

Students profit from business seminar

By **REBECCA KUZINS**
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Most high school students have never held a full-time job.

So, it's not surprising that they tend to be a little naive about how business operates.

"Many of the students are awed by big business," said Jim Fulton, a business teacher at Orchard View High School. "They need to be around an environment with people from business."

Muskegon Community College created that environment at a day-long Business Dialogue Friday. Students from 14 area high schools heard representatives from local businesses discuss the role of business in the community and in relation to government.

The event was sponsored by the state Chamber of Commerce and the Women's Division of the Muskegon Area Chamber of Commerce. Re-



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presentatives of Hardy Herpolshimers, S. D. Warren, Consumers Power, National Lumberman's Bank and the Muskegon Chronicle were among the local businesses who participated in the event.

"Youth today have a misunder-

standing of the role of business," college president Charles M. Greene told the 500 students gathered in Overbrook Theater. "They think profit is a dirty word."

Peter Turner, president of Bennett Pump Co., tried to change students' minds about the profit motive in business.

"Profit is the price our kind of society pays for efficiency and innovation," Turner told the group. "In my experience, the vast majority of people work more efficiently in a profit-oriented environment. Profit is a yardstick to measure our performance."

Turner compared the American economy to business conditions in the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and Sweden. He concluded. "I don't know of any society who's gone the non-

profit route and achieved our standard of living."

But Turner said business should question how it uses its profit. "Profit can be used for social improvement — to build schools, hospitals, libraries and symphony orchestras," he said.

Some of the students were concerned that business may be growing too big and unwieldy. And one student thought business may place too strong an emphasis on employe production.

"Is fear of losing your job a desirable motivation for doing good work?" the student questioned Turner.

"It's not desirable if it's on your mind 24 hours a day," Turner replied. "But my job as president of Bennett Pump is to produce an adequate return on our investments.

"If I don't do that, two things can happen. We can close our plant. Or, they can put someone else in to do my job. That's the cruel hard world."

Students wanted to know several other facts about the "cruel hard world." They asked Turner what caused the current economic recession and how the U.S. could recover from the doldrums. And one eager student asked how someone could best invest money in the stock market.

Robert Sumners, manager of Manufacturer and Employers Associates and Norman Kruse of Sealed Power also addressed the group.

In the afternoon, a panel of representatives from local businesses advised students how to look for a job.

