



Middle School Career Exploration Efforts

Illinois GEAR UP
Kimberly Korando





Illinois GEAR UP Grant

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs

- ISAC was awarded the federal GEAR UP grant from the Department of Education in late 2016
- GEAR UP provides grants to states and partnerships at middle and high schools in low income and high need areas
- The Illinois GEAR UP grant is currently serving 19 middle schools across the state with the leading cohort entering 9th grade this year
- Grant follows lead cohort through their first year of college and adds a new class of 7th graders every year
- We provide service delivery in several program areas including: college and career exploration, successful transitions from middle school through college, admission and financial aid application assistance, parent engagement and school enrichment/capacity building

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Middle School Career Exploration

- The GEAR UP grant provides students with tools to explore careers through:
 - Classroom Curriculum
 - Field trips, career panels/speakers
 - Capacity Building funds
- Each award year, GEAR UP schools are eligible for additional capacity building funds to create unique opportunities for their students
- Hands-on career exploration activities are a popular use of the funds





Makerspace

- Used in collaboration with STEM classes and often placed in the school library
- A space for making, collaborating, learning, and sharing
- A makerspace can be started simply with cardboard, Legos and art supplies and can be advanced to include items such as 3D printers and robotics
- Use of a makerspace can assist with developing critical thinking skills, boost self confidence and encourage an entrepreneurial spirit
- Overall purpose is to create something out of nothing and explore interests
- There are a variety of books and online resources that can help you get started

Makerspace

- Students at *Central Junior High School in West Frankfort* used engineering principles to create a marble run course and a catapult. They also recorded a news program with audio visual equipment
- Students were excited to learn about careers they had never heard of before and to use skills they didn't know they had
- Many reported considering new careers in the future after participating in Makerspace activities





INCubator

- At the start of this school year, *Stephen Mack Middle School in Rockton* started offering INCubator as an elective class.
- It is designed around entrepreneurship lessons where students learn about the foundation, skills needed, and overall importance of starting a business.
- To begin, students think of a problem they face in their every day lives and find a solution. They then create a product for it and actually sell the item.
- Each group member is responsible for a specific task such as manager, customer champion, timekeeper, and more hands-on roles such as builder.
- The final portion of the class allows students to create the product and sell it on an open web market. The students can earn a profit based on sales.

INCubator Products

Our Store



Chromebookit

\$15.00



Flat Binder

\$7.00



Robber Stopper Security Box

\$85.00



Safe Lock



Smudge Sack



INCubator Process

The Student Journey

Search and Discover

Unit 1
Ideation

Unit 2
Customer
Discovery

Unit 3
Customer
Connections

Unit 4
Dollars and
Cents

Validate

Unit 5
Building Your
Minimum Viable
Product

Unit 6
Validation/
Experimentation

Unit 7
Promotion

Unit 8
Pitch Your Story



Middle School Career Exploration

Field Trips

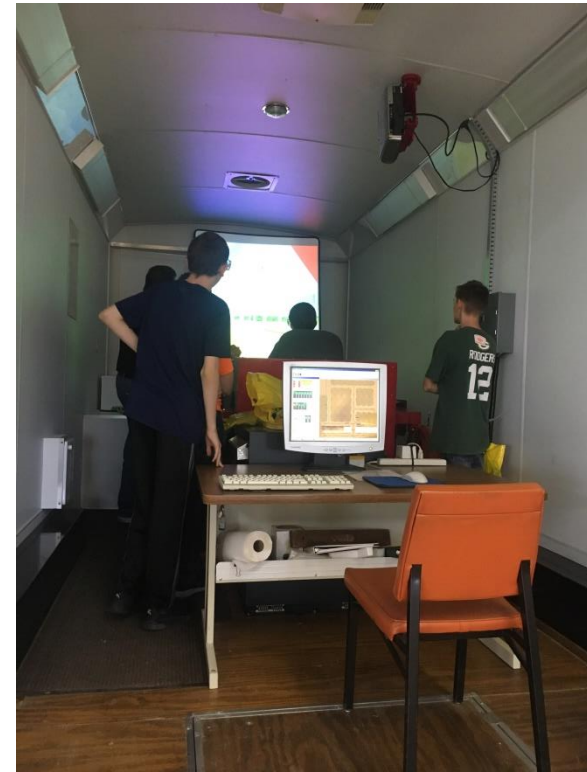
Local Employer

- Students at *Mt. Carmel Junior High School* toured local Toyota manufacturing plant where many citizens of their town are employed

