

# The ABC Academy: Exploring Career Diversity

Southeast High School's Agriscience, Business, and Consumer Sciences (ABC) Academy teachers are helping students prepare for the future through career exploration and workforce skills instruction. Meanwhile, their career-based classes work together to support students in every area of academics: reading, math, science, and more. Integrating academics with career skills is a win-win plan to help students succeed.

ABC Academy co-leads Cindy Rees (Business) and Colleen Keip (Consumer Sciences) have been hard at work encouraging growth and interest in their classrooms. Colleen's Consumer Science students tapped into creativity and talent in both Culinary I and Design Services Core classes. "Performing quality work and presenting a positive first impression are critical to success, whether you are preparing a nutritious and pleasing meal or creating an evening gown ensemble."

Fernanda Mendez has completed the Design Services Core class and is looking forward to taking Principles of Fashion Design Services and Pattern Design Techniques in her junior year. "I learned so much about fashion," she said. "I learned how to sew and how to embroider on the embroidery machine. I made a pillow, a pair of medical scrubs, and right now I am finishing up a fitted sun dress with buttons at the neck and a side zipper."

In the Business department, Cindy Rees's Accounting students didn't have far to go to gain real-world experience. The students worked with Suncoast Schools Federal Credit Union to open the first Manatee County student-run branch on the school's campus. Students interviewed for management positions, trained in financial procedures, and were supported by management and staff at the local and regional level. Lacey Houston, class of 2011, was selected as Student Branch Manager.

"I am determined to be the best that I can be and succeed," Lacey said. "I like to set goals, solve challenges, and make the best out of everything." Lacey's interests are in business, accounting, and leadership. She is vice president of Southeast's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter and president of the District 18 FBLA chapter. Cindy Rees serves as FBLA advisor for Southeast as well as co-director of FBLA's District 18.

Agriscience teacher Mike Buckley helps students explore interests in the business and science of aquaculture, horticulture, animals, vegetables, and the environment. In one project, agriscience and culinary teachers worked together so that students learned to cultivate and harvest tomatoes. The tomatoes were then processed into salsa or sauce and used to create pizzas that were sold to teachers.

Whether selling a harvest, crafting a culinary creation, balancing a budget, or designing a dress, students enrolled in the ABC Academy are making diverse career connections that focus on a better future.



Fernanda Mendez poses with her sundress and with Design Services Core teacher Colleen Keip.



Suncoast Schools Credit Union student branch manager Lacey Houston with Business teacher Cindy Rees.

# JOBS



**Environmental Scientists**  
Salary: \$37,000 – \$83,600  
Workplace: agencies, outdoors  
Hours: daytime



**Interior Designers**  
Salary: \$40,000 – \$57,900  
Workplace: design firms, builders  
Hours: daytime



**Compensation & Benefits Analysts**  
Salary: \$40,000 – \$57,900  
Workplace: corporations  
Hours: daytime



**Southeast High School's Agriscience, Business, and Consumer Sciences programs have combined to create a small learning community known as the ABC Academy. The Academy's mission is to provide students the opportunity to explore their occupational interests while receiving job training that will prepare them for work or college.**

## PARENT CORNER

- ✓ Discussion starter: talk to your child about everyday courtesies that translate into good work habits. Some examples are punctuality, active listening skills, cooperation, respect, a positive attitude, initiative, time management, and dependability. Can you think of more?
- ✓ Active listening skills are important for everybody—at home, school, and work. What makes an active listener? Practice these listening skills with your child: maintaining eye contact; listening without interrupting the speaker; allowing a quiet time before responding; and using nonverbal signals (head nods, etc.) to indicate that you are listening.
- ✓ "When students increase their involvement, they increase their competitive edge and their leadership qualities." ABC Academy student Lacey Houston. For further information about the ABC Academy, contact Southeast High School Academic Advisor Brandy Braver at 941-741-3366, ext. 2027.

## FCAT reading comprehension QUESTION

★ What three primary career categories are explored through classes at the ABC Academy at Southeast High School?

*Answer: Agriscience, Business, and Consumer Sciences*

## What's on the WEB?

[www.manatee.k12.fl.us/sites/highschool/southeast/html/career\\_ed-abc.html](http://www.manatee.k12.fl.us/sites/highschool/southeast/html/career_ed-abc.html)  
[www.mindtools.com](http://www.mindtools.com)  
[www.ManateeACT.com](http://www.ManateeACT.com)



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