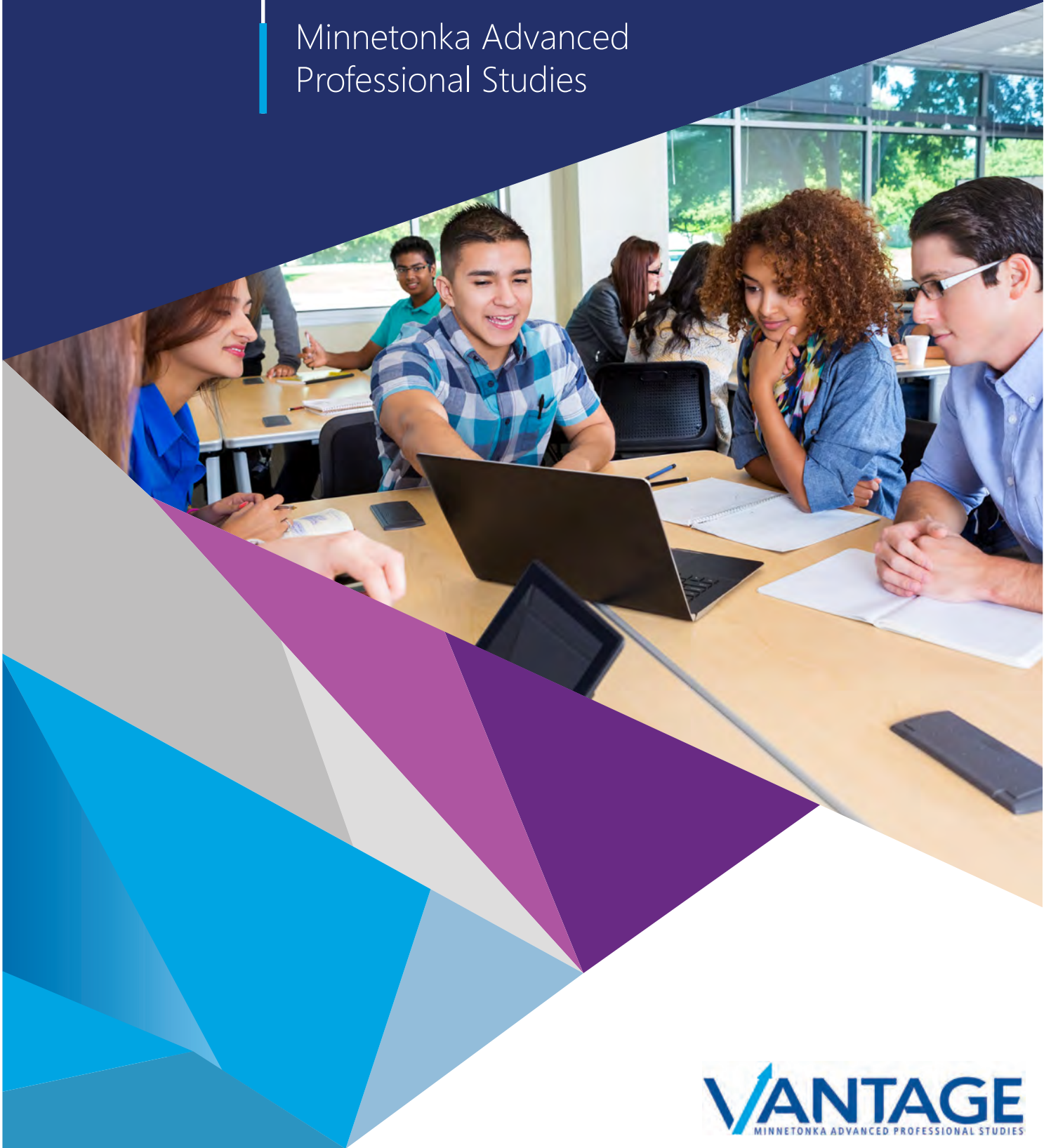


tonkavantage.com

VANTAGE

Minnetonka Advanced
Professional Studies



VANTAGE
MINNETONKA ADVANCED PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

