

Program's rewards go beyond academics

Lori McGovern, Director of Human Resources at American Eagle Paper Mills in Tyrone, thinks that The Challenge Program Inc.'s categories set it apart from other programs.

"The Challenge Program gives those students who might not be as strong in academics an area to showcase their talents through attendance, improved grades or community involvement," McGovern said.

"The program rewards students for trying to better themselves as well as their community."



ROSE WAGNER
The Challenge Program

The Challenge Program provides \$250 cash incentives to students for achievement in four areas - community service, academic excellence, academic improvement and attendance - in the sophomore, junior and senior grade levels.

The program also partners businesses with schools to mentor and support students in achieving their long-term career goals.

As a sponsor of The Challenge Program awards for Tyrone Area High School, American Eagle Paper Mills has the opportunity to speak to students at an annual orientation assembly. On Nov. 3, McGovern spoke about the importance of "creating work habits now that will carry on after high school."

"This is the age where (students) are really focusing on what they want to do after high school," McGovern said. "They are forming the habits that they need to be successful."



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Lori McGovern, human resources director at American Eagle Paper Mills in Tyrone, and Tyler Grazier, a Tyrone Area High School senior and former Challenge Program Academic Achievement award winner.

The Challenge Program helps promote these habits through the four award categories. Students have the opportunity to win awards based on their hard work and dedication. McGovern believes that the categories are each significant and that those skills are equally important in the workplace.

For students interested in pursuing a career to protect the environment, American Eagle Paper Mills may be a perfect opportunity. The mill produces paper in an environmentally friendly way, using recovered paper products to create recycled paper.

"One of the benefits of The Challenge Program Inc. is getting our name in front of students who may be future employees," McGovern said.

McGovern told students at the assembly that involvement in the community is a determining employment factor for

any employer. "When looking at resumes of high school graduates, we look for initiative," McGovern said.

Tyrone Area High School has been involved with The Challenge Program for five years. American Eagle Paper Mills has sponsored the school all five years.

"American Eagle Paper Mills likes to support activities in the community that we feel are really worthwhile," McGovern said.

She believes The Challenge Program stands out because it allows businesses to team up with students and mentor them through the process, she said.

The Challenge Program Inc. is a nonprofit organization whose dual mission is to provide high school students with financial incentives for success and to build business-education partnerships.