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## GPP Recognized as Model Program for Experiential Learning



Carl Vinson  
Institute of Government  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

The Carl Vinson Institute at UGA has recognized Great Promise Partnership as one of 19 outstanding experiential learning programs from across Georgia and the United States. The new guide,

***Creating and Replicating High-Quality Experiential Learning Opportunities: A Guide for Businesses and Schools***, helps business and school leaders partner to start a high quality program and build talent pathways in their communities.

Experiential learning, sometimes called work-based learning (WBL), includes internships, apprenticeships, business tours, and job shadowing, just to name a few. The study identifies several positive effects on students from experiential learning, including:

- Students are less likely to drop out and more likely to graduate from high school. (In Georgia, the graduation rate for WBL students is 99.5 %.)
- WBL students miss fewer days of school.
- They have more confidence in their ability to pursue higher education.
- They have a higher level of engagement with potential career pathways.
- They have a slightly higher grade point average.
- At-risk students are more likely to establish postsecondary education plans if they are involved in experiential learning.



The Great Promise Partnership model was singled out as a solution to address the fact that experiential learning programs are not always equally available to all students. For example, students may have to provide their own transportation or have an unblemished discipline record to participate in experiential learning programs. The GPP case study outlines how Georgia school districts and

businesses can provide high-quality opportunities to at-risk students.

Check out [www.gaworkforce.org/EXPLEARNING](http://www.gaworkforce.org/EXPLEARNING) to read about model youth programs. To explore ways to bring Great Promise Partnership to your community, contact us at [info@gpppartnership.org](mailto:info@gpppartnership.org).

Source: CREATING AND REPLICATING HIGH-QUALITY EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES: A GUIDE FOR BUSINESSES AND SCHOOLS, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia. March 2019



## GPP Leadership Day at the Capitol

More than 100 high school students from around the state converged on the Georgia State Capitol for Great Promise Partnership (GPP) Leadership Day at the Capitol in February. Students were greeted by Governor Brian Kemp and were welcomed to the Capitol by state Senator Bruce Thompson and Representatives Bee Nguyen, Marcus Wiedower and Houston Gaines. GPP Board Member Ann Cramer and Andrea Harper representing the Georgia Association of Manufacturers were also on hand to welcome the students.



Senator Thompson read Senate Resolution 31 recognizing and commending Great Promise Partnership for providing educational support and work experience to students across Georgia. In photo (L), Lt. Governor Geoff Duncan, GPP Regional Coordinator Janet Queen, and GPP Executive Director Lori Heemann join Senator Thompson after the presentation of the Resolution.

After students visited the Capitol and met with legislators from their communities, Audrey Maloof, a legislative aide to Congressman John Lewis, spoke about ways teens can participate in the democratic process including registering to vote, advocating for a cause in their communities, and staying informed about issues that shape their world. Willie Craddick Jr. (R), a graduate of Cedar Shoals High School in Athens and GPP alum, shared his journey through family challenges to success as an author of two books and now a freshman at Georgia State University.



“Great Promise Partnership is a win-win scenario for students, employers and the communities around the state. We’re excited to work with Governor Kemp, legislators and others at the Capitol to continue giving all students a chance to get

involved in their government and become full participants in Georgia's economy," said GPP Executive Director Lori Heemann.

## Mentoring Makes a Difference: The Carrier Transicold Experience



Teens have a lot on their plates – How can I pass that math test? What will I do after high school? I just broke up with my girlfriend. Students can talk with parents about challenges, but Great Promise Partnership provides another resource: mentors. Workplace mentoring is one of the three components

of GPP, along with part-time employment and learning life skills.

