

MEDIA RELEASE

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Technology Mentorship Program

A group of Ephrata High School students is participating in *ESPORTS EXPLORE!* - a new technology mentorship program offered through a partnership between the Lancaster Chamber and Emerald Foundation. Students who participate on the EHS eSports team or have an interest in computer science are eligible to participate, which is why EHS juniors Sam Hall, Will Ludwig, Nick Shubinsky, and Aaron Warner decided to get involved.

The students initially took a survey and provided a brief overview of their interests before being paired up with their mentors, who work locally in the fields of computer science and technology. "The goal was to pair mentors with students who had similar interests and strengths," explained Mr. Greg LoPiccolo, EHS teacher and program advisor.

Meaningful relationships have formed during the weekly meetings that are benefiting both the students and the mentors. "My mentor is a software engineer, and we have so much in common," shared Will. Sam added, "My mentor and I are both into gaming, and it just feels like our personalities are on the same level." In addition to making personal connections, the students have been able to gain first-hand experience and directly assist their mentors with tasks, including website development and writing code. "My mentor's profession is focused around software, so I've actually been able to teach him some things about taking apart and building computers," Aaron said.

The mentorships are also having an impact on students' paths after high school. Nick was not sure he wanted to attend college and discussed post-high school options with his mentor, "The response was very blunt. He flat out told me, the sooner you start, the better you'll be, especially when it comes to scholarships." Nick is now strongly considering several universities and plans to continue meeting with his mentor on a regular basis after the formal mentorship ends.

Students credit several opportunities provided at EHS as stepping-stones to the mentorship. "If it was not for Mounts Tech Support (MTS), I wouldn't be involved in computers, which is what led me to where I am today," Aaron said. Sam says, "EHS teachers, like Mr. LoPiccolo, connect with us on a personal level to understand our likes and dislikes. Being on the eSports teams kickstarted my interest in computers and being accepted to the computer science technology program at CTC next year. This has been pivotal in me deciding to pursue computer science as a career."

This unique mentorship program is currently being piloted in a few Lancaster County school districts, but the EHS students see the value and hope it continues to grow. "Programs like this give students like us a head start. These opportunities help us focus on what we want to accomplish in the future," Nick said.



*Pictured left to right:
Sam Hall, Nick Shubinsky,
Will Ludwig, and
Aaron Warner*