

SCHOOL: Handful of students have already obtained employment through their work placements

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School to Careers had a positive experience with the program. Students were similarly effusive when surveyed, with 86 percent saying their program experience was positive, the other 14 percent describing it as neutral.

Pendleton High School senior Tommy Alberti was one of the participants in the School to Careers program, where he did internships in the kitchens at St. Anthony Hospital, Pendleton Coffee Bean & Bistro and the Prodigal Son Brewery & Pub.

When he moved from Connecticut to Pendleton in 2009, Alberti described himself as a picky eater before he allowed himself to expand his palate.

“Basically, I couldn’t stop eating after I started,” he said.

His love of food went from eating it to cooking it, and he soon began to dedicate himself to the high school’s culinary program.

Through the School to Careers, Alberti now works at Prodigal Son four days a week for one to two hours per day, preparing soup stalk and salad dressing for the restaurant’s customers.

Although his high school culinary classes have already armed him with the fundamentals needed to do the job, Alberti said the work placements taught him how to adapt to each kitchen’s style and needs.

Working with people he didn’t know also forced him to hone his communication skills, he said.

After he graduates, Alberti plans to attend Blue Mountain Community College before transferring to the Oregon Coast Culinary Institute in Coos Bay.

Alberti said his longterm dream is to work in a professional kitchen and attend Johnson & Wales University, a Providence, Rhode Island-based college with a renowned culinary program.

With the state grant only lasting through June, the original idea behind the School to Careers program was for the Pendleton School District to take over operations at the start of the next school year.

Speaking from Eastern Oregon Business Source’s downtown office, Bower said it became clear over the winter that the School to Career program needed another year or two as a public-private

partnership to succeed.

With the knowledge that the district’s budget situation means it isn’t in a position to fund the program, School to Careers has already applied for eight grants to keep the program running, having already secured a \$5,000 grant from Umatilla County.

If they can raise enough money to continue, Bower and van der Kamp have ambitious plans for year two.

Besides expanding the number of businesses and students that participate in the program, the pair wants to create an online system that will connect businesses and students more easily.

Longterm, Bower said School to Careers is looking to demonstrate it can successfully create a workforce pipeline from Pendleton High School, which could lead to business sponsorships.

“This could be largely, if not full, self sustaining,” she said.

According to van der Kamp, a handful of students have already obtained employment through their work placements.

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HEALTH: AHCA would reduce federal deficits by \$119B over the next decade

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unaffordable for those with pre-existing conditions and many seniors, and kicking millions off of their health insurance.”

Trump’s Health and Human Services secretary, Tom Price, assailed the CBO for being inaccurate, with the White House issuing a similar critique.

“The CBO was wrong when they analyzed Obamacare’s effect on cost and coverage,” Price said of the agency’s report on Obama’s law, “and they are wrong again.”

Many congressional Republicans took a sharply different tack, emphasizing some of the report’s more positive findings.

“This CBO report again confirms that the American Health Care Act achieves our mission: lowering premiums and lowering the deficit. It is another positive step toward keeping our promise to repeal and replace Obamacare,” said House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis.

The analysis said the House bill, the American Health Care Act, would reduce federal deficits by \$119 billion over the next decade. The previous version of the bill reduced shortfalls by \$150 billion.

Trump and Republicans celebrated the House’s narrow May 4 passage of the bill in a Rose Garden ceremony after several embarrassing setbacks, even as GOP senators signaled it had little chance of becoming law without significant changes.

In a late compromise, House GOP conservatives and moderates struck a deal that would let states get federal waivers to permit insurers to charge higher premiums to some people in poor health, and to ignore the standard set of benefits required by Obama’s statute.

CBO said states adopting

those waivers could destabilize coverage for people with medical problems. The agency estimated that about one-sixth of the population — more than 50 million people — live in states that would make substantial changes under the waivers.

The budget office projected that premiums in those states would be lower for healthy people than under current law because their coverage would be narrower, but did not estimate an amount.

For ill people in those states, “it would become more difficult” for seriously ill people to buy insurance “because their premiums would continue to increase rapidly,” the report said.

Benefits likely to be excluded from required coverage in some states would include maternity, mental health and substance abuse services, the report said. It said consumers’ out-of-pocket costs for those services “could increase by thousands of dollars in a given year for the (patients) who use those services.”

In states not getting waivers, where it estimated half the country lives, average premiums would be about 4 percent lower in 2026 than under Obama’s law, the report said. For the one-third of the nation where states would modestly reduce coverage requirements, average premiums would be about 20 percent lower, the analysts estimated.

The budget office said average premiums in those states would go down because younger and healthier people would buy coverage and the policies would cover less.

The report said that under Obama’s law, the nation’s health insurance market is expected to remain “stable in most areas” because federal subsidies to millions of consumers largely rise with premiums.

UPGRADES: Project extends life of county properties

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and other county officials.

The building also gets a large conference room, he said, to make county meetings more accessible to residents there. And the county will staff the place a few days each week.

Lonai lives in Milton-Freewater and is the president of the Rotary Club there. Murdock said Lonai has been working there on Tuesdays. Another county employee who lives in Milton-Freewater also may end up working there two days a week, Murdock said.

People in the Milton-Freewater area who need the basic services the county provides, Murdock said, such as marriage licenses, can go there instead of driving to Pendleton.

The Broadway site, often called the Health Building, will be home to veterans services, the watermaster, community justice, drug and alcohol services and as a sub-station for the sheriff’s office.

Murdock said the project extends the life of county properties and allows the county to keep about \$250,000 to improve other buildings, including the courthouse in Pendleton.



Umatilla County is renovating their facilities at two locations in Milton-Freewater.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

The county also is working on a three-year preventative maintenance plan, Murdock said, to keep up on all the “non-glitz stuff,” such as painting and HVAC work. He said governments often cut off funding maintenance in

tight budgets but that leaves bigger and more costly repairs and rebuilds down the line.

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