



PathFinder Pages

A publication of the **St. Louis PathFinder Network**

Regional Center for Education & Work
University of MO-St. Louis, College of Education

Volume 1: Issue 1 -- 2002

GROUNDHOG SET TO SEE A MILLION SHADOWS IN 2002 UM-St. Louis Joins National Initiative

February 1st, 2002, will mark the St. Louis region's participation in a nationwide initiative introducing young people to the world of work through job shadowing. In 2001, more than 100,000 businesses and 1,000,000 students—including 14,000 Missouri students—participated in job shadowing, a career exploration activity, which helps students understand how schoolwork translates into workplace skills.

As an area leader in workforce development, the University of MO-St. Louis, College of Education and its Regional Center for Education & Work (RCEW) will join national job shadow sponsors in this effort to enrich the lives of students through "work-based learning." National sponsors for 2002 include America's Promise, Junior Achievement, American Society of Association Executives, the Society for Human Resource Management, Monster.com and others.

Jim Duane, RCEW's Assistant Director, explains the importance of Groundhog Job Shadow Day. "This event gives kids a chance to explore careers that interest them—not just what their parents do for a living. It also exposes students in at-risk situations to career options they might not have a chance to explore otherwise."

Larry Kreyling, a Principal with the Ferguson-Florissant School District before joining Dierbergs Markets, knows the value of job shadowing for students and employers alike. "Studies show that students who job shadow are more likely to finish high school and pursue further education at a college, university or technical institution. Job shadowing provides employers with an opportunity to share career opportunities with the youngsters and recruit potential job applicants."

To make it easier to participate, the RCEW is providing area employers access to PathFinder. This interactive, web-based system facilitates the matching of interested students and educators with employers willing to host work-based learning activities, like job shadowing. There is **NO FEE** and PathFinder is open to businesses, nonprofit and cultural agencies, municipal and service entities, trade and professional groups and others.

For details about job shadowing, visit the national website: www.jobshadow.org. To learn more about PathFinder or become a local job shadow host, contact the RCEW at **314-516-4378** or pathfinder@umsl.edu.

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT PARTNERS with St. Louis PathFinder Network

Last year, Junior Achievement of Mississippi Valley, Inc. coordinated some 2,200 job shadowing opportunities for St. Louis metro area students. In 2002, this task will be easier due to a new partnership between Junior Achievement (JA) and the St. Louis PathFinder Network.

Rawn Ford, Director of Secondary Education and Groundhog Job Shadow Coordinator for the local JA office, anticipates that he will personally coordinate job shadowing opportunities for more than 1,000 St. Louis metro area students this year. Regarding PathFinder as his choice of technology for managing the task, he stated:

"We see PathFinder as a great resource. Not only will our students be able to find and reserve job shadowing opportunities on the PathFinder system, but PathFinder's online communication tools will automate our efforts to coordinate matching, placement, evaluation and reporting of the activities, as well."

Junior Achievement seeks to educate and inspire young people to value free enterprise, business and economics to improve the quality of their lives. In addition to international offices in 100 countries around the world, JA has over 150 offices in the U.S. Last year, JA reached 5.2 million young people worldwide through an array of age-appropriate programs for elementary, middle and senior high school students.

For more information about Junior Achievement and its programs, visit www.ja.org. Also visit the local JA website at: <http://stlouis.ja.org/>. To find out how your school or business can participate in job shadowing and other JA programs, contact **Rawn Ford** at **314-731-4000** or rford@jastl.org.





Coordinator Corner

This column in *PathFinder Pages* will be devoted to items of interest to Coordinators at our PathFinder-affiliated schools and youth organizations. We hope you find yourself checking this column in each issue for helpful tools, tips and techniques for getting the most out of the PathFinder system.

