



WEE CAMP

Workplace Experience Exchange Camp



Funded by:



THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION

WEE CAMP I
JUNE 2-6, 2025

www.theorchardfoundation.org
www.rapidesfoundation.org

WHY WEE CAMP

GOAL

The goal of the Workplace Experience Exchange Camp is to provide experiences for educators to learn through direct, hands-on experience about trends, skill requirements, and opportunities in Central Louisiana.

APPROACH

Each summer in Central Louisiana, a select group of public school educators attend a one-week sneak peek into the region's high-demand, high-wage jobs. Through talks and tours coordinated by The Orchard Foundation, educators are immersed in the worlds that their students will enter one day as credentialed and degreed workers. WEE Camp is often the first time that educators step into the workplace and learn about the careers and work environments that their students will encounter. The aim is to cultivate a broader, global mindset among educators that they can instill in their students.

WEE Camp also connects them to real-world workforce trends and requirements. At camp, cohorts of educators are hosted by local employers, touring different employer sites and learning about what it takes to be successful in each workplace. Company representatives share their industry's trends and their workforce needs, and then drill down into what sorts of skills and characteristics they are seeking in future employees. On the jobsite, the educators study the competencies that their students will need to thrive in those jobs.

OUTCOMES

Educators leave WEE Camp with first-hand knowledge of the workforce issues facing employers in Central Louisiana. They emerge with the confidence that they can tailor their classroom practice to incorporate the new knowledge they acquired. They are better equipped to teach their students to build new proficiencies, not only in content, but also in skills such as problem-solving, leadership, and collaboration with an emphasis on real-world applications.

WEE CAMP I



PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

AVOYELLES

LA School for the Agricultural Sciences

CATAHOULA

Sicily Island High School

GRANT

Grant High School

NATCHITOCHE

Natchitoches Central High School

RAPIDES

Alexandria Middle Magnet School

Arthur F. Smith Middle Magnet

Brame Middle School

Glenmora High School

Northwood High School

Peabody Magnet High School

Plainview High School

Rapides Alternative Positive Program



VERNON

Leesville High School

WINN

Winnfield Middle School

HISTORY



In its 10th year, WEE Camp - Central Louisiana's first industry externship program - has served 386 educators in Cenla.



WEE CAMP I Starts

In 2015, WEE Camp was established by The Orchard Foundation, serving nine parishes. It has since expanded into multiple events with increased engagement by partners.



WEE CAMP II Emerges

In 2016, WEE Camp II was born to offer educators a more in-depth experience with a smaller number of industry partners.



VEE Camp (Virtual)

In 2017, The Orchard Foundation developed and implemented VEE Camp in partnership with the LA Department of Education. VEE Camp provided a model for statewide implementation. When COVID precautions caused WEE Camp to go virtual, the virtual model was utilized again.



WEE Camp Elementary

In 2022, WEE Camp added a novel option for K-6 educators. WEE Camp Elementary, the newest iteration of WEE Camp, launched with 20 educators from 11 schools.

HOW WE DO IT

INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

This year, WEE Camp I educators were connected to 13 regional employers. From manufacturing to healthcare, to military and the energy industry, many of Cenla's key industries were represented.



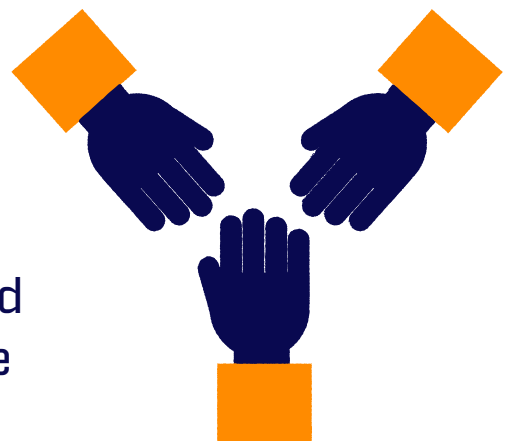
EDUCATORS

23 middle and high school educators were accepted to WEE Camp I, representing 14 public schools in 7 school districts.



COLLABORATION

Educators forge connections with industry and gain practical knowledge of the workplace. They bring their real-world experiences back into classrooms for the benefit of the students.

