



NJDOE News

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Mentor Program Leaders from East Coast will Train New Jersey Volunteers

Program managers of a non-profit national mentoring program from 11 states will gather in Newark on Friday, October 15, for a one-day training conference. The program, called CHOICES, sends volunteers from business and industry into classrooms to help middle and high school students make decisions now that will help their careers later in life.

"I welcome the CHOICES program managers to New Jersey for this special day of training," said Commissioner of Education David Hespe. "New Jersey students are bound to benefit from the efforts of volunteer trainers who attend Friday's conference."

The CHOICES leaders will meet at Rutgers-Newark. Program participants include John Mahoney, regional representative of the United States Department of Education, and Leo Muller, executive director of the national CHOICES program. In addition, Allwyn Baskin of the Office of School to Career Initiatives, New Jersey Department of Education, will highlight state-level initiatives to prepare all students for successful lives after high school.

CHOICES is an employer-sponsored activity in which employees are given time to visit classrooms for two consecutive days to talk with students about the importance of making good decisions involving academic performance. Students are challenged to face their future career options based on the level of education they achieve, as well as the impact their choices will have on others. Classroom discussions center on topics such as time management and money management. Students who complete the two-day classroom sessions are given a "Key to Success" for their lives and their futures.

CHOICES leaders on Friday will train an estimated 52 volunteers from employer sponsors for New Jersey schools. The sponsors include Federal Express, United Parcel Service and Wakefern / Shop Rite.

"Thanks to the generosity of UPS, we have students in 57 schools who will be able to participate in the CHOICES program, and we are very excited about that prospect," said Antoinette Ryals, School to Careers project director for the Newark Public Schools.

CHOICES is a program of the US WEST Education Foundation, a nonprofit public charity. Since its inception in 1985, the foundation and its sponsors have reached nearly 5 million students in the United States and abroad.