ABOUT

VANTAGE

VANTAGE is Minnetonka High School's advanced professional studies program. Through experiential learning, VANTAGE offers a unique opportunity for high school students to apply their coursework in real-world



FOCUS AREAS

VANTAGE offers seven areas of study:
Business Analytics | Design + Marketing |
Digital Journalism | Global Business |
Global Sustainability | Health Sciences |
User Experience (UX) Design



VANTAGE IMPACT

In a word: CONFIDENCE. At VANTAGE, students develop critical high-level skills that leave them confident in their ability to excel in professional environments. The VANTAGE skills include: Professionalism | Teamwork | Problem Solving | Effective Communication | Leadership



REAL-WORLD PROJECTS

Semester projects are the cornerstone of VANTAGE. Students solve authentic business problems through project-based assignments. Working in teams, students research an important business challenge, formulate recommendations and present their findings to a project client.



settings. Students solve authentic business problems through hands-on learning, project-based assignments and working one-on-one with mentors in the community, all while fulfilling rigorous academic credit requirements.



MENTOR PROGRAM

VANTAGE students work one-on-one with a mentor throughout the year. Mentors are volunteers from the community who have a passion for helping young people develop professionally. In monthly meetings, students receive guidance in areas of professional development, including business projects, presentation skills and networking best practices.



HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES

Students are exposed to regular guest instruction from industry leaders and site visits with companies to meet with experts in real-world professional environments. Events such as HR Day and the Shark Tank competition offer students unique opportunities outside the classroom.



INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

VANTAGE is a dynamic collaboration between Minnetonka High School and the professional community. This is an opportunity to reinvent the learning experience for students and inspire them with an authentic and real-world set of challenges on a daily basis.



Focus Areas

VANTAGE engages students in active, hands-on learning where they apply rigorous academic coursework in relevant, real-world settings across seven focus areas.

Business Analytics

Engage in a real-world experience in a high-demand business field. Students spend both semesters working on a variety of industry-driven projects, solving data-centered business problems and learning about the rewards of project-based work.

Using Excel and Tableau, students analyze and interpret quantitative information as a critical driver of effective business strategy development.

Students examine statistical methods such as sampling concepts, regression analysis and inference procedures and then directly apply them to real and relevant business data. They learn how to build business forecast models based on analytical methods and work with leaders from the data analytics industry such as Nielsen, Centriam and Best Buy to understand how data drives improved performance in modern businesses. [This program is offered to juniors and seniors.](#)

Course Credit

Year-long, two-credit course earns:

AP Statistics (one Math credit)

IB Business Management SL or HL
(one Business elective credit)



Design + Marketing

Students learn interactive, graphic and product design skills and how they are applied in the commercial world. The goal of this course is to bring together form and function to learn and create 2D and 3D products that are designed by creatively combining materials and digital media. Students learn about marketing variables that impact products and how skillfully designed visual images and products succeed in the marketplace.

Students work with local, national and international businesses as they learn to master programs such as Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator. By taking a lead role in planning, designing and presenting work to colleagues and clients, students function as a design and marketing consultant. [This program is offered to juniors and seniors.](#)

Course Credit

Year-long, two-credit course earns:

Marketing I and II
(one Business elective credit)

Graphic and Product Design I and II
(one Art credit—fulfills the MHS Arts credit requirement)

Digital Journalism

Broadcast news is undergoing rapid change. New forms of journalism are emerging across many platforms and industries. VANTAGE Digital Journalism invites students to explore innovative, creative ways of producing stories using video and sound.

Working with digital media professionals, students learn industry standards for digital media as well as broadcast advertising and social media. They explore the world of delivering podcasts, commercials, interviews and public service announcements, as well as community and local business events. [This program is offered to juniors and seniors.](#)

Course Credit

Year-long, two-credit course earns:

Video Production (one Art credit—fulfills the MHS Arts credit requirement)

Digital Journalism and Investigative Research (one English credit)



Global Business

Students engage in real-world experiences in high-demand professional environments, including the Shark Tank competition and professional site visits.

