

4-30-2015

High School Seniors Prepare for College through STEM Initiative

Joshua Siegel

News & Events

High School Seniors Prepare for College through STEM Initiative

Thursday, April 30, 2015

by: Joshua Siegel

Monday, April 20, marked the opening ceremony of the 19th annual Petersheim Academic Exposition, Seton Hall's week-long program of events and presentations which demonstrate the scholarship students pursue. It also marked an achievement for all 80 seniors of North Star Academy College Preparatory High School, who had spent the previous months collaborating with Seton Hall faculty and performing research projects.



The collaboration wasn't simply about conducting research; there was a clear educational imperative. Michael Mann, Principal of North Star explained, "Two years ago we realized only 6% of our graduates pursued STEM Degrees, partnering with Seton Hall was the most important component. Since then, 56% of our seniors reported an intention to pursue a STEM-related major."

The success of the project isn't simply expressed in numbers. The effect on students has been profound. Erika Saladin, examined biological engineering and its potential to eradicate diseases under the guidance of Professor Abe Zakem, Chair of the Department of Philosophy.

"I found the topic extremely interesting. It has encouraged me to study biology," Saladin said. She plans to attend Dickinson College, where she hopes to continue pursuing her interest.

For fellow students, the project proved a chance to participate and receive firsthand experience in fields in which they showed or expressed interests. Maymouna Sissonon, studied the effects of colony collapse disorder, a process in which entire hives of bees die as the result of an invasive mite.

Sissonon, who will be a pre-med student at Barnard College stated, "I always wanted to be a doctor, but the program confirmed that this was the field for me."

Michael Zavada, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, who oversaw a group of students studying the collection of particulate matter, described the importance behind the projects. "The premise was simple. It introduced students to the process and rules needed to conduct a successful study," he said.

The benefits of these projects aren't limited to their presentations. Zavada surmised their life-long implications stating, "It's about getting the students to speak the language of academia and how to represent their field. It acclimates them to college and helps them to understand the quality and range of work needed to succeed," he stated.

Zavada remains committed to using the success of this high school and college collaborative initiative as a model than can be replicated throughout the country. He believes "This is indicative of what Seton Hall needs to do to remain engaged in the community and continue to serve the people of the community."

For photos click here » (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/setonhall/sets/72157651623792687/>)

For more information please contact:

Michael Zavada

973-761-9023

Michael.Zavada@shu.edu

