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Notes from editor (not for publication):

HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

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More than 250 students take part in BDCC Reality Fair

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TEXT BODY:

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Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) hosted its fourth annual “Reality Fair” at Leland & Gray High School Oct. 1, helping students across Windham County gain practical financial literacy and “adulting” skills they’ll carry for life.

More than 250 eighth- and 11th-graders from Twin Valley Middle High School, Leland & Gray Middle and High School, Bellows Falls Union High School, Brattleboro Union

12 High School, and the Windham Regional Career Center attended
13 the event. 80-plus volunteers from local businesses, colleges, and
14 other organizations ran interactive booths to guide students
15 through a series of challenges.

16 At the “Financial Literacy Experience,” students received
17 a “paycheck” from an entry-level job connected to their passions
18 and postsecondary goals. Career opportunities included jobs in
19 the trades, health care, education, and the arts — jobs that
20 actually exist right here in Windham County.

21 With their monthly earnings, students were challenged to
22 navigate the “Game of Life,” balancing needs like housing,
23 transportation, and retirement savings with wants like pets,
24 vacations, and dining out. Adding to the fun and the realism was
25 the “Wheel of Fortune,” where a spin could lead to an
26 unexpected car repair, a late payment on a credit card, or if
27 they’re lucky, a surprise birthday gift from Grandma.

28 To complete their assignment, students met with
29 financial advisors to balance their budget and discuss taxes,
30 credit, and student loans. Advisors included approximately 30
31 employees from area banks, as well as seniors who take business
32 and finance classes at their home schools.

33 Beyond finances, students rotated through an “Adulting
34 101 Experience,” a series of booths focused on the practical skills
35 every young adult needs. Local professionals volunteered their
36 expertise to teach skills like changing a tire, cooking on a budget,
37 managing personal health, tying a tie, gardening, and even
38 preparing for travel abroad. Students capped off the event with
39 snow cones, gift card prizes, “and a sense of accomplishment —
40 along with a new appreciation for the realities of adult life,” said
41 organizers.

42 “Because of the incredible support from our community,
43 students got hands-on practice making informed financial and life
44 decisions—exactly the kind of experience that sticks,” Christy
45 Betit, BDCC workforce and education specialist, said in a news
46 release. “With so many community volunteers, plus support from

47 school staff and educators, this event embodies the power of
48 partnership in preparing students for life after high school.”
49 BDCC will continue to provide opportunities for
50 Windham County students to connect classroom learning with
51 career and college readiness experiences throughout the year. For
52 more information or to learn how to participate in future
53 workforce and education initiatives at local schools, contact Betit
54 at cbetit@brattleborodevelopment.com.

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