They spend both semesters acting as consultants on partner-driven projects, researching and solving business problems. Students learn fundamental concepts of economics, research best practices, persuasive techniques, public speaking and effective communication. Students explore business principles and functions with an emphasis on technical innovation, operations management, marketing, human resource management and finance. **This program is offered to juniors and seniors.**

Course Credit

Year-long, three-credit course earns:

AP Seminar (one English credit)

IB Business Management SL or HL
(one Business elective credit)

AP Microeconomics (one Social Studies credit)



Global Sustainability

Students engage in real-world experiences in fields related to global sustainability. They learn and grow in areas that offer future employment such as corporate sustainability, food science, food security, food safety, water systems, waste systems, energy conservation and others. Coursework integrates physical, biological and information sciences to the study of the environment and global economics.

Students spend both semesters working on a variety of industry-driven projects, solving research problems and learning about the challenges and rewards of project-based work. They also learn about economics and the policy implications of food sustainability, with an emphasis on the global nature of food production and its impact on communities and the environment. **This program is offered to juniors and seniors.**

Course Credit

Year-long, two-credit course earns:

Global Studies and Economics
(one Social Studies credit)

AP Environmental Science (one Science elective credit)



Health Sciences

Students participate in health science-related experiences to understand future employment opportunities in this growing sector of the economy. In addition to their coursework in AP Psychology and Human Anatomy, students can earn certification as a certified nursing assistant or emergency medical responder. This certification gives students advanced training and a jump-start in the field of health care.

Students receive regular guest instruction and attend site visits with health science leaders such as the University of Minnesota, Children's Minnesota and Excelen Center for Bone & Joint Research and Education. Students gain a firm understanding of psychology and the human system, including a generalist view of the many professions available as a prospective health care professional. **This program is offered to juniors and seniors.**

Course Credit

Year-long, 2.25 credit course earns:

AP Psychology (one Social Studies credit)

Human Anatomy (one Science elective credit)

Medical Sciences (.25 Science elective credit) Nursing Assistant Registered or Emergency Medical Responder



User Experience (UX) Design

Students explore the convergence of computer science and design as they develop mobile applications and website designs for project partners.

While focusing on the user interface and the overall user experience, student teams propose solutions that drive new capabilities and important business improvements. With a focus on human-centered design, students will get a jump-start into developing products by empathizing with the user first. **This course is offered to sophomores, juniors and seniors.**



Course Credit

Year-long, two-credit course earns:

AP Computer Science Principles
(one Computer Science elective credit)

Digital Interface Design
(one Art credit—fulfills the MHS Arts credit requirement)

A unique experience

At VANTAGE, students spend two or three periods of their school day at the VANTAGE building. Students make a commitment for the year. Under the direction of Minnetonka High School teachers, students study the needs of corporate and community partners, engage with mentors, and execute real-world projects for a variety of project sponsors.

Tailored to the student

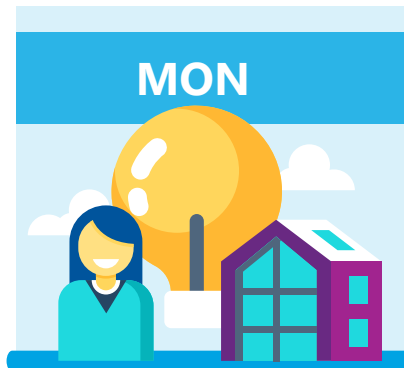
VANTAGE prepares students for future success by building relationships that benefit them after high school. Students build a competitive high school transcript and college application by applying coursework to real-world projects, developing professional skills and working with corporate and community partners.

In collaboration with partners

Working with local partners, VANTAGE's project-based curriculum addresses targeted skills needed to be successful in professional environments. Students are prepared for the future's high-skill, high-demand careers.

