

Urbandale Students Collaborate With Leading Industry Experts To Find Business Solutions

Urbandale High School students participated in Student TEAMS, quality and critical thinking training, in order to identify, analyze and develop solutions that increase efficiencies and improve cost savings

URBANDALE, Iowa – March 25, 2016 – Critical thinking, group collaboration and effective problem solving skills are fundamental for 21st century learners and are at the core of the fourth-annual [Langford/Iowa Quality Center Student TEAMS \(Training in Evaluating, Analyzing, and Measuring Systems\)](#) training where Urbandale High School (UHS) students partner with business executives in order to solve existing challenges. Two groups of students participated in training sessions over the course of two days where they learned critical problem solving tools and how to systematically improve work processes. One group of students then partnered with business executives from [Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations](#) to better understand an existing manufacturing challenge while a second group of students partnered with [Heartland AEA](#) to examine a challenge dealing with varied school use of digital technology. Both groups applied what they learned through the Student TEAMS training in order to present a solution to Bridgestone, Heartland AEA and District leadership.



Bridgestone Team Members: Alissa Russelburg, Chris Shaffer, Toby Hall, Miki Alexander;
UHS Students: Aubrey Brueschke, Zaiyah Quirk, Raj Oberoi, Maya Sims, Cameron Canada and
Bridgestone Team Member Rich Wince participating in Student TEAMS training.

“It's amazing to see how after only two days of training students were able to apply the problem solving process they learned to a problem completely unrelated to their practice problem,” said UHS Extended Learning Program Teacher Karlee McKibban. “Both teams of students found the real-world application of the process incredibly valuable and expressed how the process will easily transfer to a wide range of problems they face in their daily lives, school and in future workplace scenarios.”

Student TEAMS training is a partnership between the Iowa Quality Center and [Langford International](#) to create a learning experience for both the students and the business sponsors. The training was

developed by David P. Langford based on research that determined students learn best when immersed in the learning process and constantly involved in critical thinking that can be applied to real-world problems.



UHS Students: Ashleigh Martin, Blake Arntzen, Laura Parsons and Teresa Gonzalez participating in Student TEAMS with Heartland AEA.

“Being in TEAMS was a very fun and unique experience,” said UHS student Teresa Gonzalez. “I met a lot of great people and we solved problems in ways I had never thought of before. It was very fun and I hope to do it again the next time it comes around.”

The five-day Student TEAMS experience includes two days of training in over 50 proven problem-solving tools in the workplace and the nine-step process following the PDSA (Plan Do Study Act) Cycle of continuous improvement. Following the training, a business sponsor hosts the team of students at their place of business to work on an assigned project for three days. The Student TEAMS group then presents a theory of improvement or a solution to the business leadership on the final day of the experience.

“I wasn't quite sure what I was getting into, but I'm glad I participated in this,” said UHS student Maya Sims. “I learned a ton about team building and continual progress monitoring in the business world. We use the PDSA format in every class at school, but it was really cool to be able to not be the subject matter of the PDSA and instead apply it to something. The coolest part of the whole thing was that we made a difference in a real-world problem at Bridgestone; that we as sophomores in high school could make a difference.”

Empowering students to believe in themselves and believe they can truly make a difference supports Urbandale Community School District's aim of transforming education in order to make it more relevant, inspiring and meaningful for all learners. UHS students will be able to leverage their learning from the Student TEAMS experience in order to strengthen group dynamics, increase collaboration and improve problem-finding and problem-solving skills—essential components for becoming college and career-ready. Urbandale would like to thank the Iowa Quality Center, Langford International, Bridgestone and

Heartland AEA for their ongoing dedication to providing applicable learning opportunities for Urbandale students and their commitment to helping students achieve success. To learn more about how Urbandale is transforming education, visit: UrbandaleSchools.com

About Firestone Agricultural Solutions, a division of Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations

Firestone Agricultural Solutions, a division of Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations, is the industry leader in the manufacturing, marketing and sales of market-leading Firestone agricultural tires. Firestone Agricultural Solutions' Des Moines, Iowa, facility is located in the heart of America's farm belt and supplies approximately half of the agricultural tires consumed by North American original equipment manufacturers as well as being the leading agricultural tire supplier in the North American replacement market. Firestone agricultural tires can be found on farm tractors, planting and harvesting equipment and other farm implements in North America and around the world. In addition, Firestone Agricultural Solutions markets and sells forestry and construction tires. Firestone Agricultural Solutions also operates a testing facility, located in Columbiana, Ohio, which is the only facility in the world solely dedicated to the development and testing of agricultural tires. For more information, visit: www.firestoneag.com

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About Heartland AEA

Heartland Area Education Agency (AEA) is one of Iowa's nine Area Education Agencies. AEA's were established by the 1974 Iowa legislature to provide equitable, efficient and economical educational opportunities for all Iowa children. Heartland AEA works in partnership with public and accredited private schools to provide educational services, programs and resources for improving the learning outcomes and well-being of all children and youth in central Iowa. Heartland AEA staff members serve children from birth to age 21, families, educators and communities. Heartland AEA's staff members, 75 percent of whom are licensed educators, aid student achievement in many ways. They teach students; provide direct services to students with special needs; consult with teachers, principals and superintendents; meet with parents; lead school-community meetings; and undertake many other tasks to improve teaching and learning. For more information, visit: www.heartlandaea.org

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About Iowa Quality Center

The Iowa Quality Center (IQC) is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was established more than 20 years ago as a result of collaboration between Kirkwood Community College and Grant Wood AEA (Woods Quality Center). The IQC was established as a result of being named the administrator of the Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence (Baldrige based state award program) by the Iowa Business Council and the largest employers in the state of Iowa. The mission of the IQC is to provide leadership for performance excellence by connecting individuals, organizations and communities. While the IQC staff is based in Marion, its networking groups, consultation and membership activities take place throughout the state. For more information, visit: www.iowaqc.org

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About Langford International, Inc.

Langford International, Inc. provides professional consulting, customized training and keynote presentations specific to learning, applying and studying the continual quality improvement process. David P. Langford is an international consultant, speaker, writer and educator on quality implementation in education and it's correlation to business and the economy. Langford has a wealth of knowledge in case histories that illustrate the successes and pitfalls associated with implementing quality improvement methods. Organizations may request specific consulting in order to develop a long-term system implementation plan, or as support during the early stages of development. Langford International Inc. provides customized workshops incorporating specific techniques, processes, and theories presented during the Langford 4-Day Learning Seminars, 2-Day Leadership Seminars, or Student TEAMS Training. For more information, visit: www.langfordlearning.com

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About Urbandale Community School District

The Urbandale Community School District includes portions of Des Moines and Urbandale, Iowa. The District serves over 3,900 students in six elementary schools, one middle school and one comprehensive high school. The Urbandale District supports an increasingly diverse student population where 51 languages are spoken. Building on the existing foundation of excellence in education, Urbandale is transforming education throughout the District. By implementing innovative [Quality/Continual Improvement](#) strategies that create learning environments that more fully engage, challenge and motivate students, Urbandale is taking transformation from theory into practice. Urbandale prepares students for becoming lifelong learners and is a school district that brings learning to life for everyone. To learn more, visit: UrbandaleSchools.com and follow on Twitter [@UrbandaleSchool](#).

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