Carrier Transicold, an Athens manufacturer of refrigerated units for 18-wheelers, has enthusiastically embraced mentoring GPP students since 2014. The company hires students from **Clarke Central, Cedar Shoals and Classic City High Schools** to work several shifts, including some that begin at 5 AM. Employees volunteer to mentor students each week. Some of the stories shared in a recent conversation with employees and students included:

- One mentor delayed her retirement to make sure a GPP student finished high school.
- Mentors routinely attend high school graduation for their student mentees, celebrating the achievement that came with many challenges.
- Employees at Carrier Transicold found out one student was trying to learn to drive from a YouTube video. They stepped in, helped her practice driving, and she passed her test!
- Even though each student has an official mentor, 5 or 6 other employees make sure to check in with students about work and school, and help make sure students succeed.

GPP  
students  
and Carrier  
Transicold  
employees  
Adriane  
Jones and

### Benefits of Quality Mentoring

Research has shown that quality mentoring makes a difference for students, employees and the company's bottom line:

#### Employer

- Increases employee satisfaction
- Increases productivity and reduces turnover
- Attracts more qualified job candidates for open positions
- Helps develop the workplace of tomorrow
- Increases community support of company

#### Mentors

- Increased self-esteem
- A sense of accomplishment
- Creation of networks of volunteers
- Increased patience and improved supervisory skills

Ralph David (R) found their mentors one of the best parts of their jobs. Both students are seniors



and in their second year at the company. They talked about how their mentors were great listeners about college and career decisions. Ralph said his mentor and supervisor "are always pushing me and helping me to follow my heart and dreams." Adriane shared this advice from her mentor, "Nothing beats failure but a try."

Emily Michelbach, Manager of Human Resources for the Athens plant, said, "Every young person deserves a chance. So many companies say, 'We can't hire you because you don't have experience. Well, we're giving them the experience and I think that's awesome. These are good kids that have struggled for various reasons. They make the choice to work at the plant half a day and go to school half a day."

Hilda Garrison, GPP Regional Coordinator for NE Georgia and Wesley Mellina, Workforce Development Coordinator at the Athens Community Career Academy, support mentors and students every step of the way to ensure success. As Ms. Michelbach says, "It's a partnership between us, the families, and the schools."

If you'd like more information on how quality mentoring can benefit your employees and students, contact your GPP Regional Coordinator or email [info@gpppartnership.org](mailto:info@gpppartnership.org).

## Students

- Increased high school graduation rates and lower dropout rates
- Healthier relationships and lifestyle choices
- Better attitude about school
- Higher college enrollment rates and educational aspirations
- Enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence
- Improved behavior, both at home and at school
- Stronger relationships with parents, teachers, and peers
- Improved interpersonal skills
- Decreased likelihood of initiating drug and alcohol use

Sources: [www.youth.org](http://www.youth.org), The National Mentoring Partnership 2018, The Role of Risk, Mentoring: At the crossroads of education, business and community 2013, Mentor Scout 2018



Welcome new GPP employer, ***The Elberton Star***. *The Elberton Star* is published with pride by Community Newspapers, Inc., headquartered in Athens, Ga. The company's mission states that "We believe strong newspapers build strong communities." We feel the same way about GPP!

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## Need More Info?

Lori Heemann, Executive Director, [lori@gpppartnership.org](mailto:lori@gpppartnership.org), 404-694-0328

Heather Flury, Staff/Site Support



Specialist, [heather@gppartnership.org](mailto:heather@gppartnership.org), 404-229-1677

**Regional Coordinators**

**Hilda Garrison**, NE GA, [hilda@gppartnership.org](mailto:hilda@gppartnership.org), 706-362-7078

**Devaki Gordon**, SE GA, [devaki@gppartnership.org](mailto:devaki@gppartnership.org), 404-694-7142

**Janet Queen**, NW GA, [janet@gppartnership.org](mailto:janet@gppartnership.org), 770-842-8153

**Ann Shirra**, Metro ATL/Middle GA, [ann@gppartnership.org](mailto:ann@gppartnership.org), 614-530-0705

**Marvin Stafford**, SE GA, [marvin@gppartnership.org](mailto:marvin@gppartnership.org), 912-309-2831

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[info@gppartnership.org](mailto:info@gppartnership.org)



404-229-1677



P.O. Box 1647  
Decatur, Georgia 30031

