

# Hamburg High School

Academy of Finance

Finance Career Cluster

## Overview

The Academy of Finance at Hamburg High School in Hamburg, New York, began eight years ago to provide students with necessary financial literacy education that students all too often graduate without, as well as position students for a career in the industry. The program of study has steadily grown to become a full-fledged academy affiliated with the National Academy Foundation (NAF), arming students with the academic and technical skills needed to participate in Buffalo's growing financial sector. The three-year career and college readiness program begins in a student's sophomore year and by the completion of the program of study, students acquire universal business skills and knowledge with a strong grounding in the financial industry.

90 Students	Percentage
Male	30%
Female	70%
Low-income	10%
Students with disabilities	15%

## Strong Advisory Board Brings Finance to Life

The Finance Academy Advisory Board, consisting of **40 business leaders** with members ranging from banks, to insurance providers, and even the local county legislator, was established to support the program through curriculum advisement, financial support, and work-based learning experiences for students such as industry tours, job shadows, guest speaker opportunities, mock interviews, competitions and internships.



Five years ago, board members led the charge to become a not-for-profit corporation, allowing members to solicit funding and donations from area foundations and businesses as a tax-exempt entity. This allows the Board to further expand the numerous work-based learning opportunities as well as more easily generate funds for student scholarships.

In addition to an active advisory board, the Academy established a student-run credit union located within the high school. Sponsored by Meridia Community Credit Union, who invested \$15,000 and oversees hiring, the branch is fully run by Academy students and is open to any student or staff member in the building who would like to make deposits and even take out a loan.

*"Having spent some time on college campuses and recruiting for my firm, I can attest that these high school students are graduating lightyears ahead of some college students in terms of professionalism and drive for achievement. These are not skills that can be taught via textbook. They are learned through habits and behaviors that are ingrained into the Academy of Finance program by the passion of the extraordinary educators and the phenomenal community supporters. The beginning stages of this program were instrumental in my success today, and as the program continues to evolve, I continue to support this organization at a high level because I am proof of the impact that such programs create." – Lisa Petronio, Vice President, Retirement Solutions, Advisory Board Member, former Academy Student*

## Certificates and College Credit Pave Pathway to Success

The Academy boasts an incredible 100 percent of student enrollment in postsecondary education after graduation, a testament to the program of study's strength and rigor. The Academy has partnered with three local colleges to provide college-credit opportunities including Erie Community College, which offers **nine college credits**.



Graduates of the Academy of Finance program receive an immediate \$2,000 scholarship if they attend Hilbert College, which is located just minutes away from Hamburg High School and can also study for free through Bryant and Stratton College, which offers Saturday classes resulting in transcribed credits that can be transferred to any college of choice.

In addition to dual credit, the Academy offers numerous certifications including the WISE Financial Literacy Certification and NAF Credential.

## Success by the Numbers

The Academy of Finance offers a program of study that encourages students to take full advantage of the multiple offerings, from postsecondary credit and certifications to internships, preparing students to graduate with not only the skills they need, but also the resources that allow a seamless transition into postsecondary education and the workforce.



**80%**

Earned  
Postsecondary  
Credit



**100%**

Participated in  
Work-based  
Learning



**100%**

Earned Industry-  
recognized  
Credential



**100%**

Graduated High  
School



**100%**

Enrolled in  
Postsecondary  
Education

Data based on 2014-2015 School Year

Advance CTE

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