

Official: Challenge Program improves lives of students

Christine Oldham, superintendent of Ligonier Valley School District, works with The Challenge Program Inc. to educate and improve the lives of high school students in her district.

"The fact that someone other than parents and teachers are concerned with academic excellence, improvement, community service and attendance develops a greater level of dedication for our students," Oldham said.

TCP provides \$250 cash incentives for high school stu-



FAITH MILLER
The Challenge Program

dents in the sophomore, junior, and senior classes who excel in those four main areas.

For the past four years, TCP has partnered with Ligonier Valley High School in encouraging students to strive for good grades, increase attendance and give back to their community. These four areas prepare students to obtain top-notch careers after completing their educational requirements.

"The Challenge Program Inc. is interested in creating excellent studying habits and leadership skills in Ligonier Valley students. These habits motivate our students to do well in all four of TCP's award categories," Oldham said.

On the topic of global competition, Oldham thinks The Challenge Program has provided students with a comprehensive approach to learning and has shown them the importance of attending work on a daily basis, giving their best and working in their communities. These factors will have a lasting impact on their future no matter what career paths they select.

"As I researched Ligonier Valley School District and talked with its members, I got an understanding of what its needs are and what I can bring to the district," said Oldham, who was appointed superintendent in 2008.

"I have witnessed our students work harder to raise their GPAs and attend all their classes because TCP has inspired Ligonier Valley students to continue building their success."

The students at Ligonier Valley High School have implemented the goals of The Challenge Program Inc. by achieving major accomplishments in their academics and extracurricular activities.

"For the second consecutive year, Ligonier Valley High School has ranked No. 1 in PSSA proficiency in both math and reading for Westmoreland County. The students have also won the Heritage Conference Academic Championship six times since 2002. The Challenge Program played a role in this accomplishment," Oldham said.

The Challenge Program, Inc. awards at Ligonier Valley High School are sponsored by Seton Hill University in Greensburg.

JoAnne Boyle, president of Seton Hill University, recognizes and values the partnership between Ligonier Valley High School and TCP.

"Through The Challenge Program, Ligonier Valley High School students are encouraged to strive for excellence, become lifelong learners, demonstrate responsibility, and perform selfless service," Boyle said.

"Students who possess these skills advance into leadership positions in college and beyond, while becoming more productive in their careers and more engaged in their communities."

Oldham added, "The youth of today have so many opportunities available for their futures. They all have gifts and talents that will allow them to be successful if they choose careers that match their interests. Working hard in a career that you love does not seem to feel like work at all."

She has the following advice for students participating in TCP: "Allow the well-built fundamentals of The Challenge Program Inc. to help you explore options, experience new opportunities, and develop those areas of interest that can lead to living a life of passion and purpose."

The Challenge Program is a non-profit organization that collaborates with businesses to motivate high school students both in and out of the classroom. This partnership creates good habits in students and provides business with tangible results on their investment. For more information about The Challenge Program, Inc., please visit our website at www.tcpinc.org.