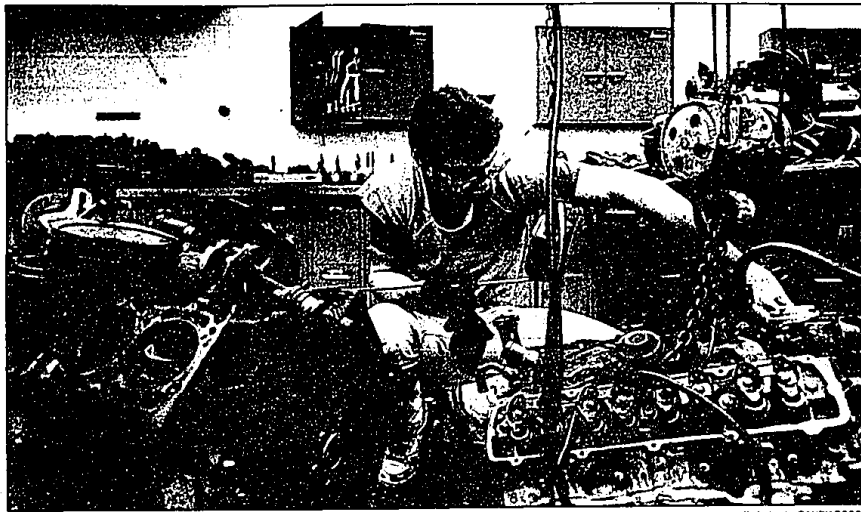




Schools help give grads working skills



staff photo by RANDY BORST

Complex tasks such as engine rebuilding are tackled in the auto mechanics class at Harrison High. Here, Deone Couch, a 16-year-old junior, begins work on an engine block.

By Casey Hana
staff writer

More than 30 programs are available to Farmington-area high school students to learn the skills for an increasingly competitive world. "I believe all youngsters who graduate should have a marketable skill," said Earl Baumunk, director of the Farmington district's vocational/technical program. Baumunk puts an equal emphasis on academics and skill-building

classes, whether or not students plan to continue their education.

Skill-building classes are currently elective in Farmington, competing with other electives and academic graduation requirements, which have increased during the past few years. Marketing, diesel and auto mechanics, floral design, food service, parenting and interior design are just a few of the courses designed to

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Electronics teacher Richard Burgess helps students Colin Earles (left) and Steve Banchoero test translators in the Farmington High class.

Voc ed called integral part of schooling

By Casey Hana
staff writer

Without an opportunity to take both academic and vocational offerings in high school, the future could be a rocky road for some students, according to one local expert in the vocational education field. Students "could very easily leave themselves up in the air," said Earl Baumunk, director of vocational/

technical education for the Farmington district.

He believes in an "equal choice and access" for students in the skill-related classes he has coordinated during the past 23 years. Each student, graduating, whether college-bound or not, should have developed some sort of skill, he said.

"We don't want a separate program, we don't want to be equal, or subordinate, just an integral part of

the program," he added.

Baumunk and his counterparts throughout the country are facing an uphill battle, as pressures mount for improved academics, and school districts act to increase academic graduation requirements.

Much of the emphasis on academics has come from reports such as "The Nation at Risk" in 1983, which criticized the route public education was taking in America.

IT HAS also left hands-on programs such as clerical, marketing, co-op work/study, life management and mechanical lagging behind as students struggle to study what teachers, counselors and parents believe are the "right" classes to guide them into the future.

In Farmington, high school science requirements were recently in-

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Inkwell provides primary and secondary school news and information about Farmington-area students. The column appears monthly throughout the year as part of the Observer's "School Page." Send news items to: The School Page, Farmington Observer, 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024. Include a telephone number where a person can be reached during the day.

• A LIFESAVER

A Harrison High graduate and former football player, Rob Smigelski, recently saved the life of an Alma College associate dean who was choking during a meeting of fraternity presidents.

