



THE STOUGHTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

PO Box 41, Stoughton, MA 02072

Phone: 781-297-7450

info@stoughtonma.com ~ www.StoughtonMA.com

Reprint from *The Stoughton Journal* Article:

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Groups discuss school-to-career initiative

By Allan Stein/ Correspondent
Friday, January 7, 2005

School and business leaders spoke out Monday about the positive impact on educational programs for career-bound students and of strengthening a mutual alliance between commerce and education at a meeting at the high school sponsored by the Stoughton Chamber of Commerce.

During the hour-long business and social event, school officials discussed programs designed for students preparing to go to work after graduation including a school-to-career initiative.

"There is an opportunity for every student to benefit from the school-to-career initiative. I'm certain we can create some exciting opportunities for students," Superintendent Claire McCarthy said.

Stoughton High School assistant principal Brett Dickens gave an overview of career-oriented programs including business, technology and media programs, job shadowing, career counseling and scholarships, and the school's 19 student activity organizations.

The new Career Pathways initiative includes directed curricular programs in business and technology for non-college-bound students. She said the goal is to enroll 20 percent of students in grades 10-12 in the program, or approximately 200 students each year.

Dickens also discussed opportunities for further community involvement such as the Brockton Workforce Investment Board Career Fair, student internships and faculty externships, as well as scholarship programs for more than 100 seniors totaling \$80,000 or more.

Laurie Langer, one of three high school alternative education teachers, discussed the value and objectives of alternative education and school-to-career and its positive impact on students having trouble succeeding outside the classroom.

"It's working, and it's working beautifully," she said. "These kids want to work. They want to contribute to the world - to the town."

During the meeting chamber president Terry Schneider presented three humanitarian awards to residents who have gone above and beyond to help the community: John F. Trocki for the design and reconstruction of a memorial garden, Richard Kaplan for providing in a budget-crunch year much-needed paper for students and for the creation of the non-profit Saving Our Public Schools Inc. Lisa Sharland and Karla Morast received their award for their donation of 160 cases of paper to the schools following a successful paper drive.

"In the schools we never take paper for granted. It is a prized commodity. I think it is time to say thank you on behalf of the school department," McCarthy said.



From left to right, Chamber of Commerce President Terry Schneider and former South School Principal Dr. David Flaherty with Rick Kaplan, a recipient of one of three humanitarian awards given out by the chamber Monday night.

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