A Week

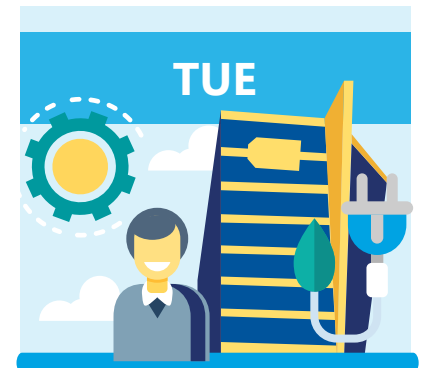
in the life of a VANTAGE student



I start my day at **VANTAGE**, which is just a couple miles from the high school.

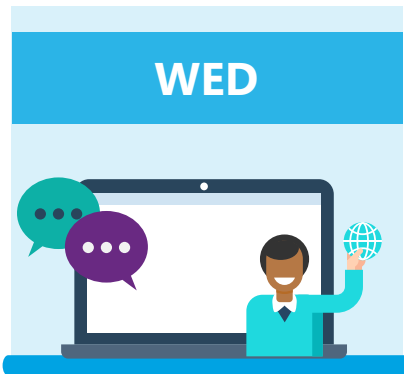
I listen to a **guest instructor** talk about how she became an entrepreneur and how we can begin building skills to do the same thing.

Next up, I meet with my **project group** to plan my primary research for a client project.



I head to a **site visit** at Best Buy headquarters.

While there, I learn about the company's **supply chain** and environmental work in the community.



Human Resources Day is around the corner, so I work on my resume and LinkedIn profile to get ready.

My **mentor** meets me at VANTAGE and we talk about my upcoming mock interview.



We're talking about **customer experience** today.

I build a customer **journey map** based on class lectures and previous guest instructors.



Today is **practice presentation** day. I present my project to an outside volunteer and receive feedback.

My group and I participate in a conference call with our project partner and **design a survey** to support our client research.



Students who are two and three years into their college or career paths are really seeing how VANTAGE is paying off. The greatest and most consistent message they share is that it's not just the content but the unique and real-life experiences they had being a VANTAGE student that had the largest impact.

LEAH DASOVICH
VANTAGE Instructor

STUDENT

Skill Development

VANTAGE students develop essential skills that help them adapt and thrive in an ever-changing world.



Professionalism

Students act with integrity, give and receive constructive feedback, and conduct themselves in a way that is appropriate for the situation.



Teamwork

Students learn how to successfully operate on high-functioning and cross-disciplinary teams by being agile, accountable and action-oriented.



Problem Solving

Students develop creative solutions to client challenges through curiosity, resiliency and critical thinking.



Effective Communication

Students explore all dimensions of communication from written to non-verbal to presentation skills, developing the ability to tailor and deliver messages to different audiences.



Leadership

Navigating with confidence, students achieve their highest potential and inspire others to do the same.

90%

Rated VANTAGE **superior to their traditional experience** at Minnetonka High School.

96%

Positively rated their VANTAGE **instructors**.

93%

Positively rated their **overall experience** with VANTAGE.



I used to think VANTAGE was just about Global Business. Now I know it has many

DIFFERENT FOCUS AREAS.

I'm working with a broadcast expert as my mentor and learning a ton about the digital industry.

MADDIE | Digital Journalism student



"The number of labs in the Global Sustainability class really surprised me in a good way. We have done everything from testing the efficacy of sunscreen to raising baby chicks to understanding soil acidity and how that affects the supply chain.

IT OPENS YOUR EYES

to where food comes from.

MAC | Global Sustainability student



This is my second year in VANTAGE. First I took Global Business and now Business Analytics.

The experience has helped me

BUILD MY CONFIDENCE,

leadership skills and presentation skills. I already feel like it's making a difference as I apply to college."

