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Legacy Youth Institute begins fourth year by championing faith and family

Branson, MO – October 15, 2015 – Legacy Youth Institute (LYI), a leadership and mentoring program for high school juniors, began its fourth year this fall. Students from 7 Taney and Stone County high schools will participate in this six-session program designed to provide students an opportunity to learn from today’s community leaders how to pass on our “Ozark Mountain Spirit”—a deep respect for Faith, Family, Friends, Flag, and ensuring a preferred Future—to the next generation.

“We want to equip and empower our youth to take a leadership role in influencing the future of Ozark Mountain Country,” said Jory Rolf, Director of the LYI program. “LYI challenges students to see themselves as a vital part of preserving the legacy of our area. The program gives them opportunities to learn, but also to practice passing on the values of our area.”

The September LYI session—Championing Faith—was held at Shepherd of the Hills and focused on how faith has and continues to impact Ozark Mountain Country. Students heard presentations from long-time resident Edd Akers on the history and heritage of the area and Branson Bible Church Pastor Jeff Giffis on what it means to have a biblical worldview.

“I’ve lived here my whole life, but I learned a lot more about the importance of the history of this area,” said Forsyth student Gracelyn Haile. “I also really appreciated learning about what it means to have a Christian, biblical worldview.”

LYI students also participated in team-building activities, under the coaching of Brandon White, which were designed to unite the students from various schools toward a common goal.

“I really liked working with other schools,” said Branson student Elizabeth Wertz.

Adam Probstfeld, a Reeds Spring student, commented, “The session today helped us learn that we can all come from different backgrounds, but still come together to work as a team.”

In last week’s LYI session held at Silver Dollar City, students learned about Championing Family. Jack Herschend, co-founder of Herschend Family Entertainment, and Steve and Raeanne Presley of Presley Family Theater shared with the students about how they champion family within their businesses.

“Hearing them speak was a great reminder to work hard through difficult times and to never give up,” said Hurley High School student Isaac Carlson.

“It’s amazing how a family can come into a community like their families did and make a legacy that lasts a lifetime,” said Forsyth student Whitney Haynie.

Later in the day, Jim Brawner, President of Team Barnabas, taught students how to improve their interpersonal skills and leadership potential, starting in their families, based on their personality types. Brawner emphasized that learning to maximize their personality strengths and to minimize their personality weaknesses enables them to treat others the way they would like to be treated.

“I learned that there are always different ways people act, but there is also always a way to work with them,” said Probstfeld.

A primary goal of the LYI program is for students to realize that an area’s culture is shaped by the choices made by individuals, organizations, and businesses.

“We want LYI students to learn that the choices they make today in their relationships will have an effect on their own futures and the future of this community,” said Rolf.

Each of LYI’s six sessions explores a different core value of Ozark Mountain Country—Faith, Family, Friends, Flag, and ensuring a preferred Future. The next session - Championing Flag - will be held on Wednesday, November 11. For more information about the Legacy Youth Institute, please contact Ozark Mountain Legacy at (417) 598-1314, or visit www.ozarkmountainlegacy.org.

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Ozark Mountain Legacy is our area’s non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, promoting, and championing our core values of Family, Faith, Friends, Flag, and Future to ensure the continued success of our Ozark Mountain Spirit as we Pass It On to future generations. (www.ozarkmountainlegacy.org)

PLEASE CONTACT us for Higher Resolution Photos. Thank You!



LYI Students at Shepherd of the Hills



Edd Akers shares the Ozarks History and Heritage



LYI Team Building Activities



June Ward, SDC, with LYI student Sophia Greenwalt who just finished 2 1/2 years of chemotherapy



LYI Students at SDC for Champion Family Day



Steve and Raeanne Presley share how the Presley Story has Championed Family for over 50 years



June Ward, Silver Dollar City Candy Maker, explains candy making process to LYI students



Jack Herschend shares how Ozark Mountain Country has Championed Family through the years



Jim Brawner shares the "Family Zoo" with LYI students