

the Ford Dimension

HISTORY

The program began in 1975 with a pilot group of 4 seniors from West High School. It was originally designed to be a “youth connection” panel for the dealership that provided off-campus orientation and education about the free enterprise system and the business community. It has evolved since then into a 10 member board that continues to foster business-youth communication but with an emphasis on volunteerism, career development, and business ethics.

Representatives from both Ford Dimension and Dream Builders attend monthly meetings together with a focus on leadership development, character, communication and career building skills. Since there is a business component to the Ford Dimension program, the representatives are provided the opportunity to “shadow” individuals involved in careers they would like to pursue. Luncheon meetings are also scheduled with elected government officials, corporate Ford executives, and Rotary members. Additionally, the students have the opportunity to serve as youth mentors and participate in unique activities with Special Olympics.

We now have over 450 Ford Dimension Alumni whose careers range from Catholic priest, Director of the New York Stock Exchange, International VP of Coors, Commander of the Kingfisher (nuclear minesweeper), pro football and baseball players to authors, actors, musicians, doctors, lawyers and terrific moms and dads. In 1995 the Ford Dimension Alumni honored Jim Burke with the establishment of an Education Foundation in his name. Each spring The Jim Burke Education Foundation distributes over \$18,000 to teachers, students and community organizations in the form of scholarships, mini grants and awards. It also oversees and directs Dream Builders, a student leadership program.