compassion, and integrity, are changing lives and inspiring others. High school seniors nominate their everyday hero by submitting an essay to the RARE “Everyday Heroes



Scholarship Competition.” Over 150 applications were submitted and five recipients were selected, each receiving \$2,500 college scholarships.

The 2009 scholarship students (as pictured left to right) are Julianna Whiteman, Abigail Koning, Kevin Lambert, Staci Spears, and Jordan Jones. They represent communities from across Michigan.

Their heroes were also honored at the event as the students read a tribute about them. The RARE Everyday Heroes are Jed Mulder, Ronald Spears, Michael Wacht, Kevin Musson, Lisa Hermann, and Amanda Whitmore. These amazing adults represent the public service, technology, education, and non-profit fields.

*Call 586.294.8449 to nominate a hero.*

## WHAT IF...

While growing up, it was never a question if I would go to college...I WAS going. So, I often ask my Winning Futures mentees, “Why do you say *if*?” Why is it a question? Questions like which trade school, apprentice program, or tech program to attend can be questions, but when it comes to preparing yourself for your life, why is the answer *if*? They had a hard time answering that.

We set goals: six-week, six-month, three-year, and five-year. If you always know what the next step is, there is no “if”. Because Winning Futures prepares kids to really examine what they want in the future, and then teaches them how to make step-by-step and inch-by-inch lists of how to achieve them, there is no “if”. There’s just the next step...I’m glad I get to be a part of their first step.



~Jamey Kozierowski  
V.P., The Huttenlocher Group  
2009 Pontiac Mentor of the Year

## EXTRA CREDIT UNION IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

We participate in Winning Futures because we feel passionately about connecting with our surrounding community and appreciate the opportunity to contribute. Our employees mentor teens and assist with the Career Closet. We have witnessed first-hand the positive shifts in kids who bond with mentors and expand their confidence, focus,



and drive to excel in life. Our organization is strongly focused on the benefits of quality education and we believe that a supportive community now will lead to a more abundant community in the future.

~Margot Hamilton  
Marketing Manager, Extra Credit Union  
2009 Warren Mott Mentor of the Year

# SUCCESS IN THE WORKPLACE

## STUDENT SUCCESS IN MEDICAL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

Joe Owens sent his resume to us at Diversified Industrial Staffing for an entry-level position. On his resume we noticed he was a graduate of Winning Futures, which immediately prompted us to call him. At that time, we were uncertain as to where we could place Joe, but we wanted to see what he was all about.



When Joe arrived for his interview, he was very memorable because he was confident, smiling, engaging, and was very prepared. He was everything we look for in a good employee; he blew us away with his interview! Joe was eager to work, he wanted to make the world a better place, and he

was confident that if given a chance he could make a difference. Our main focus was to find this wonderful young man a job. We don't see people like Joe all the time!

There was an opening at a company that was looking for an apprentice;

someone who would be groomed by the owner to someday take over for him. We immediately thought of Joe! We called and told the owner how impressed we were with Joe, he was interviewed the next day, and hired the day after that. They were impressed with Joe for the same reason we were. They continue to be very impressed with his intangible skills, which he attributes to Winning Futures!

~Lisa Crawford  
Recruiter, Diversified Industrial Staffing  
Harper Woods Mentor

## STUDENTS ARE DRESSED FOR SUCCESS!

While Winning Futures' curriculum focuses on character development, goal setting, five-year planning, and job readiness skills, we also realize that when it comes to competing in today's competitive workplace, young people will have a better chance of getting noticed if they know how to dress for success. That is why we recently held our first Career Closet.

The Career Closet consisted of gently used attire donated by mentors and local business partners that teens could wear for job interviews and other career-building events. For one day, our classroom at Community

High School was transformed into a retail store complete with mirrors, racks of clothes, and tables of shoes and accessories for both young men and women. Volunteers assisted teens in putting together professional outfits. Each teen was provided one free outfit to take home.

Natalie, a senior at Warren Mott High School and a participant in Winning Futures, stated, "It's such a good program," she noted. "With its help, I've been able to make a good resume that helped me to get a part-time job as a secretary. It taught me things I would have never known that matter



to employers, like the importance of looking professional and how to do the best job I can do for them."

## CAREER COACHES PREPARE TEENS FOR THEIR FIRST JOB



In partnership with MichiganWorks! we employed and trained 20 teens

this summer in order for them to gain work experience and to develop skills. Each student also took part in eight Winning Futures Job Readiness workshops focusing on career planning, employability training, and life skills. Teens were matched with volunteer career coaches who helped them practice important skills such as resume writing and interviewing.

"Having career coaches has given me more knowledge than ever. I feel like I have been taught things that most kids never get a chance to experience until college. The information my career coaches shared with me has helped me gain confidence so I can compete for future job opportunities." ~ Derek, Student Participant



### SPONSOR HIGHLIGHT

The Wal-Mart Foundation has donated \$10,000 to support the Winning Futures classroom mentoring program. Lindsay Huddleston, Michigan Senior Manager for Public Affairs and Government Relations for Wal-Mart Stores Inc., said, "At Wal-Mart, not only are we committed to providing our customers everyday

low prices, we're also committed to supporting the communities we are in. It gives us great pleasure to support the Winning Futures program based on its commitment to providing a better quality of life to the next generation."

### A TRIBUTE TO A WINNING FUTURES' FRIEND

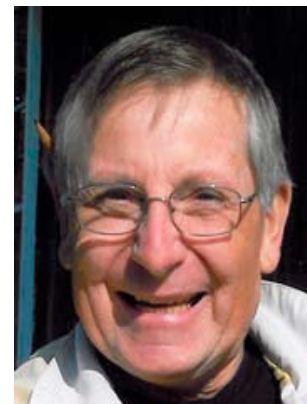
Mr. Chura was not only my counselor, he was my mentor. I had a great deal of obstacles in my life and school was last on my list of things to worry about. The only thing that mattered to me was playing football.

Every game day Mr. Chura would call me down to his office. Our conversation always started with him asking about my grades and ended with football. He made sure I understood what my priorities needed to be. When I had to make

the difficult decision to leave home at 16 years old, Mr. Chura was there to support me. His wonderful smile, strong hand shake, and passionate words were instrumental in my decision to turn my life around.

Mr. Chura has been a great supporter of Winning Futures, and I am proud to mentor in Winning Futures, passing his legacy forward.

~ Duane Marshall, Mentor  
Owner/Implementer, EOS



Robert Chura  
1941 - 2009

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