

# GUIDE TO ENGAGING EMPLOYERS



This document is intended for use by NAF academies in their efforts to recruit advisory board members and engage employers in providing work-based learning experiences, including internships, to NAF students.

## Step 1: Inquire!

The first step to engaging employers is listening to their interests, goals, and needs. Here are some questions to start the conversation.

- What do you know about the connection between education and workforce development?
- Are you familiar with your district, school, and academy? What is your perception of them?
- Are you familiar with NAF and its partners?
- Have you worked with high school or college students in the past?
- What does your company need the most from future employees?
- What is your interest in getting involved with the academy?

## Step 2: Inform!

Once you have a better understanding of their interests, you can tell them how your academy aligns. Tell them:

- About your academy and what you're trying to accomplish in schools
- How your academy's success impacts your local community
- How your academy fits into a national education, workforce, and economic movement

Include benefits specific to employers based on your initial inquiry.

## Step 3: Inspire!

- Provide a call to action that allows the employer to explore what the academy is all about. Examples include an opportunity to speak to students, attend an Advisory Board meeting, or attend a work-based learning event
- Get them to commit to something while it's still fresh in mind
- Ask them to bring a colleague to their commitment
- Follow up!
- Thank them for their time!
- Add them to your contact list



**The most important thing we can do as a company is invest in the economic prosperity of our communities. If we can help close the skills gap, we can reduce unemployment and be a force for broadly shared economic opportunity."**

- Jamie Dimon  
Chairman & CEO, JPMorgan Chase

## Benefits to Employers in Partnering with NAF Academies

- Enable businesspeople to play an active role in developing their future workforce by shaping talent in high school
- Generate positive publicity and strengthen company reputation in the community
- Lower recruitment and training costs by developing future employees local to the company
- Increase interest in the company's industry by inspiring the future workforce
- Meet a corporate social responsibility or employee engagement pledge
- Provide an opportunity for employees to use their professional skills to benefit the community
- Improve employee retention by boosting morale and job satisfaction
- Create a skilled, motivated and diverse talent pipeline that reaffirms the firm's commitment to future leaders

## Opportunities to Get Involved

Business partners are essential to the NAF educational design. They provide students with authentic work-based learning experiences and a critical bridge to industry. NAF academies seek business partners to offer a range of opportunities to students. Activities vary in time commitments for volunteers, from one-day activities to longer-term, ongoing commitments.

## SHORT-TERM ENGAGEMENT



### Guest Speak

Talk to a class about your industry, company, and career path.



### Worksite Tour

Invite students to tour your workplace and observe your business.



### Career Fair

Speak to students about your industry, company, and career path.



### Informational Interview

Speak to a student in person, on the phone, or video conference to answer questions about your industry, company, or career path.



### Job Shadows

Host a student at your worksite for a half- or full day.



### Mock Interviews

Simulated professional job interview.

### Career Awareness

- Students build career awareness and begin to identify areas of interest
- Student's primary role is to observe, receive information, and ask questions to acquire knowledge

### Career Exploration

- Students gain deeper understanding of the workplace
- Students play an active role in the experience and apply knowledge in interactions with adults

## LONG-TERM ENGAGEMENT



### Internship

Host a NAF intern at your company. Providing NAF students with high-quality, paid internships helps students develop the skills they need to be successful in college and career, and helps companies engage with their future workforce.



### Join the Advisory Board

NAF advisory board members work closely with academy leadership to provide comprehensive, ongoing support to academy staff and students, acting as ambassadors in their networks and communities to create opportunities for NAF students.

### Career Preparation

- Students apply learning through practical experiences with industry professionals
- Students engage in activities that have consequences beyond the classroom and can be evaluated by professionals