

PAUL VITALE INSPIRES, CHALLENGES AREA STUDENTS

By P.D. Gramlich

A sign over the entrance to Doll Means auditorium in the Charleston Middle School states, "When we touch the life of a child we have a hand in shaping the future." Paul Vitale's enthusiastic, energy laden presentation of "A Hero Within" to CMS 5th through 9th grade students seemed to do just that. Perhaps fittingly, Vitale's enthusiasm and energy permeated the atmosphere of the auditorium named for one of Charleston's most storied teachers, whom many former students remember as someone who touched and changed their lives for the better.

His high-energy presentation held the student's attention well, Melissa Moore, Charleston Middle School Principal said. By keeping their attention the students were able to hear his message, which was inspirational, Mrs. Moore added.

Vitale also presented his program at County Line High School and at Ozark Junior High. The presentations were sponsored by the Franklin County Right C.H.O.I.C.E.S. Coalition.

Paul's charisma and enthusiasm for the message he presents is contagious, Jennifer Hennigan, Franklin County SPF Coordinator, said. "I think his message about following our dreams, and doing so as a role model to others, is so relevant in today's time. Our youth are our future, and the more we can empower them in a positive way the more we all benefit."

Vitale, a nationally renowned professional speaker and author, challenged the students to see and to maximize their potential to the fullest. He encouraged them to chase their dreams, but to also establish a course of action that sets them up for success. "Be resilient and never give up on yourselves," Vitale told the students as he relayed several success stories about some who had not given up, even though everything had not always

been easy. "I really believe in you, you are today's youth but tomorrow's leaders," Vitale told the students. "It is a privilege to have the opportunity to speak to you, our leaders of tomorrow. As you chart your future course, you have the opportunity day in and day out to make each moment of your lives count for something special.

"I'm not here to tell you how to live your lives," Vitale said, "but to reinforce the good things your parents, teachers and people in your community have taught you.

"We all have dreams and we all represent our names and our family's name," Vitale told the students. "Everything we do and everything we dream is attached to our name, our family, our school and our community," Vitale added. "It is important who we surround ourselves with."

Vitale showed the students several pictures of famous celebrities with each receiving reactions from the students, some favorable and some not so favorable. "If your picture was up here on the screen what would people be saying about you?" Vitale asked the students.

Vitale also told the students that they were all extremely influential on those whom they come in contact with. "Every action that we are a part of results in another action. You influence your friends, just like they influence you. That power of influence is a powerful force," Vitale said.

"If you make good choices, others will follow. If you make bad choices, others will follow. Every decision you make will have



Nationally renowned professional speaker and author Paul Vitale visits with Charleston students, Donald White, Ty Storey, Matthew Ward, Taylor King and Dylan Jones on Monday in the Charleston Middle School auditorium. Vitale spoke to Charleston students in grades 5-9 about choices and accountability. Presenting his signature message, "A Hero Within," Vitale also spoke to students at County Line High School and at Ozark Junior High. The presentations were sponsored by the Franklin County Right C.H.O.I.C.E.S. Coalition.

an impact on people's lives. You do have a choice, make that choice and make today count."

Vitale is a native of Russellville. He has authored three books, several curriculums and recorded the audio CD "Live Life Like You Mean It." Vitale's expertise, energy and ability to encourage people to exceed their potential, both personally and professionally, has been described by his audiences as extraordinary. His energetic and enjoyable presentation style has made him one of America's most sought-out training and motivational speakers.

It only takes one moment to make an impression that will last a lifetime, Vitale told the students. He made the most of his first impression with the students at Charleston Middle School. "He was awesome!" Jacob Gramlich, a CMS sixth grade student said. "His presentation made me think more about the future and more about the importance of making good choices." ◀