

# AWARD WINNERS

## Corporation Learning

*Kearny School District • Hudson County*

*They* learn how to make presentations before an audience, wearing appropriate business attire. They learn how to manage resources like time, money, materials, space and staff. They learn how to work on a team. They learn how to reason, make decisions and solve problems. Although it sounds like a business course at a collegiate level, it is a process that has been used for six years at Kearny High School in physics and earth science classes. The brainchild of physics teacher John O'Hara, Corporation Learning puts aside the basic lecture method of instruction and engages the students as active participants in the learning process.

The restructured classroom assumes the characteristics of a corporation, the students become the employees or associates of the firm, and the teacher represents the CEO.

Students are required to submit a resume that cites their qualifications and background to apply for a specific team. Each team functions according to the different learning styles of the members. The whole process is tailored to fulfill the Core Curriculum Content Standards as well as develop the workplace readiness skills established by the state.

"We meet seven periods a week for a 14-period cycle," says O'Hara. "For four of those periods I will teach. The fifth period is for planning. The remainder of the cycle the students are involved in presentations." O'Hara has his students assembled in teams based on their skills so they are naturally diverse and the students learn to function within them.

The student response to Corporation Learning has been very positive, and there has been a noticeable improvement in test

scores since the introduction of the program. When asked if his students are all high achievers, O'Hara says, "Not really. They are typical kids, and I sometimes have to remind them about what is appropriate. I tell them to leave their high school behavior outside. In our class, you have to remember where you are. We are task-oriented and we want results. It's a lot of responsibility on them." Corporation Learning is in

the business of teaching skills that will last a lifetime.

### Contact:

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Corporation Physics students Steve Lagerstrom and Devon Tutak shake hands with Governor Whitman at a New Jersey Education Summit.