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Work-Based Learning Benefits Students and Employers



By Carolyn Drinkard

[Haley Amos](#) employed by dentist Dr. Randy Walters. The [Work-Based Learning Program](#) at [Thomasville High School](#) is a component of [Career Technical Education](#). The program has enrolled 67 students this year, with paid on-the-job training and voluntary internships.

For [Work-Based Learning](#) to succeed, students must be able to find jobs. Employers have stepped forward to hire these students because the students are a good investment. These students have skills that lead to higher efficiency and create a better trained workforce, which, in turn, encourages business growth and productivity. For the Thomasville community, students in Work-Based Learning pump much needed tax revenue into the local economy. In fact, state reports have shown that Thomasville's Work-Based Learning students added over a quarter of a million dollars to the local economy last year.

"The Work-Based Learning program is an example of what makes Thomasville great," said [Chuck Alford](#), principal at THS. "The cooperative effort between school and community offers our students work experience and training that will benefit them long after their high school days."



[Drue Lyles](#) is interning for [Dr. Huey Kidd](#) and his staff. [Ernest Curry](#) of Walgreens says that his participation in the program has been a "win-win" experience. "This program has been a God-send for our business. The quality of students that we get is very high. Our customers know these kids, and they have relationships with them and support them. I feel like we're working with the community to mold the future of these youngsters, and this is what our country needs to do!"

[Gina Wilson](#), Director of the [Thomasville Public Library](#), agrees. One of her past volunteers has now earned a Master's in Library Science from the [University of Alabama](#). Two of her former workers have found college jobs, based on their work experiences in Thomasville. One is working at the University of Alabama Library and the other is at the Auburn University Library.

"We have loved each student that has worked here," said Wilson. "They bring a fresh perspective to our staff. Also, our customers enjoy seeing those THS shirts here in the library. I would encourage any employer to use these students."

[Kay Larrimore](#), who has been honored for her management of the local program, stated, "There are so many great employers in Thomasville, who, along with our hard working students, have made this program a success! The students do what they are supposed to, and they work very hard. I have to say that the businesses in our community and our students are the keys to the success of Thomasville High School's Work-Based Learning Program."

The Program also offers benefits to [Thomasville City Schools](#). Work-Based Learning experiences invigorate learning, and students in the program are more likely to stay in school and graduate.

The Work-Based Learning Program offers many benefits for everyone involved. "We are so excited to give these students the opportunity to participate in this program," added Chuck Alford.

For more information about the program call the Career Technical Director's office at 334-636-4451 or visit www.thomasvilleschools.org. [Carolyn Drinkard](#) is a retired former employee of the Thomasville school system, and is currently under contract to provide public relations services for the school system.