Southern Illinois Construction Careers Expo

- Students met representatives from several construction and engineering companies in southern Illinois
- There were many hands-on activities at the exhibits
- Students learned how they could become qualified to work in a variety of construction careers when they finish high school

Southern Illinois Construction Careers Expo

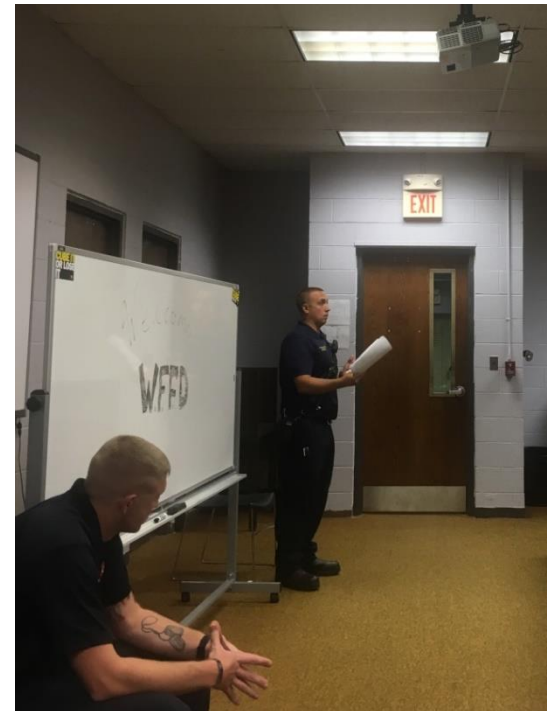


Middle School Career Exploration

In-Classroom Career Panel/Speaker Series

- The GEAR UP Corps member at *Central Junior High School* asked three fire fighters from the local fire department to speak to students
- They shared stories about how and why they chose their career path and talked about what a typical day is like working at the firehouse
- Students were given a chance to ask questions and were interested in how to become a firefighter, what the training is like, and some asked to hear rescue stories
- The Corps member shared the Knack Catalog with the firefighters and they discussed which knacks would make someone a good firefighter

Firefighters from the West Frankfort Fire Department speaking to students about their careers



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Middle School Career Exploration

ILGU Classroom Curriculum

Knack Games

- Designed to help users identify their natural abilities and personal strengths using a mobile device.
- Knack's behavior analysts look at many variables during game play such as: how long users hesitate, what part of the screen they touch, and the moves they choose to make.
- Upon completing the games students receive a list of:

9 Knacks - natural skills and abilities

9 Superknacks - career options



Being culturally aware
Relationships



Cybersecurity
Engineering and Technology

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Knack Games

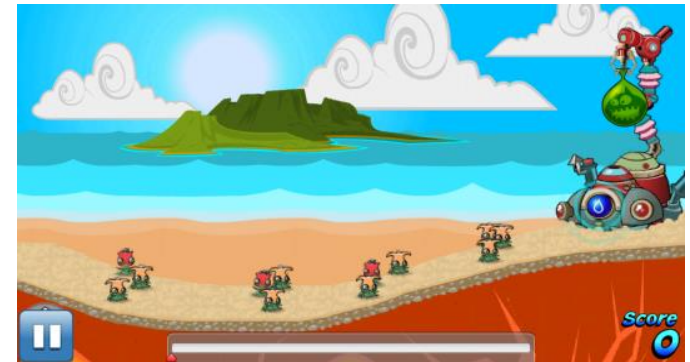
Dashi Dash

- Serve the meal that matches the client's nonverbal facial expression. Don't forget to pick up the dirty dish!



Bomba Blitz

- Use water balloons to extinguish the fire launching imps before they burn your flowery friends and get to the contraption.



Meta Maze

- Create a path within a maze in order to connect two space robots.



Claim Your Future



- Students choose a career and navigate through different spending choices
- Kit includes 50 career wheels, online version offers 125 career options
- Unique career descriptions and key vocabulary
- Printable budget worksheet
- Additional financial education resources
- An Educator's Guide that includes a detailed lesson plan and homework activities



www.isac.claimyourfuture.com



Kim Korando
Illinois GEAR UP
kim.korando@illinois.gov

THANK YOU
