WARRIOR WEEKLY

INNOVATION IN ACTION:
PUTTING 21ST CENTURY SKILLS TO THE TEST

"Innovation in Action is opening doors that I didn't even know were there," said CCHS Sophomore, Landon Raab.

As a college preparatory school, the faculty and staff at CCHS understand the importance of equipping students with 21st century skills. Gone are the days of passive learning and rote memorization. Today's students need to be able to think critically, work collaboratively, and exhibit innovation. Enter project-based learning.

"Project-based learning is important because it helps students develop the necessary 21st century skills, such as critical thinking and collaboration, to make them successful in higher education and tommorow's workforce," said Lead Technology teacher, Mrs. Katie Chappell. **"In the 'Innovation in Action' class we focus on building creative confidence through the design thinking process. Students complete a series of hands-on activities that develop their STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) skills while requiring them to think outside of the box."**

Probably the most popular project amongst the students is the paper ball run experiment. Equipped with only paper and tape, students are tasked with the challenge of creating a ball run that takes as long as possible for the ball to travel from the entrance to the exit. Think of the contraption in the popular board game Mouse Trap. Through creating their ball run, teams learn the basics of kinematics and kinetic energy, as they first test their ramp with a ping pong ball, and eventually move on to a denser, and therefore faster, marble.

"This project requires students to explore different forms of energy," said Mrs. Chappell. **"They are learning higher level math and science concepts, such as gravitational potential energy, that are usually taught in a physics class, in a tangible and engaging way."**

Innovation in Action is one of several technology courses availableto students. These classes are considered Practical Art classes, which enable students to obtain their art credit required for graduation. Additional projects the technology students have completed this year include 3D printed mugs, Tinkercad Christmas songs using an Arduino, and creating their own avatar, amongst others.

"The critical thinking and teamwork skills I learned in Innovation in Action have helped prepare me for any future career. I know how to work well with others and successfully answer any question thrown at me," said CCHS Sophomore, George Bettelli.