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Industry experts talk to students about their careers
BLOOMFIELD - About 40 gifted math and science students from Bloomfield High School listened intently today as local high-tech specialists, most only a few years older than the students, explained how their coursework could help them obtain a rewarding career in the high-tech field.

In an effort to help students take advantage of the high-tech industry's need for trained workers, U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) hosted a technology career forum at the high school, and invited representatives from the Hartford Technology Services Company to encourage students to consider a career in this field. The company provides programmers and other information technology resources to help companies manage their peak workload periods without adding fixed staffing costs.

Larson stated that the importance of today's forum is evidenced in the fact that "currently, there are more than 800,000 jobs going unfilled in the high-tech market. That's incredible. We have to make sure in this economy that we are creating a pipeline of highly skilled workers who can fill these jobs. The talent that thrives in these Bloomfield High School math and science students, and others just like them in schools across the country, is what we need to nurture and inspire if the U.S. is to remain competitive in our future digital economy."

According to a recent study released by the Information Technology Association, information technology has dramatically changed the composition of the U.S. workforce by producing an incredible demand for IT workers. In a total U.S. IT workforce of 10 million, the shortfall created means one job in every dozen will be vacant.

Trish Hadfield, who handles wireless Internet connections for Hartford Technology Services Company, told the students that the reason she enjoys working in the technology industry is because "the industry is always changing, and there is always an opportunity to learn something new."

Larson, who is a former teacher, has introduced three bills dealing with high-tech education in the classroom, which he believes is the best place students can become prepared for the country's digital future. The House recently passed one bill, the Science and Educational Networking Act.

On February 15, the House passed the Networking and Information Technology Research Development Act (H.R. 2086). Larson's Science and Educational Networking Act, which aims to develop a strategic plan for the creation of a national technological infrastructure to connect public schools and libraries to the information superhighway, was offered as an amendment and was adopted. The bill (H.R. 2086), with Larson's amendment, is now under consideration in the Senate.

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