



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Apprentice Learning Receives \$175,000 Grant from American Student Assistance to Expand Career Programs for Middle School Students

BOSTON (April, 12, 2021) – [Apprentice Learning](#) announced today the organization received a \$175,000 grant from [American Student Assistance® \(ASA\)](#), a national nonprofit that helps to foster student understanding of post-secondary education and career pathways, to expand access to its pre-apprenticeship programs for middle school students in Boston.

For nearly a decade, Apprentice Learning has supported work-based learning experiences for eighth graders in Boston Public Schools. To date, the program has served nearly 700 students across the city, with 90 percent of student participants being students of color, English Language Learners, and other students from under-resourced communities. Apprentice Learning’s career exploration programs are part of the regular school day at its five partner schools and allow students to leave eighth grade fully equipped for success in a summer job and a sense of possible education and career pathways as they head into high school.

“It is critical that students as young as middle school have equitable access to programs that help them explore their interests, gain important skills and help to establish the important social capital and occupational identity needed to make informed decisions about their futures,” said Jean Eddy, ASA president and CEO. “Apprentice Learning continues to provide Boston-area students an opportunity to identify their passions and develop a plan for their education and future careers. We are hopeful this support will ensure more students are able to pursue their dreams.”

Work-based learning programs have proven to increase student engagement and provide crucial exposure to diverse education and career pathways. Pre-apprenticeships are one way for students to get on-the-job experience and build important skills like communication and problem-solving, as well as technical skills.

“Apprentice Learning is an amazing program because not only does it give you working experience, but they teach you how to apply to jobs, how to set up resumes, and the ground rules of how to be respectful and helpful at a workplace. Our school is so grateful to have it and it’s an amazing opportunity for eighth graders.”- Gigi, Mission Hill School

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Apprentice Learning transitioned its apprenticeships to virtual programs to maintain opportunities for students to learn about careers that have become work-from-home jobs. More than 185 students participated in virtual programs with 13 virtual business partners.

“Apprentice Learning shares ASA’s belief that middle school is a crucial period during which we must ignite a sense of purpose and help young people to build a path to post-secondary success and career readiness,” said Helen Russell, executive director of Apprentice Learning. “For too many young people in Boston, many career opportunities feel out of reach. We hope to address this by starting early--in middle school--to expand access to more students and connect them with our more than 70 business partners across the city.”

To learn more about Apprentice Learning, visit www.apprenticelearning.org.

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About Apprentice Learning

Apprentice Learning provides real world work experiences for middle school students. We leverage career exploration to teach skills and nurture dreams for young people. Our vision is to provide middle school students with impactful career education that strengthens the link between academic and career success and leads to satisfying, decent-paying jobs and careers for under-resourced youth in Boston.

About American Student Assistance® (ASA)

American Student Assistance® (ASA) is a national nonprofit committed to helping kids know themselves, know their options, and make informed choices to achieve their education and career goals. ASA® has a 60-year legacy of working directly with students to increase their access to higher education through loans and financial education. ASA has turned its experience into impactful solutions for students in grades 6-12 to help them pursue their dreams. To learn more about ASA, visit www.asa.org/about-us

Apprentice Learning Photo:



Caption:

Apprentices Jovanni & Jason, eighth graders at the Dearborn STEM Academy, share their ideas for a lobby redesign with professionals at the Boston Society for Architects during their apprenticeship in Fall 2020. PHOTO: Deborah J Carson

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