

Program aims to change kids' view of healthy food

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

Local youngsters discovered the joys of healthy eating last Friday, through Kids in the Kitchen, a program led by the Junior League of Winston-Salem.

Kids in the Kitchen is a national Junior League initiative designed to get children involved in the kitchen and encourage their parents to feed them healthy food instead of relying on fast food options. The local Junior League hosts several Kids in the Kitchen events a year at places like the Children's Museum and the YMCA to teach kids about healthy snacks that are easy to make.

"We're trying to do very simple after-school snacks, easy things that parents can do, but the kids can also help in," said local Kids in the Kitchen Chair Amy Lauten.

Friday's program, which was held in the gym of the William G. White Jr. Family YMCA, was part of a larger celebration marking the end of the youth Winter Basketball season. Ten Junior League volunteers set up five stations for the event, most with edible activities for kids. Children sampled fruit smoothies and assembled fruit "snowmen" with sliced bananas for bodies, carrot slivers for arms, chocolate chips for buttons and hats made of apple slices topped with grapes. At a station designed to teach youngsters about food groups, the kids ran a relay to get trail mix ingredients. There was also a station for coloring Valentine's Day cards and another with information on healthy recipes and exercise.

Lauten said she hoped the things the children learned through the activities would stay with them.

"It influences them and impacts them for the rest of their life for their eating habits," she said. "(We're) teaching them that healthy foods can be fun and they taste just as good and that's something that, a lot of the time, people don't think about."

Warren Glover attended the event with his six-year-old son Warren II, who played Winter Basketball, his three-year old daughter Ocean, and his wife Keya. Glover, who regularly works out at the Y, said he thought Kids in the Kitchen was a good idea.

"I think it's great, especially in today's society, especially when Americans are so overweight and so it's good to get the kids at an early age and teach them the correct things they should be eating versus the fast food



Junior League volunteers Jennifer Bryan, Candice Brown and Amy Lauten.



Warren and Keya Glover with their children, Warren II and Ocean.



Participants grab some pretzels during a food relay.

all the time," said Glover.

The YMCA had plenty for kids to do beyond the healthy eating stations. On one side of the stations was a basketball court used by many attendees for free play. On the other was a massive, colorful bounce house with many slides. Youth Director Beamer Aston led the kids in dancing to the music that was blasting through the gym before unleashing them onto the inflatable playground.

The Winter Basketball program at the White YMCA involves about 680 kids ages 5-15 who are divided into 79 teams led by volunteer coaches. Sports Director Joel Zendel says the program focuses more on devel-

oping player's skills and character than on winning.

Zendel said he appreciated the Junior League's contribution to the season-ending celebration. Kids in the Kitchen complemented what the kids were taught in the basketball program, which also focuses on health by serving the kids healthy snacks after they play, Zendel explained.

"We're trying to associate exercise with healthy eating," he said.

Many families came out to enjoy the festivities. Sharon Allen attended with her husband and three kids. She said she appreciated Kids in the Kitchen's innovative suggestions for healthy eating. The fruit



Joel Zendel

smoothies in particular were a big hit with her family.

"It's da bomb!" her son, Allen Michael Walcott, 8, exclaimed before going back for seconds.

For more information about Kids in the Kitchen, visit kidsinthekitchen.ajli.org.

News Clips

Compiled from staff wire and submitted reports

WFUBMC wins Spirit Award

Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center is this year's recipient of the Spirit of North Carolina Campaigning for Excellence Award.

Sponsored each year by United Way, the Spirit of North Carolina Awards program provides statewide recognition for exceptional commitment and support to local communities through their involvement with United Way. The competitive awards are presented annually to honor corporate and not-for-profit organizations that demonstrate excellence in their campaigns.

WSSU receives NSF grant

Winston-Salem State University (WSSU) has won a \$600,000 National Science Foundation (NSF) grant to support highly qualified, economically disadvantaged, students to study computer science and information technology and to revitalize interest in those fields.

"The Advancing Computing Education through Synergistic Support (ACCESS) program provides scholarships, mentoring, leadership activities and other opportunities for academically talented students who would like to either major or earn a minor in computer science or infor-

mation technology," said Dr. Elva Jones, WSSU professor and Department of Computer Science chair. "In addition to substantial financial assistance that will be provided over the next five years, the ACCESS Scholars will participate in many activities of the program that will focus on building strong computing skills and the synergy those skills can provide to solve science and industry problems."

Students in the program often present the results of their research experiences at regional and national conferences. They receive career counseling and are encouraged to develop additional professional skills by participating in local chapters of computing organizations.

Malls supporting troops

CBL Triad Malls have kicked off Operation Heartfelt Salute with a letter writing campaign where shoppers can write a note of appreciation and kids can create a Valentine for the men and women serving in the military. The postcards will ultimately be delivered in Care Packages that will be sent to deployed soldiers.

Operation Heartfelt Salute is a community campaign that was designed to show appreciation to our military service members and their families. The campaign includes support for Veterans, Active Duty and Reserve Military as well as their dependents.

CBL Triad Malls, which includes Winston-Salem's Hanes Mall, will also collect items for care packages and new and used CDs for troops through March 12. Hanes Mall and Friendly Center in Greensboro will be collecting items at the Mall Management Offices and at the Customer Service Centers.

The malls are selling "Operation Heartfelt Salute" red, white and blue bracelets for \$1 as well.



Dr. Jones

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Join us for special storytimes:

- Wednesday, February 9th at 12 p.m.
- Thursday, February 17th at 2 p.m.
- Saturday, February 19th at 2 p.m.
- Wednesday, February 23rd at 12 p.m.

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www.childrensmuseumofws.org (336)723-9111 x211
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