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Baldwin Park Unified Students Broaden Goals at CISCO-Meraki Headquarters

BALDWIN PARK – Sixteen Baldwin Park High School students in Baldwin Park Unified’s emerging CISCO Networking Academy went behind the scenes Sept. 25 at the CISCO-Meraki headquarters in San Francisco to gain experience and insight from professionals.

Students worked with the latest technologies and experienced the booming tech industry in the area, including virtual reality learning, during the trip funded by CISCO-Meraki – one of the world leaders in creating network systems.

“Most of the employees at CISCO were self-taught and that’s amazing to think about – I love that you can start studying for certification in high school and then have the option to go further in college,” Baldwin Park High School senior Nicholas Brown said. “It was great to see the really mellow work environment. They had a snack bar on every floor, and a gym and game room to relieve stress.”

BPHS students, ranging from freshmen to seniors, explored the office layouts and amenities and attended a video conference with CISCO-Meraki CEO Todd Nightingale, who urged them to build bigger visions for their lives and pursue their passions.

“Before, I used to think what’s the point of coming to high school and just copying things off the board,” BPHS freshman Arianda Torres said. “After the experience, it made me think that everything I’m learning now is what I need to get into a good college.”

Students experienced distance-learning with professors around the country who use CISCO devices and software in their classrooms. A panel of CISCO-Meraki employees talked about how they overcame obstacles and personal struggles to be where they are today.

“Even though they might have been in the same situations as we are, they stuck through it and found a way to get a degree and job out of it,” BPHS freshman Rene Cisneros said. “This showed me how hard work can get me to a work environment that is open and social.”

This is Cisneros’ second year in the CISCO Networking Academy. The program, which launched in the 2018-19 school year, is open to eighth-graders from Jones Junior High School.

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Seventy-five students are enrolled this year, including eighth-graders from Jones Junior High. The CISCO Networking Academy provides curriculum that spans the fundamentals of networking, security, data and analytics, as well as various computing devices and operating systems.

Through the partnership with CISCO-Meraki, Baldwin Park High School is bolstering the CISCO Academy to develop a career technology pathway that will certify students for work after graduation.

PHOTO

CISCO-MERAKI: Sixteen Baldwin Park High School students went behind the scenes Sept. 25 at the CISCO-Meraki headquarters in San Francisco to gain hands-on work experience and insight from professionals.

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