PRESENTING!!! The St. Louis PathFinder Network proudly presents its **School and Youth Organization** affiliates (in alphabetic order):

Affton High School
Barnwell Middle School
Berkeley High School
Clayton High School
Construction Career Center
Ferguson Middle School
Fox High School
Francis Howell Central High School
Francis Howell High School
Francis Howell Middle School
Francis Howell North High School
Francis Howell Union High School
Hancock Place High School
Highland High School
Holman Middle School
Junior Achievement of Mississippi Valley, Inc.
Lansdowne Middle School
McCluer North High School
McCluer High School
Mehlville High School
Meramec Valley Middle School
Normandy Senior High School
North County Technical High School
Pacific High School
Pattonville High School
Riverview Gardens Central Middle School
Riverview Gardens East Middle School
Riverview Gardens High School
RYTE Connection
Saeger Middle School
Schools to Careers, Inc. at SLCC
St. Charles Community College
Wydown Middle School

The St. Louis PathFinder Network service area includes St. Louis City; St. Louis County; St. Charles, Jefferson, and Franklin counties in Missouri; as well as parts of St. Clair and Madison counties in Illinois. **Free site licenses** (worth \$850) are still available for interested Missouri public middle, junior and senior high schools in this area. To find out how your school can join the PathFinder family, call **Rosanne** or **Jim** at **314-516-4378** or send your email inquiry to pathfinder@umsl.edu.

PathFinder Registration: The first step in providing your students with access to PathFinder's electronic portfolio and opportunity systems is to get them registered and activated. Not sure how to go about it? Contact your PathFinder Coordinator (see contact info below) to schedule a free onsite visit to your school.

Student Activation: Use the "Student Accounts" tool on the "dot page" to activate your students as they register on PathFinder. Here are the steps:

1. Click on "Student Accounts."
2. Check that "Status" is the default "New" and select your school from the drop down "School" menu.
3. Click on "Find Students" at the bottom of the screen.
4. Using your mouse, select (check) each box down the left side of the page and "Save" the update.
5. Student names, user names, passwords and ID's will appear to verify the activation.

Student Passwords: Use "Student Accounts" to find your students' user names and passwords when they forget or lose them (**and they will!**) Here are the steps:

1. Click on "Student Accounts."
2. Type student's first or last name in the "Name" field.
3. Change the "Status" to "Active" for previously activated students.
4. Click on "Find Students" at the bottom of the screen.
5. Student info should appear in a few seconds.

Be sure your students always safeguard this information!

Electronic Profiles and Portfolios: It is important to get your students to add their "Individual Profiles & Resumes" and portfolios to PathFinder. This is information that potential employers (opportunity hosts) may wish to consult to prescreen the student as an applicant for a job shadowing, internship, apprenticeship, summer job or other opportunity.

PathFinder Help Desk: Please feel free to consult with your PathFinder staff members anytime you have a question or problem. It is our pleasure to assist you and your students as needed. Answers that are not instantaneous usually are responded to within 24 hours.

We welcome your questions, comments or suggestions for "Coordinator Corner." Contact **Rosanne Vrugtman** at vrugtmanr@msx.umsl.edu or phone **314-516-4378**.

Reflections

from the staff of the **St. Louis PathFinder Network**

January 2002

**Three...Two...One...
2...0...0...2!**

Year in Review: We can sum up 2001 in just one word: **WHEW!**

Undoubtedly, this year's events will mark 2001 in all our memories as the year in which the whole world changed. While we remain steadfast and hopeful as a nation, the region does its bit to help by providing area young people a chance to grow up in a safer, better, more productive world. To this end, PathFinder continues to expand its outreach in the community—offering more “work-based learning opportunities” in more career fields to more students and educators region wide.

In this first “Reflections” column in the first St. Louis PathFinder Network newsletter, we thought it would be particularly apropos to take a moment to reflect on where we started, where we are now, and where we plan to go in 2002 and beyond...

