

THE



Whitko Career Academy

Celebrating opportunities for  
Whitko Career Academy  
students with the community

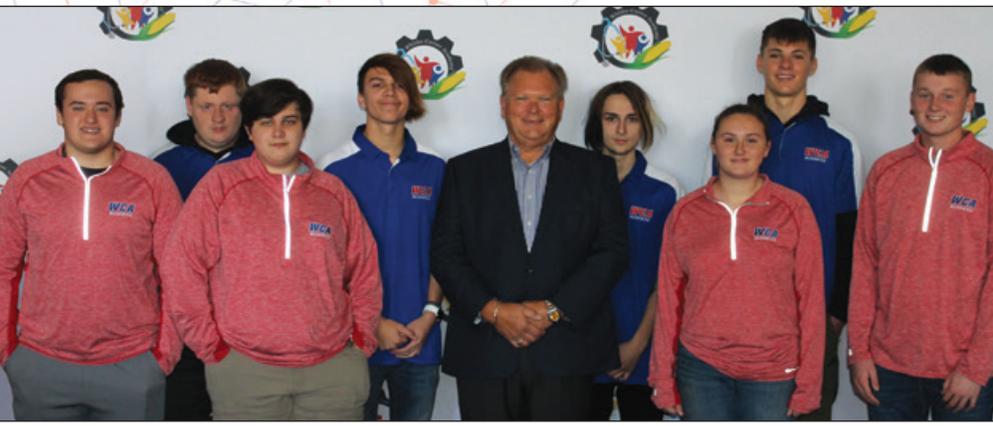
# EXPERIENCE

2021-22



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Tim Pivarnik, Superintendent of Whitko Community Schools, pictured above with WCA Business students (left to right) Dalton Ousley, Walker Miller, Bailey Bumgardner, Gavyn Alexander, Sean Blaine, Stephanie Miller, Slater Craig, and Blake Schroeder. As part of their class, the students regularly host a podcast featuring the superintendent. To listen to the podcast search YouTube for WCA Business.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Now in its second year of operations, the Whitko Career Academy (WCA) continues to attract new students and is growing rapidly with enrollment up nearly 20% from last year. The WCA is proving to be a facility that provides the career pathways necessary to give our students an edge when they apply for employment in the career field of their choice.

Whitko graduates who have attended the academy leave with work experience, certifications in their career field, exposed to industry standards and techniques and are ready to work from the employability skills, safety awareness and professional practices they've learned and earned.

The Whitko Career Academy differs from other centers in that we offer 14 career class choices. Our pathway curriculum offers exploratory classes to junior high students. High school students in grades 10 to 12 follow a career path of their choice.

The academy's project-based learning opportunities are led by staff members who are well-versed in current industry standards, offering a positive workplace-like environment to succeed while creating rigorous and relevant projects.

Each day, our students engage in a hands-on environment that generates relationship building, strategy, and trust leading to business partnerships that allow students to have real work experiences. When successfully completed they're prepared for high-wage, high-skill, in-demand careers.

**Timothy A. Pivarnik Ed.S.**  
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### ON THE COVER

WCA Business student Dalton Ousley and Culinary Arts student Eli Thompson show off freshly decorated sugar cookies. Seasonal sugar cookies are the main item offered by the Cat Attack Bakery.



## CONTACT WCA



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## CONNECT WITH WCA

whitkocareeracademy.org

FACEBOOK: Whitko Career Academy

TWITTER: @WhitkoWCA

INSTAGRAM: @whitkowca

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

Lynn Studebaker, *President*  
Bill Patrick, *Vice-President*  
Annette Arnold, *Secretary*  
Georgia Tenney, *Member*  
Scott Werstler, *Member*

*The Whitko Career Academy Experience* is a publication of Whitko Career Academy. It strives to communicate and celebrate opportunities for Whitko students with the residents of Whitko Community School Corporation.

DESIGN: Katie Brown,  
WHS Class of '95



## Alumni Start

# COLLEGE and a CAREER

Front row: Aiden Hoffman and Morgan Miller. Back row: Brian Rothgeb of OmniSource, Kim Waugh of Ivy Tech Community College Fort Wayne & Warsaw, and Joe McCune of Fort Wayne Metals. Pictured January 28, 2021.

WCA Director Joe Luce welcomed students, guests, and representatives from Ivy Tech Community College of Fort Wayne and Warsaw, Fort Wayne Metals, and OmniSource to the career academy auditorium on Thursday, January 28, 2021, for the Northeast Indiana Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (NEINFAME) signing day. Seniors Aiden Hoffman and Morgan Miller were both recognized as being accepted into a cohort of students who are now pursuing an associate degree in Industrial Technology while working for a NEINFAME sponsor company.

