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Job clubs to help students find jobs



GETTING READY TO HIT THE JOB MARKET
Roscommon High School Junior Erika Rose (seated) works on decorating a folder to hold information, including her resumé, she will use to help her get a job during the first session of the Job Club in the school library March 10. Also pictured is Stephanie Siebert, a job placement specialist from ROOC, Inc., who is directing the Job Club programs at RHS, Houghton Lake High School and Ogemaw Heights High School. (Photo by Thomas Reznich)

A project aimed at helping special education students navigate the job market and find employment began last week at Roscommon, Houghton Lake and Ogemaw Heights high schools.

On March 10, four Roscommon High School students, three seniors and a junior, attended the first session of the Job Club, which met in the school's library. Directing the club was Stephanie Siebert, a job placement specialist with ROOC, Inc., who is also directing similar job clubs at Houghton Lake and Ogemaw Heights.

During the first session, Siebert helped the students identify their interests and see how they could relate them to the job market in Roscommon County. They put together folders which they will use to keep their job search materials in as they go through the program, which was funded by a grant awarded to COOR ISD by Michigan Rehabilitation Services and the Michigan Transition Services Association.

The program is designed to help students understand opportunities in the business community and will create opportunities for career exploration, work experience and will help them get jobs. During the program, students select three career areas of interest and then participate in work site tours based on their preferences.

Then the students participate in two six-week work experiences. With help from community groups, the after school job clubs also help students enhance skills related to getting a job as they create resumes, practice

interviewing, learn to identify job leads and hopefully obtain employment.

Some of the grant money will be used to pay students the minimum wage to attend job club meetings and for work they perform at area businesses as they get real work experience during the eight-week program.

Erika Rose, 19, who is a junior at RHS and attended the first job club session after school on March 10, said she volunteers at the Roscommon County Animal Shelter and hopes to find a job working with animals. "I've been having trouble finding a job," said Rose, "I'm hoping this (the job club) will help."

Siebert said each student will work up a letter, which they will send along with their resumé to three different potential employers.

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The students will also make visits to employers as a group to get a better idea of what various jobs entail. Siebert said in addition to the four students at Roscommon, there are five students at Houghton Lake and five at Ogemaw Heights.

She said while the students gain job experience and get paid for their work, employers participating in the program "get a free employee," who "hopefully will be hired at the position they are trained at."

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