TYLER | Business Analytics student



I love spending three hours of my high school day at VANTAGE. You really get to develop a more personal connection with your teachers and peers. Plus,

NO TWO DAYS ARE THE SAME.

JOHN | Global Business student



MY MENTOR IS AMAZING.

He's a college professor at the University of St. Thomas and has helped me write letters to athletic directors as I prepare my college applications. The connections the program has created are awesome. I'm signing up for a different focus area next year!

ALLI | Health Sciences student



VANTAGE
Mentorship

The Mentor Program is an integral component of the VANTAGE experience.

All VANTAGE students are assigned a one-on-one mentor for the academic year. The mentor is a trusted and experienced advisor. Students receive guidance around many areas of professional development including: business projects, presentation skills, LinkedIn profiles, resume creation and networking best practices. Input and involvement from the mentor are critical to enhance student learning in this experiential, project-based program.

The major criteria to become a mentor is a desire and commitment to encourage and motivate a high school student in the areas of career and life exploration and development.

Mentor
Topics
throughout the year



SEP

Get to Know Each Other

Learn more about a mentor's career journey.

OCT

Collaborate with Teams

Understand team dynamics and gain tips for successfully navigating in a team.

NOV

Manage Time & Stress

Discuss strategies for managing priorities when you have too much to do.

DEC

Present with Impact

Practice your client presentation and receive feedback.

JAN

Lead Yourself & Others

Explore the traits of a great leader and share best practices.

FEB

Present Yourself

Learn about a mentor's interview experience and receive feedback on your resume.

MAR

Embrace Diversity

Talk about what diversity means and how it is important in the workplace and school.

APR

Live Your Values

Discuss the role your values play in your career.

MAY

Plan the Future

Gain insight into how to network and seek professional advice in the future.





RAY WIZBOWSKI

CMO Entrust Datacard
VANTAGE Mentor

TRENT

Design + Marketing student

Working with my mentor has empowered me to take initiative. This experience is vital for students who strive to put their best foot forward every day.

”

HANDS-ON

Experiences

From day one, VANTAGE students are off-site in a professional setting. Guest instructors, 1:1 mentors and professional-partner projects are the primary focus of class time.



Shark Tank

Students in Global Business work individually or in teams to prepare a business plan for a new product or service. They present to a panel comprised of local venture capitalists and successful entrepreneurs for the opportunity to be the next VANTAGE Shark Tank winner.



HR Day

VANTAGE students have their resume reviewed and practice interviewing with professionals from the world of Human Resources. Expert panels take student questions and help students navigate the challenging process of landing the right job.

I plan on hiring one of the digital journalism students for a summer internship. After seeing the quality of work coming from VANTAGE students, I'm convinced I want them in my business.

PROJECT SPONSOR
Digital Journalism

REAL-WORLD

Projects



Stand out on your college application by focusing your essay on a project you completed in your field. Demonstrate passion and experience in your chosen field.

Projects are the cornerstone of the VANTAGE experience. VANTAGE students collaborate to solve real problems for real clients through project-driven work. A sample of projects includes:



Business Analytics

Big Thrill Factory: Analyze which elements of redemption areas influence consumer behavior to increase profitability and determine how the number of game plays and ticket redemption impact staffing needs.

Best Buy: Identify which factors are essential to determine the appropriate productivity level for the fleets, including analyzing weekly data sets, service call data and vehicle maintenance details.

Target: Explore how the assortment architecture in the furniture department allows retailers to be profitable within specific SKUs and recommend strategy for opening price points.



Global Business

Caribou Coffee: Recommend strategies for making the Caribou Coffee Perks program and other promotions more relevant to high school students.

General Mills: Develop an overview of how the teen consumer approaches breakfast and snacking occasions and a point of view on the types of communication and advertising that resonates with them.

Habitat for Humanity: Enhance Habitat's corporate sponsorship program by conducting primary and secondary research, analyzing data and providing recommendations on how to restructure the program.



