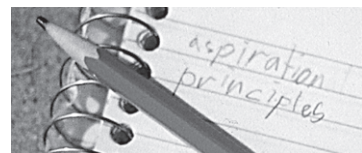


# SENTINEL

## Education



### SCHOOL NOTES

#### Spelling for dollars

Coronado Hills Elementary School in Thornton will receive a \$2,500 spelling bee grant from the Adams 12 Five Star Schools Education Foundation on Nov. 15. The donation was chosen by District 12 employee Peggy Law who won a spelling bee at the foundation's annual breakfast. After winning the spelling bee, Law was told she could choose what District 12 school would be presented with the check. Coronado Hills was her choice. For more information about the spelling bee grant or the District 12 Foundation in general, call Joan Schaefer at 720-972-4342.

#### Design-a-bookmark contest

The Bollman Technical Education Center presented \$15 gift certificates to the top three designers in the design-a-bookmark contest. The first place bookmark was designed by Anthony Moon, a student in the Computer Network-Net+ program and a senior at Horizon High School. The second place prize went to Mariah Martinez, a student in the Teacher Cadet program and a senior at Legacy High School. Third place honors went to Andre Aba, a Multimedia Technology and Auto Technology programs student.

#### Jefferson County Libraries offering recycled books

Jefferson County Public Library is offering used children's books and materials that have been deleted from the library's collection free to Jefferson County nonprofit organizations. The books are not appropriate for the library's annual book sale. Materials may be picked up the second Thursday of each month. People picking materials up should have photo identification with them. For more information, call Mary Garcia at 303-275-2224.



North Washington firefighter and paramedic **Dave Crowl** shows Clear Lake Middle School student **Justin Martinez** how to administer oxygen to a trauma victim. Martinez was one of 1,300 Adams County eighth-graders who attended a career fair to learn about possible jobs after high school as a part of the Adams County Education Consortium.

J.W. Kosena/METRONORTH NEWS

# Scoping out the future

## Eighth-graders look for possible careers

By **J.W. Kosena**

Staff Writer

A special career fair took place at the Denver Merchandise Mart last week.

Unlike most career fairs though, not one of the 1,300 people who attended the event was looking for a job.

In fact, not one of the 1,300 attendees is even old enough to legally hold a job - they're all in the eighth grade.

More than 65 representatives from business and industry set up information booths for 1,300 Adams County eighth-graders to come and ask questions at the first career fair organized by the newly-created Adams County Education Consortium.

The Consortium wants every eighth-grader in Adams County to attend a similar career fair annually as a part of the larger Consortium project.

The idea for the consortium began when five superintendents and four community college presidents got together in January.

The superintendents from every public school district in Adams County and the presidents of Front Range Community College, Community Colleges of Aurora, Denver and Fort Morgan decided students who want to stay in the county after high school graduation should have the same opportunities as a student who wants to leave.

"One of the key reasons we are focusing on eighth-graders is that we lose a lot of kids at the ninth-grade level," said Lee Searcy, director of the Adams County Education Consortium. "Part of the problem is they see no relevance to the education they are receiving."

Talking to business leaders can help change that though.

"When the students go the expo and talk to business and industry leaders who are saying here is the education you need to be successful in this field, I think it's very helpful," Searcy said.

Beginning this month, every eighth-grade student in Adams County will attend a career fair organized by the consortium.

The five school districts are Adams 12 Five Star Schools, Mapleton Schools, Adams 50,

Brighton and Commerce City.

While at the career fairs, students are able to see, experience and ask questions about the different types of careers and jobs in Adams County that are available to them after high school.

The 65 organizations and businesses ranged from emergency services to public relations firms and most anything in-between.

All organizations volunteered their time for the event.

"I found many careers that I am interested in," said 14-year-old Shaw Heights Middle School student Nallely Cruz. "I am very interested in civil engineering and I got to learn a lot about it today."

Ken Parks, CEO of Peak Public Relations, a company that works with Adams County, was one of many people who took time out of his day to talk to eighth-graders about his career choice.

"I answered questions and explained what it takes to put a career in public relations together," Parks said. "I built my career without the benefit of a college education. Although it was difficult, I want students to know that you don't have to have a college degree to be successful. A college

degree is helpful though."

Shaw Heights student Diana Baer was one of the many students who spoke with Parks about a career in public relations.

"I learned a lot about that career," she said. "I want to be a writer and I learned that you can't stop writing if you want to make it."

Parks, who came from a disadvantaged background, said eighth grade is a very impressionable age and that is why he believes these career fairs are so important.

"When you're young, the people who influence your life can be very dramatic," he said. "A lot of kids don't get the nurturing they need. It's at this age that kids are really listening. Not everyone thinks so, but they are."

Searcy said the expo still has organization kinks to work out, but for the most part it was a great success.

"I would like to recognize the Denver Merchandise Mart for their help," he said. "They donated the space and manpower to make this (event) happen and that was of great help to us."