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## Youth Works exposes teens to opportunities

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Fifty juniors from Milton and Navarre high schools are being sought for Youth Works, a pilot program to expose them to employment, education and training opportunities in Santa Rosa County.

Youth Works is an eight-month program created by Leadership Santa Rosa Class 23.

It targets students in the district's Workforce Investment Act Youth Services Program, but is open to any junior who qualifies.

More than 65 percent of Santa Rosa seniors continue their education in some form, according to the Florida Department of Education.

"Whether the juniors are considering college right after high school or not, this program will help them reach their full potential," said Candy McGuyre, a Class 23 member and the project's marketing coordinator for TEAM Santa Rosa.

More than 40 members of Class 23 plan to educate students about employment in jobs ranging from law enforcement to hospitality.

Students will listen to speakers, tour facilities and participate in hands-on activities. They will also learn basic skills to get a job, such as interview techniques and resume writing.

"Some jobs may require a college degree and some may not," said Kimi Gillis, Youth Services Program coordinator.

"We want to show juniors what training is required and where they can get it."

Students don't often know the range of their post-high school opportunities, said Joy Tsubooka, the

county's public information officer.

"If the student wants to go to college, great," she said. "But if they cannot get there right away, there are opportunities for them to be gainfully employed."

Youth Works will also help the county sustain its workforce, said Cindy Anderson, TEAM Santa Rosa executive director.

"Industries are now realizing their workforce is their most important asset and approximately 80 percent of workforce are not required to have a degree, but a skill," she said.

"By showing kids what skills are needed, they are now better equipped to decide what they are interested in and then look to acquire that specific skill."

## Additional Facts

Want to apply?

To learn if a Santa Rosa County high school junior is eligible for Youth Works, contact Kimi Gillis at 983-5700, ext. 284, or [gilliskd@mail.santarosa.k12.fl.us](mailto:gilliskd@mail.santarosa.k12.fl.us).

The deadline is Friday.

To become a sponsor, contact Robin Vickers at 393-7334 or [rvickers](mailto:rvickers@ufl.edu)

[@ufl.edu](mailto:rvickers@ufl.edu).

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