

High School Students Gain Real-World Experience at ISM Business Symposium

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Community volunteers recently lent their time to share practical advice with high school juniors and seniors involved in the Frisco ISD Independent Study and Mentorship (ISM) program.

The annual ISM Business Symposium was split into two events this year to accommodate increasing student enrollment.

Students from Frisco, Lone Star and Wakeland high schools participated on October 3 at the Fisd Administration Building, while students from Centennial, Heritage, Independence and Liberty high schools got their chance October 10 at Independence High School.

During the symposium, business professionals conduct mock interviews, evaluate student resumes and help students build networking skills.



"I was pleasantly surprised with how prepared the students were, how specific and thought out their goals were and the level of maturity and professionalism that they approached me with," said Nicole Arnold of Nicole Arnold Interiors. "They weren't shy. They knew they were there for a purpose."

The event helps students prepare as they begin contacting professionals working in a career field of their choice.



"This gives us the experience to go out there in the world," said Wakeland senior Regan Reuling. "Phone calls are more comfortable and aren't as scary."

Over the course of the ISM program, participants conduct research interviews, work with a mentor in a chosen career field and formally present a product based on what they have learned.

The course is part of the Fisd Gifted and Talented program and requires an application in order to ensure students are prepared for the rigor and course expectations.



"She was always focused, but being a part of ISM gave her a sense of responsibility and accountability," said volunteer Mike Rodriguez, whose daughter chose to study broadcast journalism at the University of North Texas after participating in ISM. "It emphasized that she could do it and gave her the courage and confidence to talk to reporters."

The hope is that all students gain a better understanding of which career path or major to pursue after graduation.

"I wish I would have had something like this," said volunteer Ed Wiest of GE Critical Power. "I didn't realize until I was a junior in college that what I was going to school for wasn't what I wanted to do and by then, it was too late. I had already invested so much time and energy in the program."

Lone Star senior Josh Moore hopes ISM will help him avoid a similar situation.

"I'm really excited to see what ministry looks like day in, day out," he said. "If it is really my calling, then I'll know."

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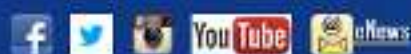
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