

Counselor's Corner

Career Day

Several doctors, nurses, lawyers, engineers, pilots, professors, scientists, diplomats, videographers, accountants, bankers, entrepreneurs and other professionals went back to school last Friday. They went back as a way to give back. They participated in George Walton's second annual Career Day, organized by the College Counseling Department.

College should not be seen as a destination, but as a step in a larger journey. Going to college is an expensive proposition and it is important that students go with a clearly defined purpose in mind. Career Day is meant to help students learn about different careers and identify some that interest them.

Last year, the College Counseling Department planned to organize lunch-time presentations, but received such a positive response from people wanting to participate, they decided to host them all on the same day. Michael Clancy, Director of College Counseling, said, "Career fairs that are a series of booths in a gymnasium do not seem to be effective. They allow students to wander, sometimes aimlessly. Enabling them spend ten to twenty minutes listening to someone tell them about a typical day in their career and how they got to where they are now is more memorable and meaningful."

This year's Career Day kicked off with a keynote address from Dessa Morris, Workforce Development Director for the Development Authority of Walton County, and Ben Stout, Senior Field Coordinator for U.S. Congressman Jody Hice. Mr. Stout said agriculture is still Georgia's economic driver, but the state's economy is quickly diversifying. Not only did Georgia rank number one in feature film production, but 70% of all payment transactions in the USA take place in Georgia. In addition to the financial services and film industries, high tech manufacturing in aerospace and pharmaceuticals will also see healthy growth in the coming decade.

Mrs. Morris focused her part of the presentation on Walton and the surrounding counties. She said the population of Walton County was increasing and aging. In addition to the industries Mr. Stout mentioned, careers in health care are also expected to grow. To make Walton County more attractive to younger residents, she said efforts are underway to make the various downtowns more attractive to younger people. Her message to the crowd was, "Go to college, see the world, and come back to Walton County."

Students then went on to attend a series of four 30-minute presentations. There were close to forty presentations from which to choose. A student could attend four related presentations or sample one from a variety of professions. Mark Mitrulescu, a junior, already knows he is interested in business and signed up for the business-related presentations, such as *Business & Accounting*, *Banking & Finance*, *Mergers & Acquisitions*, and *Supply Chain Management*. Mark said he "liked learning about all the different opportunities in the field of business."

Natalie Dally, a sophomore, sampled a wider variety of presentations. She liked *Better Money Habits* because it helped her plan long term and the *Entrepreneurship, Photography and Video Production* showed her it is possible to make a living doing what you love and the benefits of being one's own boss.

Will Gregg III, a senior, said last year he chose a topic he had never heard of before, *Supply Chain Management*. He said it appealed to him and now it is what he intends to pursue in college. This year he

went to the panel discussion on supply chain management, and said, "I felt like I discovered what I want to do."

Mr. Clancy said, "I would love for everyone to have an experience like Will's; however, I don't expect everyone's experience to be that profound. I just hope everyone learned something they didn't know before."

He also went on to say how grateful he is to all the people who gave up a day to share their knowledge with the students of George Walton. "It would not have been possible without them," he said.