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Building a bond

Brevard Middle School comes to BC

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The 8th grade from Brevard Middle School came to campus on Friday, Oct. 28, as a games and initiatives day. Students from the WLEE and Education departments led the groups.

Brevard Middle School has been sending the 8th grade to BC for the past three years as a way for the 8th grade to bond and learn about teamwork. This opportunity allows education majors to interact with a potential age group they will be working with in the future and allows WLEE majors to practice facilitation skills.

"We really like this partnership we have with the middle school," WLEE professor and event organizer Jenny Kafsky said at the facilitation meeting. "The kids really enjoy coming and playing games with you all and it gives you college students the opportunity to work with kids."

There were 11 groups of facilitators, with two BC students in each group. All 11 groups had approximately 16 middle school students. Kafsky and several faculty members from Beam Admin came to float around the large group. In total, there were 26 BC students, faculty and staff and 180 middle school students.

Kafsky gathered half of the facilitators on the Wednesday before the event to practice and learn the games. Pizza was provided for the students and everyone had a chance to introduce a new game to the group.

"It's pretty awesome that we can all get together and play games for our major," senior McDara Folan said, "Being in WLEE isn't all about going in the woods but also about making connections and facilitating groups. This is great practice."

While the group was primarily WLEE majors, the Education Department was well represented with six students. Many of the student facilitation groups were intermingled between majors, creating a dynamic environment for the middle school students.

"Every person brings a little bit of something different to the group, so being able to work alongside with someone from a different major... I have a lot to learn from them," sophomore Erin Humphries said.

When the middle school students arrived on Friday, they were broken into groups according to homeroom and met the facilitators of their group. The groups then played name games to break the ice and get to know each other and then moved on to games which made the students work together as a group.

"It's really cool to see it all happen within an hour and a half. We don't have long to make a difference with them but I could honestly see them start to learn more about each other and work together as we played these games," sophomore Gabe Neckolaishen said.

The groups all went through a variety of games and initiatives as they all filled the hour and a half with fun, teambuilding activities. The middle school comes every semester and typically only sends the 8th grade. However, according to Kafsky, both the 6th and 7th grades have expressed interest in coming and playing similar games.

"WLEE does it because we have wonderful WLEE students who have enthusiasm, talent and a desire to develop professionally," Kafsky said. "We think it is valuable to create a way for our students to contribute to our community in a positive way. We also believe that this is such an important developmental period of life, and are happy to have the chance to provide a way for these eighth graders to connect with our BC students."



Photo courtesy of BC Media Relations

Brevard Middle School students work together in an initiative led by BC students.