



## For Immediate Release

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## Nashville Freshmen Chart Path to College and Careers

*Seventh Annual 'My Future, My Way' Career Exploration Fair Helps  
High School Freshmen Learn Firsthand from Future Employers*

**NASHVILLE, Tenn. (Nov. 12, 2015)** – The exhibit floor of the Music City Center buzzed with excitement and nervous energy today as more than 7,000 Davidson County high school freshmen jammed the convention hall to ask questions of business and technology companies, public utilities, police and fire agencies and dozens of local employers about the skills necessary to make it to college or a good career. The seventh annual "My Future, My Way" Career Exploration Fair was hosted by Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) and the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, and was sponsored for the fifth consecutive year by Shoney's. The event included participation from Shoney's Chairman and CEO David Davoudpour, Tennessee Congressman Jim Cooper and Nashville Mayor Megan Barry.

"I couldn't be more pleased by the collaboration between Shoney's, MNPS and the Nashville Chamber on this year's Career Exploration Fair," said Davoudpour. "When you see the curiosity expressed by the students and the questions they ask our vendors, you can see young people taking a real interest in the direction of their careers."

More than 200 Middle Tennessee employers participated in the Career Exploration Fair. Davoudpour was joined by Barry and Metro Nashville Public Schools Interim Director Chris Henson in presenting the Best in Show award.

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“Talking to the students gives you a real sense of the opportunity the Career Exploration Fair presents,” said Barry. “They’ve provided a chance to learn how the courses they study in high school can lead to professional options in the future and can prepare them for the path they want to take.”

“This event is always a big win for our students because of the conversations it sparks,” said Henson.

“Thousands of Metro students engage in meaningful conversations with professionals of all types to explore their options for what to do after high school. When they leave, they have conversations with themselves, their parents and each other about where their interests lie and what they can do in the classroom to help get there.”

“Attracting high-quality jobs to Middle Tennessee is going to depend to a large extent on the quality of the workforce we’re able to create,” said Ralph Schulz, president and CEO, Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce.

“Helping young people choose a career path that’s going to be in demand will be a significant factor in our region’s continued economic growth.”

### **About the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce**

The Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce is Middle Tennessee’s largest business federation, representing more than 2,200 member companies. *Belong, engage, lead, prosper* embodies the Chamber's focus on facilitating community leadership to create economic prosperity for Middle Tennessee. The work of the Nashville Area Chamber is supported by members and sponsors; the Chamber’s Pivotal Partners (a partnership at the highest level for all Chamber programs and events) are Delek US Holdings, Bass, Berry & Sims, PLC, BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee, Community Health Systems, First Tennessee and Ryan LLC. Together with its affiliates, the Nashville Chamber works to strengthen the region’s business climate and to enhance Nashville’s position as a desirable place to live, work and visit. For more information, visit [www.nashvillechamber.com](http://www.nashvillechamber.com).

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