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# News Release

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## Milton High's Social Innovators Academy Teaches Real-world Skills and Design Thinking

Milton High School students have a new opportunity to turn their passions and ideas into real-world entrepreneurial opportunities. The high school recently became the first public school partnership with the GivingPoint organization, creators of the Social Innovators Academy.

The partnership kicked off with 25 talented and gifted (TAG) students participating in weekly Lunch and Learns to find out how to build a company, form a nonprofit, raise funds and more. Community presenters such as local chamber of commerce members and business owners volunteer for these presentations, ensuring that students experience real-world examples of entrepreneurship. At each session, students learn about a new aspect of innovation and review what they learned the previous week.

"The response has been enthusiastic from both the community and the students," said Milton TAG coordinator Renee Denney, who first heard about the program through a student and invited GivingPoint to partner with her classes. "Milton High is pleased to provide new programs to enrich students' learning and opportunities beyond the classroom."

Throughout the school year, Social Innovators Academy members will learn about social entrepreneurship, networking, marketing, research, and other skills, all while getting to meet and interact with local experts and business leaders in the community.

"We want them to gain a sense of their own power and potential, and learn the skills they need to lead social innovation," said GivingPoint Director of Programs James Aucoin. "Our vision is to inspire this generation to be a generation of givers."

At the end of the semester, students will participate in "Shark Tank" style presentations, with a chance to win scholarships and bring their nonprofit dreams to life. Sophomore Sloan Salinas is drawing on personal experience for her semester-long project. Sloan, who attended summer camp with five students from Parkland, Fla., is looking into providing service animals for teens and children with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). "I'm addressing the problem of PTSD in children and young adults, which doesn't always get a lot of attention," Sloan said.

GivingPoint looks for projects that will positively impact the community. "GivingPoint has been inspiring teens to give back to their communities and to make a difference in the world since 2009," said Mr. Aucoin. "The Social Innovators Academy was developed when we realized that students had more than just a passion for service. They have brilliant and innovative ideas of their own."

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**About the Fulton County School System.** The Fulton County School System is the fourth largest school system in Georgia. More than 95,000 students attend 106 schools in the cities of Alpharetta, Chattahoochee Hills, College Park, East Point, Fairburn, Hapeville, Johns Creek, Milton, Mountain Park, Palmetto, Roswell, Sandy Springs, South Fulton and Union City.