

# German STEM students tour the North Country

Program will allow American, German students to see career opportunities in North Country

BY CARLY NEWTON  
Press-Republican

**PLATTSBURGH** — Willkommen im Nordland.

A delegation of German STEM Experts from Seigen, Germany, visited the North Country this week in an effort to increase high school students' interest in STEM.

## STUDENT COLLABORATIONS

The North Country Workforce Partnership, Inc. (NCWP) is collaborating with the Universität of Seigen, for the Authentic STEM Project, according to the NCWP press release.

The Authentic STEM project will revolve around students from the North Country and Germany and will "enable the students to enrich their problem-solving skills while being engaged with their respective manufacturing industry and working together in weekly virtual meetings."

The North Country will look to potentially benefit from the STEM project in many ways in the future.

## TRAIN AND SUSTAIN

Michelle Friedman, Director of Career and Technical Education at CV-TEC Division of Champlain Valley Educational Services, stressed the influence the project can have on the North Country area.

"It's important to connect our talented students with opportunities in their own backyard. The work on real-world problems with companies located in the region will inspire students to cultivate their talents," Friedman said.

"Not only do we train our talents, but we sustain our talents. I think a lot of our students think that they have to leave in order to have high-paying jobs. Hopefully, it will inspire them to want



PHOTO PROVIDED

Sylvie Nelson, executive director for the North Country Workforce Partnership, and Brigitta Marx and Dr. Gero Stoffels with the Institute of Mathematics Education at the University of Siegen, tour the nearly completed Makerspace at the Strand Center for the Arts.

to stay in the North Country and have long-lasting fulfilling careers here."

## GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

The cultural exchange is also an important aspect of the project, and Friedman said it will bring more connectivity to the area.

"We're so excited to have more of a global perspective. Social media and the digital age has made the world more accessible, but sometimes it takes away that connectedness," Friedman said.

"By opening up this oppor-

tunity to the German students, in collaboration with the NCWP students, it provides a more personal connection on a world-wide stage. They'll find that they are more alike than they are different, but the cultural exchange is something I'm excited about."

## BUILDING A TOOL KIT

The Authentic STEM project may influence the development of a Tool Kit that could be used by other areas that may want to feature a similar project.

Sylvie Nelson, executive

director of the North Country Workforce Partnership, is already planning for future projects, and the Tool Kit will be useful in that regard.

"We here in the North Country are the first location to host the program. The partnership has been so strong, encouraging and supportive that we are looking beyond the first cycle, we already have interest in a summer cycle," Nelson said.

"We'd like to create a digital tool to get additional locations up and running."

## TOURING THE REGION

The project will give students the opportunity to learn and understand more about the area they live in.

"Additionally, from a North Country and workforce development perspective, this project is crucial because it will allow students to understand what a variety of manufacturing employers create in our region," a NCWP news release said.

"Moreover, its goal is to enable the students to understand career pathway opportunities available in the North

Country and entice them to either pursue their studies or credentials in the region or, should they leave, have them want to come back after completing their studies."

The delegation has visited both the CVES Conference Center and the STEM Makerspace at The Strand Center For the Arts this week.

The group continued their tour to CV-TEC's Mineville campus on Wednesday.

Email Carly Newton:  
newton@pressrepublican.com