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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuolumne County Students Explore Careers Through Hands-On Learning

[Sonora, CA, 10/21/26] On October 21st, the Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools (TCSOS) hosted the 2nd annual Career Technical Education (CTE) Expo. Thanks to the continued generosity of the Sonora Area Foundation, local businesses, and educational partners, this event connected students with opportunities to explore career pathways that align with their interests and strengths.

Approximately 1000 students in grades 4-12 participated in this event, which prioritized hands-on learning experiences. Younger students discovered future career possibilities, while older students explored the education, training, skills, and qualifications needed to pursue various professions.

The CTE Expo showcased jobs that are available in Tuolumne County and highlighted the strong partnership between education and industry. Jon Banks of Banks Glass, applauded the turnout and said, "It was so nice to see the kids want to learn, and see their eyes light up when they saw something new". Students in attendance explored careers in the trades, forestry, law enforcement, hospitality, utilities, agriculture, health science and more.

Industry professionals engaged students with demonstrations, such as the heavy machine operations by Caltrans and log processing by Joe Cover & Sons and Sierra Resource Management. Sherri Brennan, President of Sierra ForestWorks, said, "Sierra Resource Management had their processor going, which is a piece of equipment the public rarely gets to see. It was a hit, and a great chance to showcase careers in logging and resource management."

Another unique facet of the event was that it taught students how to obtain these jobs, from vocational training to college degrees. Dameion Renault, Vocational Training Program Director, shared, "Marketing and promotion is a difficult endeavor for programs and businesses; emails get lost, flyers get rained on. The TCSOS CTE Expo did an exceptional job of bringing the right audience to the appropriate venue". By increasing access to career focused learning opportunities, TCSOS is helping students discover rewarding jobs.

County Superintendent, Zack Abernathy, shared “The CTE Expo is a dream of mine, and it means so much to me to see it come to fruition”. He continued, “The part that moves me the most is seeing the kids’ excitement as the learning comes to life and they get to handle the parts of the job, and not just learn it out of a book.” This sentiment was evident throughout the event—curiosity being sparked in real time. CTE empowers students to find their ideal career and give them the guidance they need to achieve their dreams.

This event was made possible by the community’s shared vision of a skilled and prepared future workforce. Darrell Slocum, CEO of the Sonora Area Foundation, said “Sonora Area Foundation supports technical education and the TCSOS CTE Expo provides an excellent opportunity for Tuolumne County students. We appreciate the work required to bring this event to our area and value our partnership with TCSOS.”

For more information on CTE, visit tcsos.us.