

Career Tech Matters

by Dennis Franks • Sept. 20, 2019

Most weekdays, Jennifer Widdig's classroom looks like any other room in the science hallway.



But on Wednesdays during mentoring, it transforms into the location of Pickaway-Ross' new student-run credit union offered through a partnership with Atomic Credit Union.

Early this year, Jennifer visited each lab to encourage students to apply for jobs at the credit union. Eighteen students applied and all were hired. The students were divided into teams of nine and will alternate working each week. Students will work as tellers, member services representatives, data entry specialists and bookkeepers.

Jennifer said she was so excited by the support shown for this project by teachers. "Some

teachers are giving extra credit for opening an account or making a deposit."

Natasha Gilbert, Atomic's Education Partnership coordinator, who helped interview students, said the student-run credit unions expand financial education for young people.

Andy Eisnagle, Atomic's director of Financial Education, said students hired by Atomic to work at the school's credit union location gain valuable work experience that "can be used for resumes, community service hours and helping the student figure out if they want to take a business career path."

Atomic Credit Union has hired more than 20 students after graduation, Andy said.

Before this week's grand opening, Jennifer said 50 students had already turned in membership applications.

Jennifer said if Pickaway-Ross meets goals, Atomic will pro-



vide a cash reward that Jennifer would like to divide at the end of the year among workers who have demonstrated the GRIT initiative.

"This would be a cash scholarship that could help students who aren't going to college but need to purchase items they might need for work, such as boots or uniforms or to put gas in their car to get to interviews."

Atomic also offers college scholarships for which any credit union member can apply.

Dennis Franks is superintendent of Pickaway-Ross Career & Technology Center. He can be reached at dennis.franks@pickawayross.com.



ABOVE LEFT: Students participate during the grand opening of the student-run credit union. ABOVE RIGHT: Eighteen students applied early this school year to work at the credit union.