



The ALL-STAR Newsletter

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Amelia Taggart, director of workforce for Eastern Gateway Community College, addresses students as part of the Student Empowerment Tour during a visit to the Jefferson County Alternative School. She is pictured with Cookie West, employment and community navigator with the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities, and Chris Hoover, interim director of enrollment services at EGCC.

SET Tour Helps Youth Forge Their Future

The Student Empowerment Tour has begun another year of inspiring students to forge their future.

The program centers on junior high and high school students with Individualized Education Plans, or IEP's, and gives them some added support to transition into the community as they reach adulthood. This year's theme is "High Expectations" and representatives of the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities and Eastern Gateway Community College are speaking to students about the process of "Prepare, Plan and Perform." Officials have traveled to Indian Creek High School and the Jefferson County Alternative School with more visits set for Edison, Buckeye Local, Toronto and Harding Middle School through January. Taking part are Alex "Cookie" West, JCBDD employment and community navigator, along with JCBDD Community Employment Services specialists Renee Pastre-

Hanlin and Angela Goodrich and EGCC's Director of Workforce Amelia Taggart, Interim Director of Enrollment Services Chris Hooper, Creative Development Coordinator Leanna Lulla and Machining Instructor Jason DiVittorio.

The events include three segments: "The Road," which inspires students to visualize their destiny and put their eyes on the prize; "Employee Code," which shares a snapshot of the dos and don'ts of employment and "Why Workforce," which engages students with interactive equipment from EGCC's Workforce program. Officials spoke to roughly 20 middle school-aged students at the alternative school and provided opportunities to use an AC/DC electrical systems unit and engage in activities such as "Name That Tool," plus they rolled large inflatable dice inscribed with types of soft skills needed in the workplace such as leadership, patience and problem solving. The pupils were divided

into smaller groups and Taggart led discussion on opportunities to work in such trades as industrial maintenance, plus she let students engage with the interactive equipment. Lulla, Pastre-Hanlin and Goodrich worked with another group as they rolled the large dice and defined the meaning of the terms.

"We wanted to visit the alternative school to encourage their students and remind them they too have potential," West said "We tell kids to dream and imagine their now and future, that is why we want to give them a visual and interactive experience, it imprints a picture of what that future could look like. And receiving information in multiple ways makes it stick better; therefore, when they go to retrieve those experiences, they have more fuel to then 'Prepare, Plan and Perform.' We are planting seeds of information, and everyday their teachers,

(Continued as SET)



Shaffer Residents Enjoy Trunk or Treat

Shaffer Plaza residents were among those taking part in the Trunk or Treat sponsored by Special Connections on Oct. 29, where they donned Halloween costumes and enjoyed treats, sensory activities and games. Pictured are Glenn Springer as a police officer, Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities Superintendent Mike Zinno as an All-Stars basketball player and Nichole Vandine as a deer during the festivities.

SET *(Continued from Front)*

parents and other influential people in their lives will water them,” she added. “We’ve seen the success in other students and we are convinced that when students prepare by creating a plan and develop the skills necessary for maximum performance, their journey into adulthood is smoother and more fulfilling.”

About 55 students participated during the kickoff at ICHS and praised how much they were engaged in the program, and she hopes it will inspire more youth to ponder their future.

Meanwhile, Taggart said EGCC prepares students for the next chapter of their lives.

“These are hands-on tracts. One of the things we have is industrial maintenance program and it’s working with tools, identifying the problem and then fixing them,” she said,

adding that students can move on to well-paying careers. “We have classes available and work with the Jefferson County Joint Vocational School, doing programs with them. We also have a machining program and do 3-D printing.”

Pastre-Hanlin and Goodrich described their work as job coaches and assisting youth and adults with finding employment, plus they extended an opportunity to participate in the Summer Youth Program where they have worked with local parks and municipalities. Youth can take part beginning at age 14 and teens work for five weeks and earn wages.

Alternative School Director Vance Miller said the program was a positive reinforcement for the kids.

“We are primarily made up of grades 5-12 here, and I think [SET] is awesome,” he said.

Getting to Know You...



Janie Herron



For Janie Herron, her life is all about kids.

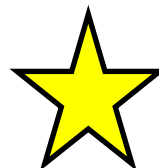
She has been an early intervention (EI) service provider with the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities since 2014, where she has worked as a speech and language pathologist. The Wintersville resident assists 25 clients in the program, including children aged newborn to five years old, and said she can never get enough.

“Children are my hobby,” she smiles. “I spent 47 years as a speech pathologist in Jefferson and Harrison counties and I retired three times, but I don’t have any other hobbies. This has been my favorite job.”

She took that career path after being inspired at an early age. Herron recalled a neighbor with a speech impediment that piqued her interest.

“I knew it was the right field and I’ve tried to retire, but I kept coming back. I just love kids. I’ve always loved kids. I think I have a Grandma-type personality and this has been a wonderful vocation for me.”

When not working with JCBDD, she enjoys spending time with her three grandchildren, dancing and listening to oldies music and tunes from other genres.



William Chichick



William Chichick is a real success story.

Chichick, of Wintersville, has been employed as a cafeteria worker at the School of Bright Promise for the past two years where he is responsible for helping to organize and cleanup the facility. He was previously highlighted for a Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities profile during Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month for March because of his perseverance and worked with JCBDD’s Community Employment Services specialists Renee Pastre-Hanlin and Angela Goodrich to obtain his job.

He is a 2021 graduate of Indian Creek High School and Jefferson County Joint Vocational School, the latter where he studied multimedia and design, before he began working at the School of Bright Promise. However, he really enjoys his spare time with his family and hobbies. He resides with his grandparents, Mike and Debbie, and brother Jacob and also has a dog named Chewy. Among his favorite pastimes is building LEGO sets and watching the movie “Jurassic Park.”

Chichick added that he loves the weekends the most.

“I get to hang out with my dog and eat pizza,” he said, adding that he also relishes having the house to himself.