### BEYOND GRADUATION

After graduating from high school this past June, Aiden immediately began work at his sponsor company, OmniSource, while Morgan started her experience at Fort Wayne Metals. When college classes began in August, they joined their cohort of students at Ivy Tech Community College of Fort Wayne and currently attend classes two full days a week while working three days a week. Aiden and Morgan are on track to graduate, debt-free, in the spring of 2023. According to Aiden, “It is really nice to have a paying job while going to school. And the school work applies to what I’m doing at work.” He also stated, “The career

academy helped me out a lot. It gave me a year to figure out that this [manufacturing] is what I like. The career academy also increased my work ethic.”

Morgan would agree, sharing that “The career academy gave me a definite advantage. The classes I took in manufacturing and welding helped me learn what I liked, and I went into my job already knowing how to operate machinery and weld.” Morgan continues, “Working at Fort Wayne Metals is the best job I have ever had and is a great work environment. I will eventually be training future cohorts.”

***“The career academy gave me a definite advantage. The classes I took in manufacturing and welding helped me learn what I liked, and I went into my job already knowing how to operate machinery and weld.” - Morgan Miller***

Morgan encourages other students to “go in with an open mind and don’t be afraid to try something new.” While Aiden adds, “if you want to get into a field where you get dirty and work with your hands, the program [NEINFAME] is a great opportunity.” ●

# Connecting Industry to the Classroom



Colton Snapp participates in the Work Based Learning related class while instructor Sandy Benedict looks on.



Whitko Jr/Sr High School's Work Based Learning Program offers students the opportunity to learn about a profession by connecting real business/industry training with an employment based classroom curriculum. We focus on helping our students explore, plan, and prepare for their next move after high school. Work Based Learning (WBL) is supervised by the coordinators, Sandy Benedict and Rebekah Mitchell, along with the employers to assist the students to be college and career ready in a field related to the student's career interest. The WBL experience contributes to a student's education and employability.

Whitko Jr/Sr High School's Work Based Learning Program is available for seniors to apply. The WBL Program is a full year course with classes scheduled in the morning or afternoon while working 15 hours on average per week. This work experience can be paid or unpaid. When the student is a junior and signing up for senior year classes, students interested will complete an application to

the WBL Program. Once the student is accepted, there are contracts that all four parties (employer, parent/guardian, student, coordinator) will sign before starting the WBL journey. If a student is needing any assistance with securing a job, the coordinator will help guide them to available employment in the career interest of their choice. The surrounding business employers are committed to partnering with Whitko students by mentoring our students' journey into the world of employment.

Once the student is employed, important documents are agreed upon and signed. Each student creates a training plan with their employer/mentor that is designed specifically for that student. The training plan includes goals that have been agreed-upon with student and mentor. The training plan will help the student develop and increase the necessary skills throughout the employment. The training plan is a working document that mentors and students refer to often.



Work Based Learning student Jacob Porter is employed by Paragon Medical (pictured at left), while student Laura Jackson works at Fox Products (pictured below).



The Work Based Learning related class is directly related to a relevant curriculum placing emphasis on: career exploration, employability skills, employment search, success in the workplace, and personal financial responsibility.

Students will develop employability skills, positive work ethic, work habits, self-confidence, employment awareness, and marketable skills to ensure success in the workplace. Various classroom lessons are designed to give the classroom learning experience a more relevant and meaningful result. A good part of their grade is the employer/mentor performance evaluation. Each student will be evaluated every 9 weeks using a rubric provided to them that addresses work based characteristics.

Students participating in the Work Based Learning Program will reap rewards bigger than just a paycheck. The participating employers are committed to providing the necessary knowledge of workplace expectations with

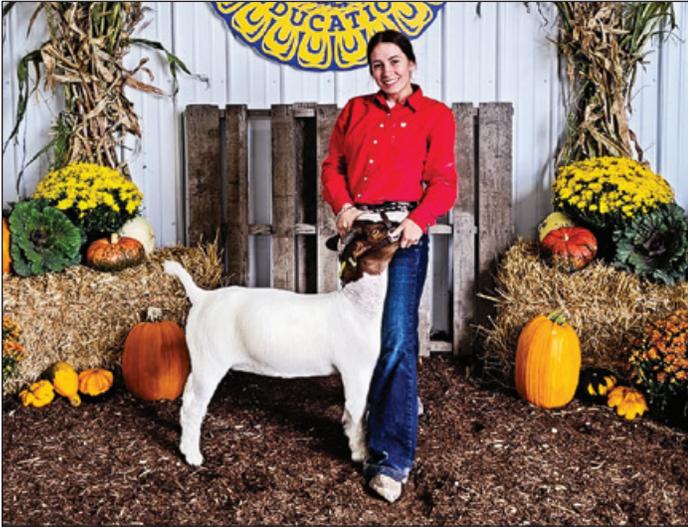
the guidance and encouragement so that our students successfully enter the workforce after graduation. Students learn and master new employability skills that give them the confidence to improve on their employer-employee relationships and increase their career opportunities that will open more doors in the future. Many students find a job in their career focus through WBL that leads to advancement in that company for many years to come! ●