A Look Back: About a year and a half ago, a group of community leaders met to consider the best use of the remaining School-to-Work funds. They agreed that the region needed to find a better way to connect what is learned in the classroom with skills used in the work place. One option they discussed was creation of a centralized regional database of career-related learning opportunities accessible to educators, students, parents and others. Ultimately, PathFinder, a web-based system designed by VisionLink (Boulder, CO), was selected—largely because of its unique dual “Portfolio” and “Opportunity” systems.

As one of the community leaders, the College of Education at the University of MO-St. Louis saw PathFinder fitting well within its newly established Regional Center for Education & Work (RCEW). Through a U.S. Department of Labor grant, the RCEW was established to foster research and new business-education communication and initiatives. The St. Louis PathFinder Network will be one of the components to help the RCEW reach its workforce development goals and objectives. PathFinder staff immediately set about fulfilling their mission to “*Connect Classrooms and Careers.*”

We do best that which we enjoy most. Helping students find careers that they will love is the best way to ensure their long-term success—and promote the vitality of the community as a whole.

A Look Around: Since mid-year 2001, we've awarded 33 (of 60) **FREE** PathFinder site licenses to schools and youth organizations throughout our service area. (A list of current affiliates, as well as service area information, can be found elsewhere in this newsletter). At present, we're concentrating our efforts to enroll additional area employers (i.e., "opportunity hosts") on PathFinder. Obviously, by providing an array of interesting work-based activities in all six of Missouri's career pathways, we give area students the widest possible range of career choices to explore.

A Look Ahead: While we made great progress toward our goals in 2001, we realize there are still “miles to go before we sleep”! In 2002, we'll continue the push for new employers and opportunities. To focus our efforts, we're concentrating particularly on employers willing to host job shadowing, community service projects, career fairs and classroom presentations. Other goals for the coming year include:

- Giving away the remaining free site licenses to qualified area school and youth organizations
- Registering many more students and educators on PathFinder (and encouraging students to complete their electronic portfolios)
- Profiling a variety of new employers and work-based learning opportunities on PathFinder
- Supporting the organizational goals of our PathFinder affiliates through networking, training, communication and onsite assistance
- Solidifying funding for the continued expansion of the St. Louis PathFinder Network
- Maximizing PathFinder's value to the community-at-large by ensuring that the system's amazing potential is utilized to the fullest extent

Final Reflections: As has been asked somewhat poignantly: "What would you be able to accomplish if you knew you couldn't fail?" With this in mind, we plan a quarterly newsletter to keep you posted on our progress. We believe that with your help, a year from now we'll be able to look back on 2002 and sum up our combined achievements in just one word: **WOW!**

We're very grateful to all of our PathFinder partners for your invaluable support in 2001. We look forward to working with all of you as we continue our progress in 2002.



Beginning Friday, February 1, and throughout 2002, students in St. Louis and around the country will “shadow” workplace mentors as they go through their workday. Students get a close-up look at how the skills learned in school relate to the workplace.

Groundhog Job Shadow Day...

... excites students to learn by making their class work more relevant

...builds community partnerships between schools and businesses that enhance the educational experience of all students

...introduces students to the requirements of professions and industries to help them prepare to join the workforce for the 21st Century

...encourages an ongoing relationship between young people and caring adults

Contact the St. Louis PathFinder Network now at **314-516-4378** or pathfinder@umsl.edu to find out how your school or business can participate during 2002!

St. Louis PathFinder Network
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*Affix
Stamp
Here*

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Label
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PathFinder: “Connecting Classrooms with Careers”
through electronic portfolios and work-based learning opportunities.

MEET YOUR PATHFINDER STAFF



Seated left to right:

Jim Duane, Assistant Director/RCEW
Rosanne Vrugtman, PathFinder Coordinator
Bernadette Dalton, Administrative Assistant/RCEW

Our offices are located on the campus of the University of MO-St. Louis, at I-70 and Florissant Road. If you have questions or need assistance, we invite you to contact us anytime at:

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