

Workforce: All students benefit from IT training, principal says

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He came upon TechBridge and the company was interested in helping his school expand its technology program into something unlikely in such a rural area.

A group from TechBridge visited the high school last week. During their visit, students took professional headshots in work attire purchased and donated by the Assistance League of the Columbia Pacific. Students are

building individual LinkedIn pages and, once they pass the course, will have a certification in IT.

Workforce Prep is for students headed to college, trade school and "those who don't know what the heck they're going to do," Heyen said. "I would like to have a good portion of my kids be able to go through that program."

There are 31 students enrolled in the class.

"I hope to get more knowl-

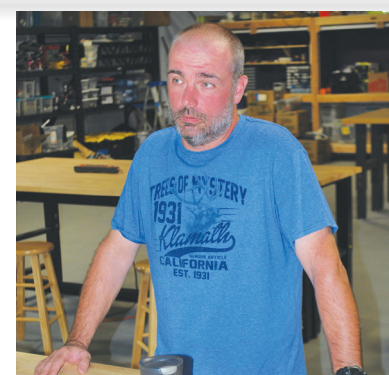
edge on IT, as I see that's where the future is headed," said Jose Rosendo Talancon-Botello, a senior in the class. "I want to be prepared. The more prepared, the more successful you'll be."

The class has helped him create a personal portfolio and a profile on LinkedIn, a social network for business professionals often used by job recruiters.

"I feel it's giving me new ways of viewing the work-

force and the world," said Sarah Neuenfeldt, a senior who plans to go into graphic design after high school. "I'm hoping just to get a better understanding of everything -- IT and the whole working world. ... After graduation from high school, I want to have a better view and be better prepared. I think it's a very good essential class."

Senior William Carruthers is in his fourth year of taking STEM (science, technology,



Teacher Scott Norman in the WHS Career-Technical lab.

engineering and math) classes and is helping other students in the class. He plans to attend college and become an aeronautical or electrical engineer.

"I want to improve my leadership skills," he said. "This class is definitely valuable to me."

Workforce Prep teacher Scott Norman joined the staff this year after years of working in the corporate world.

"My goal is to help these students be prepared for whatever is next when they leave the school," Norman said. "There's a little bit of something for everybody in it."

Students are learning to do presentations, develop and keep a budget, and understand what things cost in the real world.

"You'd be surprised the answers you get when you ask what a 1,000-square-foot apartment in Portland is going to cost per month," Norman said.

All of his students will come out ahead because the class focuses on technology and a real-world perspective, he said.

"The IT world is growing so fast and so quick that kids can get great jobs coming out of high school without getting all that (college) debt," Norman said. "No other high school in the country has gone through this before. ... Imagine our little community of 5,000 people and we get a huge legacy."

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