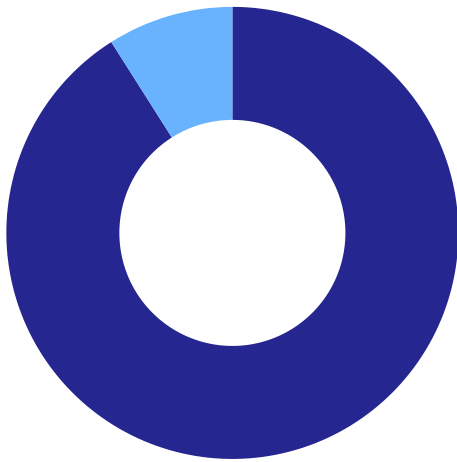


WEE IMPACT ON EDUCATORS

Connections to
classroom subject matter

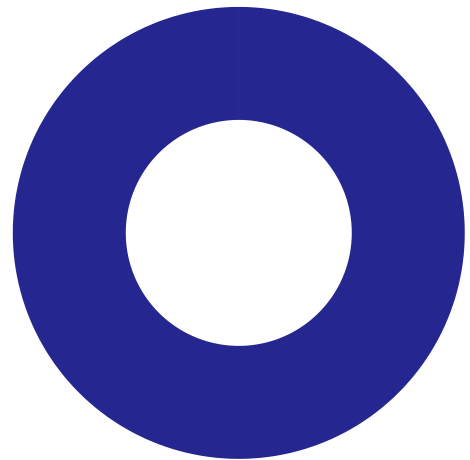
Somewhat Agree

9%



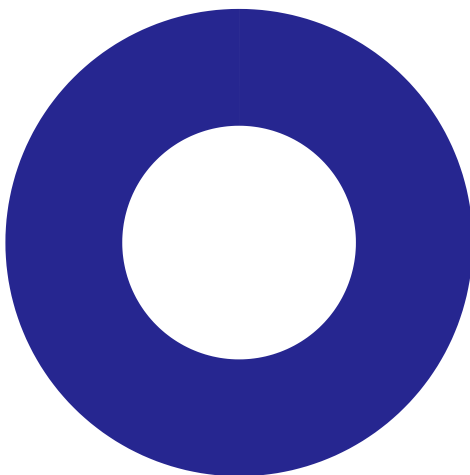
Agree
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Increased awareness of
employer requirements



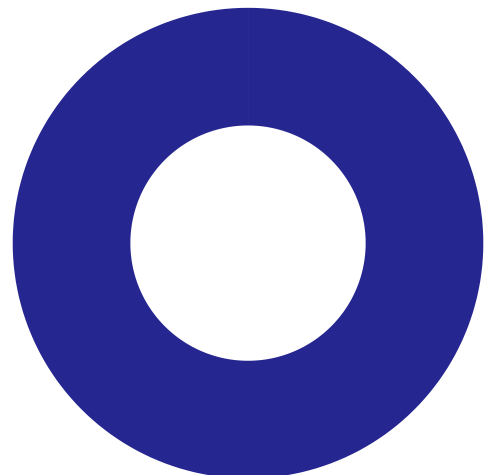
Agree
100%

Identified ways to incorporate
skill requirements into classroom



Agree
100%

Increased awareness of
programs and jobs in region



Agree
100%

*Results from post-WEE Camp satisfaction surveys of educators

WEE CAMP FEEDBACK

“ [Because of WEE Camp] I now have resources to make what I teach relevant to the future career choices of my students.

During the experience, I was able to identify ways in which I could incorporate skills needed in the occupation(s) observed into my classroom instruction. ”

“ I had no idea what ALL was out there and available to students that don't necessarily want to go to college. It [WEE Camp] also gave me great insight on what I can do to help them succeed in those areas.

WEE Camp will change the way I teach because of the conversations we have had with employers and the knowledge and insight with different companies and how students can benefit and probably don't know anything about these opportunities. ”

“ This [WEE Camp] experience has given me essentials to provide students with career coaching and selection.

It [WEE Camp] just gives me more resources to make what I teach relevant to the future career choices of my students. ”

“ This is life-changing information. It will be shared as often and in as many ways as possible.

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

Thank You

for your invaluable partnership

in the success of year's WEE Camp! Your support in welcoming Central Louisiana educators into your workplace strengthens the link between education and industry - creating meaningful connections that promote student growth & workforce readiness.



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

