

Geneva 2030 hosted its 2nd annual *What's Next?* College and Career program for Geneva juniors and seniors the week of June 26th.

What's Next?, formerly HWS Summer Academy, is sponsored by Geneva 2030, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, and Finger Lakes Community College. The three main goals for "What's Next?" are to help Geneva High School students 1) identify their strengths, values, and interests; 2) explore possible careers and pathways to discovered careers, with suggested experiences and skills to acquire; and 3) allow them to make informed decisions about prospective career paths and achieve personal goals.

Throughout the week, the group had visitors from all sectors of Ontario County including: Ontario County Workforce Development, Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES, and FLX Works. The group even had the opportunity to hear from Hobart and William Smith Colleges President, Mark Gearan, who stopped in Tuesday morning to share some words with the group; President Gearan remarked "this is the greatest time to be alive", "with observation comes opportunity", and "optimism can take one far". President Gearan even shared a bit about one of his internship experiences as a clerk for a congress member.

"It's incredible to consider that these students, in their first week on summer vacation, are investing in themselves and their futures. They are our future and everyone should take notice" says Assistant Director of Community Engagement & Service Learning Peter Budmen, who took the lead on organizing the week-long event.

Hannah Bixby '23, MAT '24, a Geneva 2030 summer intern, who helped facilitate throughout the week reflects, "building connections with the students was inspiring. I'm confident they will be carrying all they learned about themselves and their futures with them moving forward."

Students explored potential careers of interest and investigated the different pathways to those careers. Balancing the exploration with hard skills, students participated in a mock interview with campus colleagues from Hobart and William Smith Colleges, and even walked away with an edited resume ready for job seeking.

By the end of the week students were already considering What's Next? One student who is interested in Parks and Recreation stated they'll begin "Volunteering, working at the state park, interning and shadowing professionals in the area, connecting with people in the field." While another explained they hope to "Definitely engage more in my community, letting people know what my objectives are and having those connections." Much of the week was focused on social capital and how to leverage one's social

capital to help them pursue a career they're interested in. Shadowing opportunities, informational interviews, and internships can all lead to additional introductions and connections that can help them advance themselves.

If you or someone you know wishes to be a part of advancing the careers of our Geneva youth, please reach out to Geneva2030@hws.edu to inquire. Opportunities to present at What's Next? 2024 are always welcome as well as Geneva 2030's College and Career action team's Career Chat series hosted during the academic year for all high school students during their lunch period.

Geneva 2030 is a collective impact initiative working with resources from the entire Geneva community, including nonprofit organizations, businesses and individuals, to support the education of Geneva's children from birth through high school and beyond. Since its founding in 2011, Hobart and William Smith have served as its anchor institution.

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To learn more about Geneva 2030 and its commitment to the Geneva youth, reach out to geneva2030@hws.edu or [click here](#) or [here](#).