

Local Schools



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Breakfast of Champions

OCTOBER 24TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Breakfast of Champions

Student advocates stressed the importance of investing in the next generation of leaders during the fifth annual Bright Futures breakfast symposium held Friday, Oct. 19, at the Holiday Inn.

“This is our community and our home, so every kid who lives here is our business,” said host Becky Winters, program director for AmeriCorps, before nearly 100 community leaders in attendance.

Run by R-I social workers, Bright Futures serves as an umbrella organization for community partners who work together to see that the basic needs of students are met so they can focus on learning. Poplar Bluff Schools became affiliated with the national nonprofit in 2014.

Each school has its own site council made up of parents, faith-based officials, business folks and social service representatives to help identify the unique needs of the building. Programs highlighted at the ‘Breakfast of Champions’ event included lunch buddies, club day, and a young women’s group known as Chi & Company.

Melanie Hamann of Three Rivers College and R-I school board member Roger Hanner provided heartfelt testimonies about their involvement mentoring students over the lunch hour. Lunch buddies taught Hamann to “look at life through a different lens,” while Hanner said he views the commitment as a future investment.

“Thirty years from now, these kids will be running this town,” Hanner said, adding half-jokingly: “I may need one of them in the nursing home.”

Lake Road fourth grader Somaria Simpson discussed club day, which gives students an opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities twice a month at the elementary school. PBHS freshman Serena Davis talked about gaining confidence as a Junior High student through Chi & Co., an organization started by banker Christy Frazier-Moore to empower females.

“You have to treat every child as if he or she will be the next human success story,” said speaker Bill Dee of Poplar Bluff Realty, longtime sponsor of Oak Grove Elementary School.

Pictured: Roger Hanner of the Board of Education challenges the audience to volunteer to become lunch buddies for the district.

Article and photo submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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