

## **Students get real-world design, marketing experience**

### **Profit always a consideration with products**

KETTLE MORaine SCHOOL DISTRICT

**By Jake Ekdahl**

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WALES — It's not uncommon to hear parents express a desire to see their children's schools emphasize teaching career skills. At Kettle Moraine High School, there's a program that offers about as much realworld career experience as possible.

Students there are working with real clients in the community to design and produce marketing materials and merchandise.

Peter Kopperud, a senior, has done recent work with the firm Momentum Realty Group. He worked with them to design several logo concepts and make their theme work from both an aesthetic and practicality standpoint. "There's a lot of subtleties in designing graphics," he said. "As you're working you kind of evolve your design."

Kopperud has learned to take into account what kind of products a logo might be impressed on, and to make adjustments accordingly. Cost-effectiveness can vary widely when it comes to color, size and complexity. That knowledge is set to help him as he moves on to college.

"You get a little taste of the real-world experience and it kind of helped me realize this is what I want to do," he said. He plans to attend a University of Wisconsin school and further pursue marketing and graphics.

Marketing Business teacher Erika Dugger said she makes sure students learn not just how to design and produce something, but to do it

profitably. Students even have a competition to create products with the highest profit.

Dugger has been co-teaching the retail, merchandising and product development course and advanced retail merchandising course with Tech Education teacher Patrick Stinnett

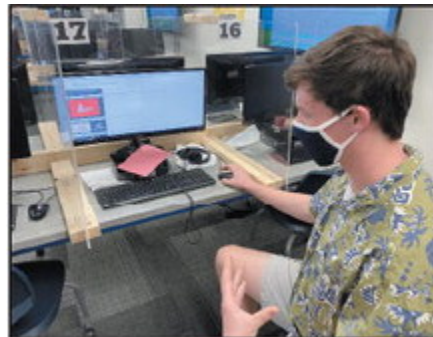
since 2018.

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Kettle Moraine High School senior Jake Baumann stencils a vinyl design for a T-shirt he plans to wear.

Jake Ekdahl/Freeman Staff



Kettle Moraine High School senior Peter Kopperud showcases marketing work he did for a real estate firm.



A studentdesigned logo promoting a Kettle Moraine event sits ready to be impressed onto T-shirts and other items.

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Design

all they do... The quality is there (and) the price is beyond reasonable.”

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Enrollment in the program has increased since then. They began with 20 students and have since more than doubled that.

“We do a lot of stuff for the community,” Stinnett said. “It keeps the dollars in the district.” Money earned through the program is reinvested and also helps offset costs.

“That’s stuff the kids learn about,” Stinnett said. “Our paint costs money, our emulsion costs money, our vinyl costs money.”

Everything from logo design to printing, working with vinyl and even laser etching can be done from the on-campus workshop.

The school itself benefits from having such capabilities nearby, too. Products are produced and sold at the school store and promotional materials are put together in smaller, more cost-effective batches than wouldn’t otherwise be possible at the same price if the district had to use a third party service.

Students are getting sales experience too, reaching out to local businesses and letting them know about the services they can offer.

One local business, Always Beautiful Lawns, made use of the program and was impressed. Scott Hettwer got a firsthand account not only through his business, but also because his son Zac is a senior in the program.

Hettwer said the program has been helpful for Zac, who wasn’t able to take part in an internship at a local sports apparel business due to COVID-19, but is still getting that experience at school.

“I’m proud of that whole situation, that’s all he talks about now when he comes home,” he said. “The quality of the stuff that I’m getting out of Kettle Moraine is just as good as (some) other

Other local customers include an organic farmer who had her beehives laser-engraved and a fitness apparel company.

Students also help run an online store where the products they make are available for purchase, [laser-locker.com](https://laser-locker.com).

Dugger said, eventually, she’d like to be able to add a third class to the program and allow students to take the experience one step further.

“It seems to be catching on,” Hettwer said. “Word must be getting out there now, that they’re doing this... Parents are starting to hear about it.”



Kettle Moraine High School senior Zac Hettwer works on a screen template for T-shirt logo production.

Jake Ekdahl/Freeman Staff

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