

JENNIFER CONNELLAN : FUTURE FOCUSED

# Youth in Business Day Teaches Many



Fire fighter Bruce Bailey with students on "Youth in Business Day"

We all know that adolescents typically have rather present-focused thinking.

Their minds are centered on what is going on now... "Who am I going to talk to on IM tonight?" "When is my History test again?" and of course, "What am I going to do this weekend?" Is this normal? Yes. Is it frustrating? YES! As parents and educators, we are continually trying to help teenagers think beyond the present and start planning for the future.



Last Thursday, March 29, 41 Capo Valley High School students were given the opportunity to do just that. On the 3rd Annual SJC Chamber of Commerce 'Youth in Business Day,' students were matched with local San Juan Capistrano business owners whom they shadowed for the morning.

Twenty-five different careers were represented, and students were able to select the profession in which they were most interested. From banking to dentistry to nursing to police to electronic equipment development, students were given an inside, concrete look at what it is actually like to do the jobs they are interested in doing.

For the students and professionals both, the day was an incredible experience. At the luncheon afterwards, one Chamber of Commerce board member, **Cindy Holmes**, was literally moved to tears after listening to one student speak about what he learned from shadowing **Lt. Mike Betzler** from the OC Sheriff's Department. Holmes said, "You could actually see the impact the officer had on him. In one morning, this boy went from having a vague idea of what he wanted to do with his future to knowing

it absolutely. And the best part was that he seemed to now be motivated to work harder in school in order to make it happen."

Further enhancing the experience, local San Juan business owner and motivational speaker, **Seth Sherwood**, spoke

about the importance of developing relationships. He emphasized the power of asking questions and genuinely listening to the answers. In order to help students grasp the concept and remember it, he had them pair up and practice asking questions about the '3 F's: Family, Fun, and Future.'

These he said, will give them a deeper understanding of the person with whom they are speaking, and help them develop a solid foundation for future conversations. So instead of just asking, "How are you?" upon meeting again, they can ask, "How was that trip to Alaska with

your family?" It is a simple and relatively subtle difference, yet incredibly helpful in true relationship building.

Overall, Youth in Business Day was amazingly powerful for all involved. Adolescents need concrete experiences such as this in order to strengthen their understanding of the connection between the present and the future. For business owners, it was the perfect opportunity to make a difference in the life of a young person. What greater gift could you give to a child than a real glimpse at the future?

JENNIFER CONNELLAN IS THE CO-FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT OF FUTURE FOCUSED, WHICH HAS OFFERED HIGHLY EFFECTIVE LIFE COACHING AND TUTORING SERVICES FOR TEENAGERS SINCE 2003. SHE HAS TWO MASTER'S DEGREES IN PSYCHOLOGY AND YEARS OF EXPERIENCE DEALING WITH ADOLESCENT ISSUES. REACH HER BY EMAILING [JENNIFER@FUTUREFOCUSED.COM](mailto:JENNIFER@FUTUREFOCUSED.COM)



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