

## *Pennsylvania Free Enterprise Week – Creating our next great workforce!*



**Company Advisor Raylene Boots (second from left) takes a break with her team, Mist Fitz, an outerwear company, on a sunny Wednesday in Williamsport.**

As your partner in supporting local business, we know how difficult it is to find and keep great employees. Many of our young people lack the knowledge and skills you need, or they leave to pursue opportunities because they simply don't know about the great local jobs available right here, right now. That's why we support **Pennsylvania Free Enterprise Week (PFEW)**. PFEW is a youth development program like no other. It teaches high school students about business and our American free enterprise system and helps them develop job ready skills like leadership, communication, work ethic, finance, marketing and more that prepare them for great careers right here at home.

Offered by the Foundation for Free Enterprise Education (FFEE), PFEW holds multiple week-long summer sessions for rising high school juniors and seniors on the campuses of Lycoming College and the Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport. Over 47,000 young Pennsylvanians have benefitted from PFEW since 1979.

PFEW is effective because it is entirely funded and taught by practitioners from the PA business community. Students form teams and run a modern manufacturing company using a robust college-level simulation, making the same decisions real executives make. Volunteer business mentors provide guidance and real-world perspective throughout the week. Teams are responsible for two judged presentations – a stockholders annual meeting and an advertising presentation - where they must demonstrate in-depth knowledge of all facets of business operations. The week is highlighted by Speakers delivering inspiring messages directed at the students' personal and professional development. An ethics case study, other business-related activities and a full immersion in the college experience round out this incredible week of learning.

PFEW 2021 graduate Amaan Syed from Downingtown STEM Academy in Chester County describes the vital importance and impact of PFEW: ***“PFEW was unlike any experience I have ever had, giving me a glimpse into the world of business, transforming my perception of the field in its entirety. What had been previously thought of as just looking at numbers and reports, as well as making decisions, had turned into an exhilarating activity. I learned a lot more this week about business than I had in 16 years, be it classes at my school or other programs. None of them provided the type of high-class education and hands-on activity that PFEW had.”*** Amaan describes why we proudly support PFEW – it educates, it excites, it transforms, and most of all, it *works*, and that benefits us all.

PFEW made a triumphant return to in-person learning in 2021, educating 1,139 students statewide. This summer, they plan to welcome 1,600 eager students to Williamsport for the 43<sup>rd</sup> year of this award-winning program. Students attend on a fully tax-deductible \$625 sponsorship donated by a business, foundation, organization or individual. FFEE is an approved Educational Improvement Organization through the PA Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program. I encourage you to provide PFEW sponsorships for our local students and, if possible, volunteers for the sessions.

FFEE offers two other impactful programs that prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce. The Stock Market Game™ (SMG) teaches students in grades 4-12 about investing and financial literacy, and the Speaker Series helps students explore careers and discover the knowledge and skills needed to become great employees. All Foundation programs are singularly focused on promoting the ideals of business and the American free enterprise system and preparing our young people to become our next great business and community leaders. To learn more about PFEW or their other educational programs, please visit the Foundation's website, [www.pfew.org](http://www.pfew.org), or contact Scott Lee, vice president of marketing & development for the Foundation for Free Enterprise Education at (814) 833-9576 ext. 8, or [scott@pfew.org](mailto:scott@pfew.org).