

More students getting jump on college

HIGH-TECH HIGH SCHOOLS

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TEC-SMART students look at a computer chip wafer in class earlier this year. The program expanded to include ninth graders for the first time this year.

Gilbane Construction Co. employees have visited the Clean Technologies Early College High School for the past two years. This year, they'll bring students to their workplace, using [GoPro](#) cameras to connect the classroom to the field. Gilbane is among more than 30 businesses that have partnered with the early college high school at the TEC-SMART campus in Malta. The program is one of the largest and longest-running early college high school programs in the region.

The three-year-old clean technologies program expanded this year to welcome its first cohort of ninth-grade students. Those students will be the first to complete the six-year program. The 73 students will spend two years at their home districts and travel to the TEC-SMART campus for their junior and senior years of high school. Then, they'll remain in the program for two more years while completing an associate degree from [Hudson Valley Community College](#).

When the next class of freshman arrives next fall, the program will near its capacity and enroll nearly 300 students in grades nine through 12.

The Troy City School District also opened an early college high school to about 30 freshmen this fall, who will also graduate with both a high school diploma and an associate degree. The program, known as the Pathways in Technology Early College High school, is meant to prepare high school students for careers in high-needs areas and requires public-private partnerships. The state will fund a second round of these P-TECH programs.

In addition to using the GoPro action cameras to walk through a job site, students at the clean technologies high school are also using the cameras as one tool to document their project-based interdisciplinary learning experiences. Look TV, an independent, local TV station based in Saratoga Springs, partnered with the school to create a six-part documentary on the program over the course of an academic year.

"This region needs to know what's happening here and decide when and if to get involved," says Christine Dixon, director of media development.

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