



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Sumter County Schools Career and Technical Education Student of the Month for January 2024

[Bushnell, Florida] – The Sumter County School District would like to recognize the Sumter Career and Technical Education Student of the Month. The “CTE” student of the month for January 2024 is Jessica Dawson from South Sumter High School.

Jessica has lived in Sumter County for the past 12 years and is currently a junior at South Sumter High School. She has been actively involved in Career and Technical Education for the past several years. This school year she is completing the final course in the Criminal Justice Operations program of study, and she is also enrolled in Digital Information Technology. For the past year, Jessica has been a Sumter County Sheriff Explorer and has served her community while learning various aspects of a career in law enforcement. Currently, Jessica has a 4.2 weighted GPA and is a member of the National Honor Society. In 2023, Jessica earned the *INTUIT - Entrepreneurship and Small Business Industry Certification*. Jessica is also preparing to earn her realtor license while a high school student. Her career aspirations involve residential or commercial real estate and/or law enforcement. While pursuing her goals, Jessica established her own small business to help cover costs for her education in the future. When asked about her favorite part of being in a CTE program, she expressed that it was the knowledge gained beyond regular academics and gleaning from the knowledge and experiences of her teacher who worked in the field for decades. She also described the benefits of working in the sheriff’s office and the rewarding experiences of helping the community. Her CTE Criminal Justice teacher, Mr. David Segrest, described her in these words, “*(Jessica) is a great student with a high work ethic and bright future.*”

Career and Technical Education (CTE) is a modern approach to higher education and training, and it can accelerate personal and professional success. With little to no barriers to enrollment and 17 career pathways to choose from, individuals can acquire the skills needed through real-world, hands-on experience. As teachers prepare CTE students for their future careers as skilled professionals, students engage in hands-on learning with real life applications. These approaches to teaching are linked to greater understanding, comprehension and retention. CTE offers a way for students to gain skills and earn certifications in some of Florida’s most critical and desirable industries. Unlike traditional higher education, CTE programs can set individuals on the right path in less time with less cost. That means they can get into a career today without the worry of debt tomorrow.

*For more information about **Sumter County Schools**, call **352-793-2315**. For more information about Career and Technical Education in Florida, visit GetThereFL.com.*



Jessica Dawson

*South Sumter High School class of 2025
Sumter CTE Student of the Month January, 2024*