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15 C-NS High School students who will take part in a new internship program.

C-NS

MATTYDALE

Students see 'real life'

■ An internship pilot program starting next fall will give 15 C-NS students a view of the working world.

By **LORI DUFFY**
The Post-Standard

Cicero-North Syracuse High School students who want to take part in a new internship program will get a taste of the real world just by applying.

Only 15 students will be accepted into the pilot program next fall.

Interested teens will have to compete for slots in the same way that adults compete for jobs. The process will start with applications and references.

Students who meet qualifications must undergo interviews with faculty. Those chosen for the semester-long internships must sign commitment letters similar to job contracts.

Instead of salaries, the students will earn a half-credit toward high school graduation. The selection process begins in January when students must decide their schedules for the 1998-99 school year.

The new internship program is certified by the state, which requires districts to meet guidelines developed by its education and labor departments. Students must be at least 16 years old to participate, and their parents must sign their applications.

To earn credit, students must spend 27 hours in the classroom and at least 54 unpaid hours at a work site. Teacher Sally Bakker, a state-certified work experience coordinator and the developer of the C-NS internship program, said she is working with Partners for Business and Education, an organization based at Onondaga Community College, to find businesses willing to take on students.

The career fields offered for next fall so far include accounting, advertising, child care, computer programming, fashion design, hospitality, human resources and journalism.

The school board approved the pilot program Sept. 22 for the fall and spring semesters of the 1998-99 school year. If all goes well, the program will become a regular offering at C-NS, school officials say.



TIM REESE/The Post-Standard

Helen and Norman Bullett stand next to plaques engraved with the names of two former students of the former Bessie Riordan Elementary School who gave their lives in World War II.

Couple determined to honor veterans

■ A former student of the old Bessie Riordan Elementary School and her husband are on a mission to memorialize 11 ex-students who gave their lives in World War II.

By **LORI DUFFY**
The Post-Standard

Norman and Helen Bullett got sentimental three months ago when they learned that someone had bought the former Bessie Riordan Elementary School on East Molloy Road.

Helen Bullett is an alumna. She remembers returning to the Mattydale building in adulthood to help honor 11 school friends who gave their lives in World War II.

The veterans' names were engraved on plaques that were mounted on tree protectors. Maples grew in their centers. Helen Bullett and her husband, a veteran who also knew some of the men, wanted one last look before the sale.

"I would drive by here and think, what ever happened to those names," Helen Bullett said. "So we stopped by and checked. There were only two here. Most of the trees are gone."

The sentimental stop became a journey that took the Bulletts from the former Bessie Riordan School to the office of state Assembly Majority Leader Michael Bragman, D-Cicero. There, they asked for help in replacing the memorials.

On the advice of Bragman's staff, the Mattydale couple went to Jerome Melvin, superintendent of the North Syracuse school district. The Bulletts' visit inspired Melvin to go on his own mission.

Melvin hopes to persuade local veterans groups to create a new plaque bearing the names, birth dates, ranks, military affiliations and dates of death of all 11 soldiers.

Melvin will then ask Christopher Community, the building's buyer, to hang the plaque in the former school, he said. Christopher Community plans to convert the building into affordable senior citizen housing. Many of the residents will be familiar with the veterans' names.

"My hope would be to maintain the connection with the community and the school," Melvin said. "You want to maintain a sense of history."

Peter White, executive director of East Syracuse-based Christopher Community, could not be reached for comment Tuesday.

Helen Bullett attended the 1945 ceremony dedicating the plaques when she was 25 years old. The memorial service became an annual event. She and her husband continued to take part until 1981 when the school closed and the services ended.

The maple trees grew so big, most of them busted through the tree protectors. Black metal bars jut out of the trunks of at least two of the surviving maple trees. The school district felled

many of the trees over the years and returned some of the plaques to the families.

Other families never saw the plaques once the trees disappeared. The two remaining plaques honor Edward Fischer, an Army private who died Aug. 21, 1944 at age 22; and Dominick Rossi, an Army sergeant who died July 11, 1943 at age 29.

According to an article in a 1990 issue of the school district's Dispatch newsletter, the other honorees are Pfc. Alexander De Lemo, Pvt. Patsy Capozzi, Pvt. Robert Dunn, Pvt. William Gilmore, 2nd Lt. Edgard Martun, Aviation Ordinance Mate 3rd Class Leonard Michaels Jr., Cpl. Paul Starusnak, Cpl. Robert Thornton and Pfc. Thomas Wevers.

Helen Bullett said she remembers well the fear that permeated the community those days when everyone knew that their relative or friend could be the next name listed in the death announcements. Her only consolation was that her husband was stationed in the United States.

"But I had a brother over there, too," Helen Bullett said. "Everybody was scared. It was sad. You knew them all. They were your friends. Then you read that they died."

The Bulletts said they just want to make sure those memories, those emotions, those men are never forgotten.