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Scholarship program announces first partnership with local business

By AARON MUDD amudd@bgdailynews.com Jun 1, 2019

KYhirED students at Service One, Matt Wininger (from left), Joanna Carey, Kira Harmon and Orhan Karamov, are pictured.

Submitted

A program that offers students the opportunity to work part time, get on-the-job experience and earn a \$1,500 college scholarship is reaching out to area businesses, and recently announced its first major partnership.

The South Central Workforce Development Board, on behalf of its KYhirED scholarship program, announced Thursday that it would be piloting the program with Service One Credit Union this summer. Through the program, four students will work in customer relations, according to the news release.

“It’s valuable to us to have those students ready to come into the workforce,” said Michelle Dyer, Service One’s vice president for human resources and organizational development.

The new partnership marks a major step in KYhirED’s development. Originally created at Western Kentucky University as the school’s Learn and Earn program, it’s since moved to the South Central Workforce Development Board. The board collects

donations and offers students scholarships for dedicating their time to a company in need of part-time employees.

For Leslie Witty, vice president for outreach and communications at the South Central Workforce Development Board, the program is about much more than a scholarship.

For one, Witty said, it's a service employers can count on for employees that have been vetted, trained and shown to have dependability and tenacity.

"They know right off the bat these candidates ... they are going to be high caliber," Witty said.

Rebecca Stone, president and CEO of Service One Credit Union, shared that view in a news release.

"The availability of an educated and skilled workforce is essential to attracting and retaining business and growing our economy. That is one reason we are so excited to partner with the new KYhirED program," she said. "The students we have hired through the program will be a great asset to our organization. We will benefit from their enthusiasm and dedication and they, in turn, will gain valuable business experience while continuing their education. I can think of no investment that would pay a more valuable dividend for the future of our workforce."

For students doing the work, it's also an opportunity to make connections and get the experience they can use to build a resume when hunting for jobs after graduation, Witty said.



Service One Credit Union also partnered with the program under its previous incarnation as the Learn and Earn program at WKU.

Melanie Hatfield, who works in Service One Credit Union’s human resources department, said the business has been impressed with the student employees the program has produced over the years.

“All of the experiences we’ve had with the students from the Learn and Earn program have been great,” Hatfield said.

More information about KYhirED is available online at kyhired.com.

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Aaron Mudd

Education reporter. Covers education and related issues, focusing primarily on the Bowling Green and Warren County public school districts and Western Kentucky University.

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