

PRESS RELEASE

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STEM Academy Planned for New School

[Newark] There is a lot to celebrate in Worcester County Public Schools during the February National Career and Technology Education Month. The new Worcester Technical High School is scheduled to open in the fall of 2008. With the opening of the new school, more opportunities will exist for students to take relevant career courses along with rigorous academic courses at the state-of-the-art campus in Newark.

The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Academy is one of the new programs planned for the new school. The STEM Academy is supported by state and federal grants. This academy will provide Worcester County Public School students in grades 9 through 12 with a unique opportunity to complete a four-year sequence of rigorous, pre-engineering courses coupled with challenging, traditional courses in science, mathematics, and technology. Students who complete the STEM Academy will be able to confidently pursue post-secondary education in engineering.

During National Career and Technology Month, National Engineers Week is celebrated from February 17 through 23. According to www.eweek.org, Engineers Week promotes recognition among parents, educators, and students of the importance of a technical education.

Worcester County Public Schools recognizes the importance of engineers in our society. “Engineers use their scientific and technical knowledge and skills in creative and innovative ways to fulfill society's needs,” explained Dr. Jane Pruitt, Principal of Worcester Technical High School and Supervisor of Career and Technology education. “Engineers face the major technological challenges of our time — from rebuilding towns devastated by natural disasters to designing an information superhighway that will speed our country forward into the 21st century. Engineers encourage our young math and science students to realize the practical power of their knowledge.”

The United States will be looking more than ever to engineers and their knowledge and skills to meet the challenges of the future. Creating a pipeline for post secondary education in engineering on the Eastern Shore is the vision of the STEM Steering Committee which is

currently spearheading the implementation of this program. Community partners – including representatives from NASA at the Wallops Flight Facility – are working with educators in Worcester County and at Wor Wic Community College, Salisbury University, and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore to encourage career opportunities close to home for high school students.

For more information about Career and Technology Education Month, Engineers Week – 2008, or the proposed STEM Academy at Worcester Technical High School, please contact Dr. Jane Pruitt at 410-632-5055.