Design + Marketing

CityKid Farms: Create a series of graphic design collateral, increase Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) subscriptions and develop interactive experiences for the public along the greenway bike path.

JUUT SalonSpa: Develop an innovative branding strategy for the company's new location in Wayzata, Minnesota.

Westonka Food Shelf: Develop branding materials, exterior and interior signage and wayfinding materials for the organization's new location in Mound, Minnesota.



Global Sustainability

SunOpta: Develop new smoothie flavors for product launch that leverage sustainable ingredients and appeal to consumer tastes.

University of Minnesota: Research best practices in recycling and composting behavior management to support expansion of multi-channel waste management system.

Cargill: develop new chocolate powder formulation to create a new product opportunity for Truvia all-natural sweetener.



Digital Journalism

FASTSIGNS: Research the customer experience and develop short commercials that improve the customer relationship management process for Fast Signs.

Loaves & Fishes: Develop a compelling overview of the organization that helps them recruit volunteers and increase donor participation in programs.

GiGi's Playhouse: Create a video to be used at the organization's annual fundraising gala that highlights the need for funding while staying true to their belief of empowerment.



Health Sciences

Sholom Homes: Interview residents to develop recommendations on how to improve sense of community for residents.

Minnetonka Aquatics: Analyze best practices and create recommendations on how to best develop and implement an aquatic therapy program.

The Glenn: Research resident experiences to develop programs to improve sense of purpose in the community.



User Experience (UX) Design

Nelson Grass Farms: Research and create prototypes/design elements for a mobile app to support an improved customer experience.

HockeyStop: Create a mobile app and enhancements to the HockeyStop website to better manage the customer experience and improve satisfaction.

Kiddywampus: Develop a technology-enabled user experience for their event and space rental businesses.

VANTAGE Industry Partnerships

Become a **VANTAGE Partner**

VANTAGE isn't just for students! Every week at VANTAGE there are dozens of community members mentoring students, coaching student teams, guest instructing or hosting site visits. The "VANTAGE Ecosystem" works because hundreds of professionals find it rewarding to be part of the future of education. Most partners who get involved decide to come back for more because being part of the VANTAGE world is both fun and rewarding.

VANTAGE is a partnership-based platform, changing the face of education. Join us as we create a very special and unique experience for tomorrow's leaders. Roles for partners include:

Project Partners

Organizations provide a student team with a real challenge in their current environment. Student teams spend several months researching and designing solutions to the challenge. The result is a win-win. Students gain real-world experience, and partners get critical help with a real challenge.

Mentors

Develop a deeper relationship with a single VANTAGE student, helping them navigate the challenges associated with entering the professional world.

Guest Instructors

Professionals with expertise in an area covered by a VANTAGE strand come in to the classroom and provide experience-based expertise that make course topics come to life.

Site Visits

An industry expert hosts students at a work site to experience real-world business environments.



In Good Company

Our students have worked with world-class organizations across a range of industries:

Best Buy	Lifetouch Photography
Cargill	Lola Red PR
Caribou Coffee	MN United
Children's Minnesota	Nike
Emerson	Oracle
Evereve	Sholom Homes
General Mills	SunOpta
GiGi's Playhouse	Target
Hubbard Broadcasting	Thrivent Financial
KARE 11	University of Minnesota
Kowalski's	Valleyfair
Lakewinds	

Our Advisory Board

The VANTAGE Advisory Board is made up of senior-level business and community advisors who provide VANTAGE with knowledge, expertise and connections that expand and enhance those of the school district's management and directors.

Advisory Board members represent a broad range of industries that directly support the seven areas of focus at VANTAGE. In addition to being mentors to current students, they actively advocate on behalf of the program both in and out of the classroom. Board members serve terms up to three years in length.



We have managed 350+
Projects
in the last seven years



- New product launches
- Focus groups
- Marketing analysis
- Event planning and management
- Social media strategies
- Marketing planning
- Price strategy development
- Brand development
- Pricing elasticity analysis



Contact Us

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