*To learn more about the Work Based Learning Program at Whitko Jr/Sr High School, contact:*

Sandy Benedict  
Work Based Learning Specialist  
Whitko Career Academy

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# STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS



Top left: WCA has been host to several events this past year including the Wildcat Cup Classic Goat & Sheep Show (pictured), Whitko Jr/Sr High School Prom, and a weekly Guest Speaker Series hosted by College & Careers.

Top right: Culinary Arts students cater events, create box lunches, and provide freshly baked items for special events. A recent collaboration with WCA Business students led to the formulation of the Cat Attack Bakery.

Above: Led by Ashley Roberts, Cybersecurity is an exciting new Career Focus opportunity offered to students.

At left: Early Childhood Education students regularly assist with the Little Cats Early Learning Center.

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

KARLA YEAGER began working for Whitko Community Schools in July 2000 as the Treasurer at Whitko Middle School. When the Middle School and High School merged in 2018, she became the Administrative Assistant/Athletic Secretary for Whitko Jr/Sr High School. In January 2021, Karla had the opportunity to return to the Larwill Campus and become the Administrative Assistant/Treasurer at Whitko Career Academy. Karla states, "I am so honored to be part of this amazing opportunity for our Whitko students and our community."



## WCA INSTRUCTORS & STAFF

NEIL BAMMERLIN - Precision Machining

CHRIS BENEDICT - Director of Alternative Education/Corporation Scheduling Coordinator

SANDY BENEDICT - Work Based Learning Specialist/WCA Assistant Director

JIM BUMBAUGH - Transportation Team Director

LAUREN COOPER - Special Education

MAX CORLE - Alternative Education Aid

HAYLEE COYLE - Instructional Assistant

TAMMY COYLE-WALTER - Health Science

CHAD DAHMS - Advanced Manufacturing/ Tool Room

MATT DAHMS - Consultant

MATT DICE - Agriculture

JOEL FRANK - Custodian

DANNY GERBERS - Custodian

JADE HOLLENBAUGH - Precision Machining

ANGIE IRWIN - Early Childhood Education & Education Professionals

JOHNATHAN IRWIN - Alternative Education Aid

MELISSA LITTLE - Business

JOE LUCE - WCA Director

DON MCCUNE - Criminal Justice

REBEKAH MITCHELL - College & Careers/ Work Based Learning

JAY OCKEN - Welding Technology

BRAXTON O'HAVER - Construction Trades

JAMIE PAINO - Little Cats Early Learning Center Director

CASSANDRA PENROD - Agriculture

MALLERY PIERCE - Culinary Arts

TRACY RHODES - Special Education Aid

RON RIDER - Custodian

ASHLEY ROBERTS - College & Careers/ Cybersecurity

KELLEY SHEISS - Agriculture

GRACEY SLINKER - Receptionist

DERREK SORG - Engineering & Design/PLTW

DONALD STONE - Special Education & Blue Team Director

WCA TRANSPORTATION TEAM

KARLA YEAGER - Administrative Assistant



WHITKO CAREER ACADEMY  
710 North State Road 5  
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*It's time for you to experience  
Whitko Career Academy!*

ASK A QUESTION

REQUEST A TOUR

ENROLL AT WHITKO JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL

☎ 260-327-3603    ✉ [joe.luce@whitko.org](mailto:joe.luce@whitko.org)  
[whitkocareeracademy.org](http://whitkocareeracademy.org)

Career Focus classes offer sophomore through senior students the opportunity to choose a more concentrated area of study. WCA Criminal Justice students pictured at left.

## WHITKO ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



Do you know the Whitko Alumni Association has a home at Whitko Career Academy? Memorabilia from days gone by are on display along Alumni Hall and an Alumni Room is currently in progress. It's a goal of the Whitko Alumni Association to preserve and celebrate Whitko history by sharing their collection of memorabilia from Whitko Jr/Sr High School and Whitko High School as well as the Larwill, Pierceton, Sidney, and South Whitley community schools.

The Whitko Alumni Association can be contacted by email at [whitko.alumni@whitko.org](mailto:whitko.alumni@whitko.org).