Smigelski, president of the Sigma Chi chapter at Alma, saw Herb Nauss's "head bobbing up and down" from across the meeting room, according to an account in the college newspaper. He hit Nauss on the back twice without response, then attempted the Heimlich maneuver, an emergency rescue skill for choking victims, without success.

Smigelski then reached into Nauss' throat to remove some pizza that had lodged there, causing the associate dean to cough and ultimately reviving him.

Smigelski said he had some training in this sort of emergency response through a class with the Farmington Hills Fire Department and through a student management seminar.

• STUDENT SIGNUP

Registration for all kindergartners has been scheduled from March 7-11 at all Farmington elementary schools and early childhood centers, according to information from Farmington Public Schools. Any Farmington school district child who will be 5 years old on or before Dec. 1, 1988, can be enrolled at one of the following schools: Beechview, Eagle, Flinders, Forest, Gili, Kenbrook, Larkshire, Longacre, William Grace, Wood Creek and Wooddale elementaries, or Fairview or Alameda early childhood centers. Kindergarten orientation is scheduled for May 13.

• ART COMPETITION

The third annual Art Competition for High School Artists, sponsored by

the Farmington Area Arts Commission, is scheduled for March 24.

Prizes from \$50 to \$200 will be awarded to the winning Farmington school district students who are eligible. Both two and three dimensional work will be accepted in the competition.

Applications are due by March 21 and are available at school offices.

• TOPS IN MATH

Seven Harrison High School students placed in the finals for the Michigan Math Competition, according to information from the Farmington Hills school.

Neal Blatt, James Cannon, Michelle Orell, Dave King, A. Parnes, Todd Rumpas and Wes Woodall placed.

Blatt placed third in the Southfield-based Lawrence Institute of Technology Math Competition in 1987, winning a savings bond, and also ranked in the top 100 in the state for the 1987 Michigan Math Competition. In addition, Harrison placed 20th in the state of all Michigan high schools in the American Math Competition in 1987.

• BUSY WINTER

Students from Evelyn Kaplan's class at Larkshire Elementary recently entered the Daughters of the American Revolution Junior American Citizens Contest, choosing "We Help America" as their theme.

Probably most exciting for the Farmington Hills kids this month was a recent "thank you" letter from Platon Isiah Thomas, for their involvement in a Detroit Edison Safety Contest.

• EARLY ADMISSION

Christopher Gilinski, a student at Detroit Country Day School in Beverly Hills and a Farmington Hills resident, earned the honor of early admission to the Wharton School of Business and the University of Pennsylvania.

• SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

Jeff Black, a senior at North Farmington High School, was recently awarded a \$10,000 scholar-

ship by the school of engineering at the University of Evansville in Indiana. He plans to study electrical engineering and computer science.

Black was the Farmington Observer "carrier of the year" for 1987.

• CUDDLE TIME

Students at Larkshire Elementary are planning a "bear rally" during the month of February.

The Farmington Hills kids will bring in a favorite teddy bear, do creative writing, find facts on bears, read bear books, solve word puzzles, sing bear songs and even have a bear parade. "We should have a heavy good time," said one teacher.

• HOSTS NEEDED

Host families are needed for approximately 55 youth and five adults from a Japanese exchange program for one month this summer. They will be in Michigan in July and August.

The Japanese youths are between 12-18 years old, with the largest percentage of students in the 12- to 14-year-old range. There are roughly equal numbers of boys and girls.

Host families must have a child of the same sex and approximately the same age as the member they are hosting.

For more details, call the Oakland County 4-H Agent at 858-0889.

• DIPLOMAS EARNED

Two Farmington-area residents have completed requirements for high school graduation, and have been awarded diplomas.

Mary Kathryn Stitzel and Roy Parker each received diplomas through the Farmington school district.

• 15 APPOINTED

Fifteen new employees were hired recently by the Farmington school board.

They are: Cheryl Hoemke, Larkshire secretary; Rose Marie Malloy, paraprofessional at Longacre; Nena Portnoy, secretary for Maintenance and Operations Department; and Loretta Zdyrak, paraprofessional for Alameda developmental kindergarten program. All were hired in January.

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