



## **West Generation Academy Students Complete Internship Program**

*BBB Foundation SMARTS program gives students hands on workforce experience*

**DENVER—** On Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, West Generation Academy (WGA) students shared their spring internship experiences with friends, family, and staff at the first annual WGA Intern Showcase.

"These internships are incredibly valuable work experiences for our students. Students learned what it means to go to a job, manage long-term tasks, and be responsible for completing projects. They learned valuable skills like time management, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking which will help them wherever they end up," says Chad Cookinham, Director of College and Career Readiness, Generation Schools Network™.

The nine 11<sup>th</sup> grade students shared Prezi presentations describing their accomplishments and the challenges they faced during the 11-week long internship. They provided insight into their favorite, and least favorite, aspects of the experience. "My favorite part about the job was the diversity," shared Stefany Galindo-Bernal, who interned for the Denver VA Hospital. "Every time I got to hear something new. They [the patients] shared their life stories with me."

"All students were enthusiastic about what they had learned in their internships. Even if it led them to want to pursue a different field, all students felt that the experience was beneficial and left them better prepared to succeed after high school," said Cookinham.

"Generation Schools Network has proven to be one of our most valued community partners because it is one of the most forward thinking organizations who really understand the need for a different way of raising employable youth," says Kim States, CEO/Executive Director of BBB-Foundation Serving Denver/Boulder, Colorado. "A major part of this thinking is the investment in internships and the

development of the emotional intelligence that employers today and tomorrow will need. They are the ideal organization for us to plug our SMARTS Program into."

Founded in 2011, the SMARTS program provides students with training in entry-level office tasks through a 10-week long program where students will receive the SMARTS workforce readiness curriculum in class while concurrently completing 80-100 hours of internship hours putting into practice what they are learning in the classroom. This provides a supportive and experiential environment for high school juniors and seniors who are preparing to enter the workforce.

For more information on the SMARTS program and other BBB Foundation programming, visit <http://www.bbb.org/denver/bbb-foundation/> or call (303) 996-3974.

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**ABOUT GNEREATION SCHOOLS NETWORK:** Generation Schools Network™ seeks to transform public education through sustainable, scalable strategies that drive student achievement and teacher effectiveness for all students and teachers.

**ABOUT BBB FOUNDATION:** The mission of the BBB Foundation is to support the future of the Denver/Boulder business community, raising up an ethical marketplace for tomorrow, by creating both ethics education and opportunities for students and youth.