

Pacelli Catholic Schools receive major gift

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STEVENS POINT — Pacelli Catholic Schools has announced it has received a gift totaling more than \$437,000 over the next three years for its science, technology, engineering and math curriculum.

Heartland Farms, Adventure 212 Fitness and the Pavelski Family will support the STEM curriculum through Project Lead the Way, which will benefit PCS students in kindergarten through 12th grade.

PLTW provides specific STEM curriculum, professional development and an assessment program. PCS administrators spent time researching PLTW, according to a news release, and found it met the needs of their students, particularly in the current workforce environment. PCS is also planning a formal PLTW launch for grades kindergarten through fifth this school year, according to the release, which will provide students with a consistent, focused program from K-12 with one nationally tested curriculum.

PCS has been adding PTLW courses over the past few year. In 2013-14, classes implemented include Design & Modeling; Automation & Robotics for grades six through eight, and both Introduction to Engineering Design and Principles of Biomedical Sciences for grades nine through 12. Courses implemented in 2014-15 include Principles of Engineering and Human Body Systems for grades nine through 12. Along with the kindergarten through fifth-grade curriculum, a course on computer science and software engineering for grades nine through 12 will be implemented this year.

“STEM education is so vital for our students and their future careers,” said Gregg Hansel, director of education for Pacelli Catholic Schools. “Almost every job in the future will require skills in science, math, engineering and technology, and these programs will make sure our students are equipped for success in their educational and workforce endeavors.”

Beyond STEM curriculum, PCS is providing students hands-on experiences for K-12 students in part through Pacelli High School’s Youth Apprenticeship Program. The program combines school-based and work-based learning to instruct students in employability and occupational skills that are defined by local businesses and manufacturers.

The apprenticeship program training is based on Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development skill competencies with close input from employers, according to the release. Students involved with the program are supported by teachers and a mentor/supervisor at the worksite and are given the opportunity to engage in real world, on-the-job experiences that impact their future while supporting their cooperating employer. The financial gift provided to PCS will cover classes and transportation required for youth apprenticeship students.



The Pavelski Family are owners and/or investors in more than 30 companies throughout the nation. Those include Adventure 212 Fitness, located in Stevens Point, and Heartland Farms, which is the largest employer in Adams County with over 240 employees and farms over 22,000 acres in central Wisconsin.

“As a Pacelli alumnus, I see this as an opportunity to provide graduates with the skills necessary to grow in the current economic environment,” said Richard Pavelski, owner of Heartland Farms, Adventure 212 Fitness and the Pavelski Family as well as a 1967 Pacelli High School graduate. “Through this process of learning more about Pacelli, my family and I saw their commitment to a K-12 program with agriculture, engineering, computer and biomedical sciences as a cornerstone for what is important.”

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