

## ABOUT US

WorkSMART connector is a community collaboration that prepares young people for exciting local careers through unique work-based learning opportunities.

Ambitious and growing local employers are looking for qualified team members like never before. Young people are looking for personal pathways to a degree or a career, with opportunities to advance themselves along the way.

**WorkSMART connector has a solution!**



WorkSMART connector is a collaboration of local high schools, colleges and employers, in alignment with Future Ready Iowa and the goal to prepare Iowans for the workforce.  
**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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## IS THIS PROGRAM FOR ME?

- ✓ If you are a hands-on learner and would gain more knowledge at work than in a classroom.
- ✓ If you enjoy classes and want to grow a stand-out resume and career experience.
- ✓ If you want to explore career options in a particular field to see what best suits you.
- ✓ If you are concerned about paying for college and want to earn while you learn.
- ✓ If you want to try the college experience before making a long-term commitment.

*Or even if you just don't know...*

**WorkSMART connector is for YOU!**

## 4 REASONS WHY MY CHILD SHOULD PARTICIPATE

- 1 Get valuable (paid) work experience and earn college credit for it.
- 2 Launch a career with guidance from a professional mentor.
- 3 Enjoy a college experience while gaining skills that will successfully transition into the workplace and adulthood.
- 4 Choose a pathway to a degree in one to four years post-high school.



[worksmartconnector.org](http://worksmartconnector.org)



# HERE'S HOW WE'RE BUILDING THE **PATHWAY**



## **CAREER AWARENESS**

GRADES 2-9

Discovering a variety of careers and related skills in the classroom.



## **CAREER EXPLORATION**

GRADES 8-11

Identifying and considering specific career interests and related classes.



## **WORK-BASED EXPERIENCES**

GRADES 10-12 AND BEYOND

Gaining specific technical skills, related coursework and temporary employment.



## **FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT**

POST-HIGH SCHOOL

Completing certifications and degrees and securing fulfilling employment.



## **PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL GROWTH**

DURING EMPLOYMENT

Becoming role models for the next generation entering the local workforce.

## **MENTORING**

*Being a mentor is recognizing something amazing in someone else, that they haven't even recognized in themselves.*

We know local schools are full of students with untapped potential. WorkSMART connector is determined to help students discover their talents, through mentors who help connect those interests to a local career and guide them in their professional journey. Mentors are trained to be a safe, personal resource for students, coaching them in learning a skilled trade, a brand new technology, how to work in a team environment or even how to progress in their chosen career.

## **LIFE-SKILLS TRAINING**

*"Adulthood" isn't always easy. School teaches us a lot, but life-skills training is intended to affirm students through their steps to successful, adult living.*

WorkSMART connector participants find themselves with a significant paycheck, a busy schedule, leadership opportunities, decisions and more. They can thrive through all of those realities with WorkSMART connector learning opportunities in financial management, community engagement, workforce skills & mentoring, leadership & character and health & well-being. We can't do it for them, but we will provide the skills and guidance for them to learn how to do it on their own.

## **ON-CAMPUS EXPERIENCE**

*How many times have you heard it... "college is all about the experience." But incredible experiences also happen in the workplace. And in all of life. Now you can experience both college and career, with people who care about your unique journey.*

With WorkSMART connector, you have the option to live on Central College's campus while you earn your apprenticeship certification and degree from Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) in one year after high school graduation. Enjoy on-campus amenities with the support of a Pathway Navigator to help meet your educational goals. After that first year, pursue independent life and career OR your Bachelor's Degree on Central's campus. It's up to you.

