



Working Together to Make a Difference

BLAIR YOUTH PURSUIT PROGRAM LEARNS FINANCIAL LITERACY

Did you know that 84% of college graduates say that they need more help when it comes to personal finances? Or that 61% of the U.S. is living paycheck to paycheck? These are two of the statistics that the Blair Youth Pursuit students learned during their time with the Co-Op Credit Union.

On July 28th, Jackson and Jason taught seven eager to learn students about financial literacy and budgeting. This is an important topic because not many high schools or colleges teach it in their curriculum anymore.

Jackson and Jason began by asking the students questions to see what they knew and what should be focused on during the rest of the presentation. They learned about budgeting, student loans, credit scores, needs vs. wants, investments, 401k and much more.

The students were very interactive and loved learning how to manage their finances, especially by using realistic numbers such as the cost for rent and a phone bill. The credit union has online tools to help create a budget which they filled out to see how much an average person would spend on each bill. They also learned about SMART goals, which are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely and how they can relate having goals to saving money.

At the end of the presentation, they did an exercise to see what it would be like to have a family, car, student loans, bills and paying everything to get real world experience on finances. Each student was given a different salary, family living situation and number of family members to show the differences in living cost.

The students had never heard of a 401k before and they were interested to learn about saving for retirement. They also learned a lot about credit scores and how they can positively or negatively affect loans. This presentation was very beneficial to the students and they all learned a lot, especially about saving money and how much that can benefit them in the future.

With the Blair Youth Pursuit Program, there are seven high school aged students learning work skills to get them ready for a job in the future. They spend time developing a resume, understanding email etiquette, practicing interview answers and more. They learn communication, teamwork, problem solving, critical thinking, enthusiasm, attitude, networking and professionalism. All these skills are very important for a future job.

The students tour businesses to see what they are interested in and to know where they could possibly work in the future. They went to Global Finishing Solutions and Titan Air in Osseo and toured two businesses in Mondovi. They also had the opportunity to job shadow the laundry department at Mayo Clinic Health Systems in Eau Claire. The students will continue to learn a lot of valuable information for work readiness skills.