



### **For Immediate Release**

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February 25, 2022  
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## **CTE Work-Based Learning Experience Leads Student to Success After High School**

When Avery Cervantes-Lalone started the BioScience Careers program at the Wilson Talent Center as a junior in high school, he really wasn't sure where it might lead him. He knew he had a passion for science and appreciated the fact that he could start earning credit for something that up until that time had only been a hobby for him.

Over the past few years, Cervantes-Lalone has completed an internship at the East Lansing/Michigan State University Water Treatment Plant, completed the two-year BioScience Careers program, graduated from Williamston High School, landed a job at the Delhi Township Water Treatment Plant and is working on a 2-year water certificate from Bay de Noc Community College. He is excited about his future and appreciates the opportunities he has been awarded.

With February marking Career & Technical Education (CTE) Month®, stories like Avery's show the importance of the work-based learning opportunities provided to students through CTE programs. Work-based learning can come in the form of job shadows, internships, apprenticeships and part-time paid or unpaid employment. These opportunities help students determine if the career path they are exploring is something they can see themselves doing in the future.

"It is so imperative that we have work-based learning partners such as Michigan State University and the City of Mason who allow our students the opportunity to put what they are learning in the classroom into action in a work environment," notes Toby West, BioScience Careers instructor. "Career and Technical Education programs are built on these opportunities for students. CTE gives them real-world experiences that are vital to their educational journey and gives them a jump start on their career goals," West also noted.

Tom Silsby, Skilled Trades Supervisor of Water Treatment Plant, served as Avery's supervisor during his work-based learning experience at Michigan State University. Avery spent eight weeks working with the water treatment department. Silsby included Avery in everything a new employee would experience.



“Being able to participate with Wilson Talent Center’s work-based learning program has been a great experience for me over the years,” Silsby noted. “Avery took on the role with enthusiasm and by the end of the eight weeks, had progressed to a point of being able to discuss plant process adjustments with the operators,” Silsby also noted.

The BioScience Careers program studies laboratory safety, chemical technology, microbiology, DNA technology, forensics, biofuels and water technology during the first year. Students who chose to stay for a second year will complete work-based learning in the area of water technology, can complete two industry certifications, participate in a science fair project and serve as a mentor to first year students. The program has college partnerships for credit with Bay College, Davenport University, Jackson College and Lansing Community College.

The Wilson Talent Center, operated by Ingham Intermediate School District, offers career and technical education programs for high school juniors and seniors who reside in Dansville, East Lansing, Haslett, Holt, Leslie, Mason, Okemos, Stockbridge, Waverly, Webberville and Williamston. Applications are also accepted from Lansing School District, Fowlerville Community Schools and Eaton and Clinton County schools. For more information, visit [Wilson Talent Center](http://www.inghamisd.org/wtc) (www.inghamisd.org/wtc).

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