

Eisenhower Presidential Library's School to Career Program for Area Students

Story by
James (Jim) Hill
Public Programs Specialist
Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library & Museum

Owen Brittan, an Abilene High School senior, recently joined the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum as a school to career program student. Brittan will spend the semester transcribing an oral history of a prominent three star World War II general. Jim Leyerzapf, the School to Career Archives Program Coordinator, states that “Abilene High School students like Owen will assist with the work of public history professionals where they are exposed to an organization’s operations—its rules, procedures, and experiences. Hopefully such an experience will prepare them for the world of work when their high school education is completed”. The School to Career program provides a job shadowing experience.

Brittan follows Amanda Soelter, also of Abilene High School, who just completed her program. He states that he “liked the subject of history all along, especially world history.” He wants to pursue a career in history but is not sure exactly in what area. He states that he would “maybe become a history professor if teaching were involved.”

Brittan is not new to the library. Last May, he participated in “Five Star Leaders: Crisis at Little Rock” that re-created the events of the 1957 public school integration crisis that was precipitated by the Supreme Court’s 1954 *Brown* decision. According to Kim Barbieri, the Library’s Education Specialist, “His role-playing captured the essence of Orval Faubus, the segregationist Arkansas Governor, and made him a believable historical character.” Barbieri added, “Brittan set the bar very high for future students playing the role, readily grasping the complex rationale of the 1957 segregationist viewpoint.”

This program is available to all area high schools. For more information about this and other programs, please call the library at 785-263-6700 or visit us at www.eisenhower.archives.gov.