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Student-run Mules Store Opens on PBHS campus

FEBRUARY 10TH 2021 BY DEE LOFLIN

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The Stable held its grand opening during the Basketball Homecoming on Friday, Feb. 5, in the Poplar Bluff High School commons.

The Poplar Bluff Chamber of Commerce conducted a ribbon cutting ceremony for the student-run Mules merchandise store, which was originally envisioned during the relocation of the High School around five years ago.

“Several groups have approached me with the idea over the years, but these kids got it done,” stated Mike Owen, PBHS principal.

The effort was led by students Olivia Kirkman, Logan Massey and Isabella Sifford in their leadership elective taught by communication arts instructor Jennie Randolph, who charged the students with working on group projects aimed to benefit the campus community.

“Students leading this project have studied markup, ordering, electric methods of payment, contracts, interviewed local businesses, and so much more,” Randolph reflected.

The retail space is located between the gymnasium and the cafeteria, and sells Mules T-shirts, cups and other school memorabilia, as well as some practical items such as phone chargers and earbuds. Staff voted on the name, The Stable, during the design phase of the building addition, but the area has been used for storage up until now.

The plan, according to student leaders, is to operate the store during varsity basketball games and then hopefully during the school day in 2021/22. If approved, students managing the business would gain credit hours.

“The room has been here since [the facility has] been built and it was meant to be a store, but no one’s ever done anything with it,” Olivia said. “It seemed like a cool project, but we weren’t sure it would become a reality this year,” Isabella noted. Logan added: “We’re very excited to see it finally come together.”

The trio conducted a trial run in the fall, staffing a spirit table during the home football season. For the brick and mortar operation, the high schoolers acquired several manikins from Maurices, and purchased shelving units from Family Video when the chain went out of business.

The entrepreneurship class helped design a T-shirt, after surveying the student body, according to junior Gary Lewis. The Mules Booster Club, along with High School administration, donated some additional gear. All proceeds benefit the Student Council organization.

Pictured: Students (left to right) cut the ribbon for The Stable on Friday, Feb. 5. Also pictured are (from left) Dr. Scott Dill, Valerie Ivy, Mike Owen, Stephanie Hillis, Jennie Randolph and Tammy Deken from Poplar Bluff Schools; and of the Poplar Bluff Chamber.

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

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