

The Sun

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Speaker tells students to seize opportunities

BY LeAnn Askins
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JONESBORO -- While high school students may not realize it, they are making choices that will impact the rest of their lives, Paul Vitale, national motivational speaker, told students at Westside High School Wednesday.



Students in grades 8-12 in the Westside School District were able to gather information from more than 30 exhibitors participating in the district's annual career fair, including all branches of Arkansas State University.

Vitale, sponsored by the Crowley's Ridge Education Cooperative, spoke to students in grades 8-12 as part of the district's annual career fair.

A native of Russellville, Vitale said by delivering his message he is "really trying to make these students realize how important the decisions they make today are."

He noted that it is imperative for students to understand that

perception is reality and individuals should be aware of how perception can change based on the people in which they surround themselves.

"All you have is your name," he added.

To emphasize his point, Vitale showed students photographs of celebrities and asked the students to say the first thoughts that came to mind about each celebrity.

He told students it's essential that the right words come to mind when someone thinks of each of them.

Students have to learn that they live only once, he noted.

"I talk to them about chasing their dreams," Vitale explained.

"I think we're all capable of what we set our minds to."

He also teaches students that it's never too late to turn over a new leaf.

"Everything you do now -- the habits you have now -- follow you," he told the students.

Among the other messages presented by Vitale to the students were how their attitudes are perceived by others and how others feed off their enthusiasm.

More than 30 exhibitors participated in the district's career fair. Students were able to visit with representatives of colleges and technical schools as well as business and industry.

Students were able to learn about a variety of professions including veterinarians, electricians, pharmacists and the positions within the different branches of the military.

Tricia Watts, career orientation teacher and one of the organizers of the event, said the career fair is "just an opportunity for the kids to be able to talk to people about different jobs and careers."

The event was put together by the district's vocational department. ■



Paul with Junior FBLA Officers