

Ethan Koster  
Automotive Technology

One might ask, “Why go to PATHS?” Well, there are plenty of reasons to go to PATHS. I personally went because I wanted to learn how to fix my car, yet I never thought that I would be getting valuable experience for college, and my future, in a great hands-on approach. I am a senior at Deering High School and what PATHS has done for my high school career is given me the hands-on and mechanical aspect of education that hardly anyone else, if anyone, at my sending school would have ever been able to teach me!

When I first stepped into class, I said to myself, “there is no way I’m going to be able to use all of this equipment – I’m way over my head.” I could not have foreseen the amount of knowledge there was in automotive technology; in fact, it still makes my head spin. Everybody takes pride in what we do here (PATHS), whether it be winning trophies nearly as big as we are, or getting certified in various areas of automotive technology from well known companies. Everyone in the automotive class takes pride in their work and they take it seriously, creating an inspiring place to learn. Next year I am enrolled to attend Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and am pursuing a mechanical engineering degree. The school is focused on more of a hands-on approach to teaching, rather than the traditional theoretical approach in a huge lecture hall. In fact, there is not a single lecture hall on campus. Attending PATHS makes me feel more secure and far more prepared for a post-secondary education than just my sending school could have done. Plus, the teachers here (PATHS) are all basically field trained, meaning they really know what they are talking about, because they all make their living off of what they are now teaching. Ask a question, and rarely will they ever have to look up the answer, it comes right out of their heads.

Ever since my classmates learned that I was going to school for mechanical engineering, they will come up to me and demand that I design this or that, to make their jobs as technicians much easier. This had had a great impact on my future because a hobby of mine is to design machines and trinkets which is definitely a great attribute to have in the engineering field. When I first came to Mr. Carmichael’s Automotive Technology class, all I really thought I would do was to learn how to fix my car. Not only did I learn to fix my car, but now I am confident enough to help my friends diagnose problems in their own cars.

This year, Mr. Carmichael asked me to be on the Ford AAA team. Being up to the challenge, I tried my best to do well on the written test. Unfortunately, I did not score high enough to be one of the problem solvers on the team. However, just sitting in the classroom training definitely had a positive affect. I felt as one of the team and it was just an overall good feeling that only comes in certain situations.

PATHS is also a great place to make new friends and meet up with old ones. The sense of camaraderie can make it feel like a great big family. I would always encourage younger students to look to PATHS if they really want to excel at what they want to do. My only regret with coming to PATHS is not coming sooner. Because I am a senior, I

will be graduation and therefore will not be coming back. I only wish that I came to PATHS as a junior so I would have been able to complete the two-year Automotive Technology program.