

*Eastern Connecticut*

## Eastern CT Students Gain Employment Edge In Science Careers

School Stuff

*Submitted by Teddie Sleight, EASTCONN, on 2010-07-28.*

Sixty high-school students participating in the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board's (EWIB) Youth Pipeline Program recently finished coursework preparing them for science-related professions that will give them an edge when seeking future jobs.

In preparation for summer internships, the students - 20 from Windham, 20 from Norwich and 20 from New London - completed one of three introductory science courses at Three Rivers Community College in Norwich, either in Healthcare; the Green Jobs Pathway; or Lasers/Holograms, part of the Pipeline Program's focus on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

"It was great," said Kevin Roman, a junior from Windham Technical High School, who enrolled in the Lasers/Holograms class. "It was interesting to learn about lasers and designs and I think this will help me. I'm in manufacturing technology at Windham Tech., and I want to build airplane parts."

Each of the students will move into summer internships in related disciplines across eastern Connecticut.

"Giving students hands-on experience in these growing science fields will improve their ability to find employment in careers that not only have strong futures, but also hold great appeal for them," said EASTCONN's Nancy Vitale. She directs the EWIB-funded Youth Pipeline Program.

Youth Pipeline students chose the career pathway that interested them most. They also built critical interpersonal and teamwork skills for the workplace.

"Students had to participate in the EASTCONN Cool Directions program before being allowed to apply for the highly competitive Youth Pipeline Program," said EASTCONN's Cyndi Wells, who coordinates both the Youth Pipeline and Cool Directions programs. "It was a rigorous application process," she said.

Cool Directions is an in-school, year-round program that helps students meet with academic success and prepares them for the world of work.

Now in its fourth year, the federally funded EWIB Youth Pipeline Program is made possible through a partnership between EWIB, EASTCONN, Norwich Youth and Family Services, and New London's Office of Youth Affairs. This year, the partners also collaborated with TRCC and the Employment and Training Institute (ETI), which provided online training.

A culminating ceremony, celebrating the 60 students who completed the two-week-long program, took place at TRCC.

"This is a real celebration of a future that you've just begun," said Peg Stroup, TRCC's director of Business and Industry Services. "You will use what you've learned here throughout your work life."

After the ceremony, TRCC Prof. Judy Donnelly returned holograms that Pipeline students had created.

"This is a hologram of my ring!" said a clearly pleased Rubileysi Ramos, a junior at New London High School, who shone a light on the ghostly, 3-D image of a gold ring embedded in a dark square of glass. "I made this myself," she said, proudly.

To learn more about the EWIB Youth Pipeline Program, contact EASTCONN's Nancy Vitale at 860-455-0707, or at [nvitale@eastconn.org](mailto:nvitale@eastconn.org).



EASTCONN photo

Left to right, Michelle Billips, who just graduated from Norwich Free Academy, Rubileysi Ramos, a junior at New London High School, and Paul Arroyo, who just graduated from New London High School, shared a flashlight to examine the holograms they created during the science-focused, workplace-preparation Youth Pipeline Program in Norwich.