Accomplishments

Youth Leadership Book Drive

In 2014, a new youth leadership program, “Youth Leadership in Action”, debuted in Pulaski County. This effort was the combined work of Pulaski Tomorrow, the local Chamber of Commerce and Pulaski County Schools. The goal of the program was to share some of the lessons from the successful adult program with area teens. Working with the Fanning Institute for Leadership Development and the local 4-H program coordinator, Sonya Jones, a new curriculum was developed that included a community service project to be completed by the youth participants. “Youth Leadership in Action” selected a children’s book drive, modeled after the Readers to Leaders program in Whitfield County. From August 17 to September 4, students are collecting preschool books at a variety of locations that will be distributed by local pediatrician, Dr. Sandra Kopacz, during well child visits. Students will also read to children in the waiting room throughout the fall. Local restaurants have provided treats for book donors and one lucky book donor will win 4 UGA football tickets.

New LIFE League Club forms for Middle School Boys

LIFE League continues to motivate and inspire boys in the community to complete high school and plan for post-secondary education. In order to reinforce the program’s lessons a new club has been formed at Pulaski County Middle School by LIFE League founder, Jeff Tarver, and Hawkinsville High’s basketball coach, Cedric Blackshear. This initiative is part of a change in LIFE League’s focus to concentrate on middle school boys, particularly those from under-represented populations and first generation college goers. The club effort is possible largely due to relationships developed during the Pulaski Tomorrow Leadership Program in 2011. Jeff Tarver, Liz Conner (the current Assistant Principal at the school), and Michelle Elliott (UGA Archway Professional) are all graduates of the 2011 leadership class. The students will meet twice a month on Friday mornings, and play mini basketball tournaments two times a year.

Ongoing Efforts

Community Responds to Suicide Tragedies

In response to six suicide tragedies in the community this year, Hawkinsville Dispatch publisher Chuck Southerland organized a coalition of local leaders to develop a community plan to reduce suicide. A group of over 30 people met on Wednesday, August 28, to consult with a regional community mental health professional. The event, sponsored by the City of Hawkinsville, is the beginning of a new Archway Community Health Group formed to address this issue. The group has already made preparations to launch an active awareness campaign to increase knowledge about the warning signs of suicide and what action can be taken to get help. Archway Graphic Design student Jake Green, is developing cards that can help educate community members. The cards will be distributed by schools, clergy and health care professionals during Suicide Prevention Week, September 7-13, 2015.