

## EDUCATION

# Good schoolwork rewarded

In the months of August, September, October and November, students from approximately 120 high schools in Pennsylvania and Delaware will learn about a unique opportunity: The chance to win a check for \$250 that they can spend however they want, with no strings attached.

For some, the opportunity already has become an integral part of their high-school experience. Others will be learning about it for the very first time.

The Challenge Program Inc. is a nonprofit organization located in Johnstown.

The program aims to provide financial incentives to high-school students for successes they achieve while still in school.

In order to motivate students to excel in the classroom and in their communities, we award checks of \$250 to four students at the sophomore, junior and senior levels at each participating high

school in the following categories: Most improved, best grade-point average, most community service and best attendance.

The cash incentive that these students receive is similar to a year-end bonus in the business world. It shows students that if they work hard, they will be rewarded.

The program was founded in 2003 by Daniel T. Perkins, President & CEO of MTS Technologies, as a way to give back to the community in which he was raised.

In the program's first year of operation at Bishop McCort High School, Perkins funded all of the awards himself. However, the program quickly raised interest in several other Cambria County schools, and Perkins soon realized that he no longer would be able to fund all of the awards.

The program turned to the business community in Johnstown and the sur-



## THE CHALLENGE PROGRAM

**Kayla Washko**

rounding area, looking for support.

We were not disappointed.

Since 2003, The Challenge Program has grown tremendously. This year, the program's message will reach students in 17 counties and two states.

Although we have grown rapidly in only a few years, we remain proud of our roots in Johnstown, where the program was born and where our offices are located.

Our goal is to educate our local stu-

dents about the job opportunities available to them in the area and to retain them in the area after post-secondary school to become part of the region's work force.

In weekly columns, we will be sharing human-interest stories with you about students from local communities who have achieved success and have been recognized by The Challenge Program.

We know that this program is making a difference in the lives of area students because of the cards and letters we receive from them, their family members and their administrators.

We constantly are told about the amazing things our award winners have contributed to this community.

Now, we would like to share those stories with you.

*Kayla Washko is an intern with The Challenge Program.*

# Colleges tailoring courses for adults

According to a recent survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, an average of 44 percent of adults older than 25 participate in some type of formal adult-education activities.

Part-time and full-time college students age 25 and older outnumber those younger by 50 percent.

Adults going back to college now are



## CONTINUED LEARNING

**Angela Seidel**

◆ Adults are autonomous and self-directed. Their instructors must actively involve them in the learning process and serve as facilitators for them.

◆ Adults are goal-oriented. Adult students have a distinct purpose for enrolling in a course or program. Therefore, they appreciate an educational program that is well organized and has clearly defined goals that are made available to them on

Realizing that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to teaching, a successful adult curriculum is designed to combine the educational experiences,