

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **190 High School Students Participate in a Career Pathway Day**

On Monday, April 24, Grays Harbor Youth Works, Greater Grays Harbor, Inc., Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee, and Grays Harbor College worked together to provide North Beach and Lake Quinault High School students with participating in a Career Pathway Day,

Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council (PMWDC) awarded two high impact grants to two organizations in each county under their jurisdiction. Those counties are Grays Harbor, Mason, Lewis, Thurston, and Pacific. The two organizations awarded in Grays Harbor were Coastal Community Action Program and Grays Harbor Youth Works. Coastal Community Action Program's grant focused on employment for low income families. Grants from Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council (PMWDC) and Greater Grays Harbor, Inc. provided Grays Harbor Youth Works Board with the funds to work with rural schools identified by PMWDC serving fewer than 900 students and with diverse populations. North Beach and Lake Quinault High Schools were identified by PMWDC in our county.

Grays Harbor Youth Works mission is to engage and transform Grays Harbor Youth through internships with businesses, nonprofits, and public sector organizations, throughout the county, and encourage them to pursue post-secondary and livable wage jobs. Since 2013, they have placed 100 students with internships county-wide. Seventy percent of those students were seniors where 60% did choose post-secondary education. Thirty of these interns were juniors where six returned in their senior year to repeat the experience; Rachel Wiechelman was one of those who returned. Rachel attended Aberdeen High School and was assigned to Domestic Violence Center of Grays Harbor. As a senior, she was assigned to Department of Public Health and Human Services. Rachel said, "Both experiences inspired me to follow a career in Health Education." Today she is attending Grays Harbor College and has a place on Grays Harbor Youth Works Board.

The Career Pathway Day will begin at Grays Harbor College with two speakers Julie Skokan, TRIO Programs that is heavily involved in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM); and Matt Holder from the IT Department. Both will talk about today's industry, what types of jobs are available in each area, and what it takes to acquire those positions. The students will go to their assigned buses to companies they selected for their career pathway. The participating companies are Grays Harbor PUD, Sierra Pacific, Grays Harbor Community Hospital, Grays Harbor Historical Seaport Authority, and Hesco Armor, LLC. These companies will provide the students with promotional materials about their organization, historical perspective, types of positions in their company, what they look for in skills, experience, and education. They will then provide a tour of the facility and make time for questions. The students will return to Grays Harbor College for lunch and wrap-up before heading back to school.

Special thanks to the Port of Grays Harbor and all the companies that opened their doors to Grays Harbor County youth.

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