March 10, 2020

East Hampton High School students — 125 juniors, to be exact — fanned out into the community on Thursday, March 5, to get a taste of careers ranging from law enforcement to diesel mechanic to banking to psychotherapy to construction to cosmetology.

It was the fourth such job shadowing day, and the second time buses were available to transport any students who needed a ride to meet one of the 65 adult mentors who had agreed to demonstrate what they do for a living. Other students drive themselves, or mentors pick them up or take them, for instance, from their office to a job site.

“Everyone is so amazing,” Catherine Tyrre, who teaches business classes at the high school and organizes the shadowing day, said after the juniors had followed the adults into courtrooms and classrooms and garages and medical offices and patrol cars, and so forth. “All of us have to do is call or email someone.”

Among those who agreed to participate was Dell Cullum, a photographer and rescuer of wildlife. Shannon McNerney and Brianna Luperico went out in the field with him thanks to their interest in photography and video and film production.

“As soon as I picked them up, I got a wildlife call for a muskrat trapped in a window well, so we went and got the little critter out and on its way. A very exciting start to our morning,” he reported later on Facebook.

The three of them also flew a drone at Lazy Point and shot land camera photos and fed geese at the Nature Trail, which the girls were visiting for the first time. “Great program,” Mr. Cullum by email said on Friday. “I look forward to it each year.”

Meanwhile, LTV hosted four students — Max Eberle, Ella Grenci, Anni Spacek and Megan White — who got to work filming a public service announcement about the shadowing program.

They went with Ellen Watson, LTV’s operations manager, and Danielle Koyles, LTV’s studio manager, to the Animal Rescue Fund shelter, where they interviewed Scott Howe and Jamie Berger, ARF’s executive director and its director of marketing and communication.

Durell Godfrey, a photographer with The East Hampton Star, was also at ARF, doing a photo shoot with another student shadower, Maria Roxana Hernandez, while Michael Heller of The Sag Harbor Express was being shadowed in that village by Evan Mendelman and Lauren Gabbard, who are considering careers in photojournalism.

Ms. Tyrre said other students shadowed architects, engineers, criminal lawyers, politicians, people from the East Hampton Town Natural Resources Department, the authors Tom Clavin and Billy Baldwin, teachers, FBI agents, real estate agents, people at Monk Music Productions, the artist Janet Culbertson, electricians, retail workers, and members of the armed services.

In one case — at John Hummel Builders — students were offered summer jobs, and in others the professionals gave the students their business cards along with offers to mentor them.

The East Hampton School District has been stepping up its career and technology programs, offering culinary arts and auto mechanics training at the high school rather than at BOCES, and the shadowing day is one leg of that effort, Ms. Tyrre explained.

She said it’s great that the juniors have an opportunity to try on a career before pursuing it in the field or in college. This way they can ask, before they jump in, “Is this something that I really will enjoy?” — and answer the question for themselves.