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Fisher reflects on her connection with Challenge program

Julie Fisher, sales director of Center Rock Inc., values her important connection with The Challenge Program Inc. and how the program allows her to mentor high school students.

“My husband (Brandon, president of Center Rock Inc.) and I are interested in instilling good work habits in the youth of today,” said Fisher. “Our overall job is to create an entrepreneurial spirit for them, while encouraging students to have goals and to learn to achieve what they are looking for.”

Center Rock Inc. is a co-sponsor for The Challenge Program Inc. at Berlin Brothersvalley High School. The program provides \$250 cash incentives for high school students in the sophomore, junior and senior classes who excel in four areas: academic excellence, academic improvement, attendance and community service.

Center Rock Inc. encourages the same imperative values as The Challenge Program Inc., inspiring students to grasp the importance of showing up to work, improving their work ethic and striving for excellence throughout their lives.

Fisher believes that The Challenge Program Inc.’s strong focus on academic improvement is extremely valuable for students to succeed in high school and one day run their own businesses.

“Academic improvement shows that students are not settling for less, but maintaining the desire to better themselves everyday; these are the characteristics of a well-built leader,” said Fisher.

She also noted that community service is a must for Center Rock Inc.’s employees. In 1998 the company started a 24/7 customer service call. This year, it played a major role in saving the lives of 33 trapped Chilean miners.

“We were watching the news and found out that it would take almost to Christmas to get the miners out,” Fisher said. “Center Rock Inc. had the technology to rescue the miners quicker. With our tools and expertise there was hope for those workers to live.”

Center Rock Inc. manufactures and distributes a complete line of air drilling tools and products for hard rock drilling.

At times, Fisher says the hard work that it took to rescue these miners challenged the team.

“This was the most difficult challenge we have ever faced,” she said. “The hole was not vertical and there were angles and turns, which made the rescue a high stress job. One thing kept us motivated - the fact that our business was drilling in the ground for human lives. We are thankful to God that we were able to make a difference.”

Fisher says that, for her, watching the miners reunite with their families was the most rewarding part of the experience.

“Witnessing this interaction was worth every stressful moment,” she explained. “We gave the families of the miners an early Christmas gift; there was a little boy waiting for his father with tears in his eyes.”

Although the company received public attention and recognition from President Obama for its heroic efforts, Fisher says the recognition was secondary to the task.

“We went into this mission with one main focus, to rescue the miners,” she said. “No one thought about the attention that would follow, but everyone is grateful and thankful to know that the world does care.

“At the end of the day, we still have a business to run, but being honored in the White House is an experience that we will never forget.”

Fisher hopes that the high school students who are connected with The Challenge Program Inc. take away an important lesson from Center Rock Inc.’s contribution in giving back to its community.

“No matter how difficult the challenges, no matter how much you want to give up, if you believe in the task, never say ‘I quit’ or ‘this can not be done’.”

The Challenge Program Inc. awards at Berlin Brothersvalley High School are sponsored by Center Rock Inc. and Snyder of Berlin. The Challenge Program Inc. is a unique nonprofit organization that partners with business to motivate high school students both in and out of the classroom. This partnership creates good habits in students and provides a business with tangible results on its investment.

For more information about The Challenge Program Inc., visit the website at www.tcpinc.org or contact 533-7401.

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