

News and Notes Newsletter

The National Character Education Foudation

A Thought to Ponder

The Fate of Many

The Greek philosopher, Heraclites, said, “A man’s character is his fate.” The future of our youth rests in the hands of those who develop their character. People are like buttons on an elevator. They either take us up or down. We should measure our value by the number of people we have taken to new heights. Friends, family, teachers, heroes, TV stars - they all influence the character of youth.

You have influence over the fate of many.

Hot Topics

Dave Rettig Joins the Pittsburgh Pirates’ Scouting Staff

Dave Rettig started the National Character Education Foundation three years ago in Zelienople. He works to influence the lives of teens and tries to motivate them to chase after their biggest dreams. The National Character Education Foundation tries to lend a hand to the schools all across the nation to help build good character in students. To see others succeed is one of Dave’s passions.

It is no surprise that he has been working as a talent scout for the last fourteen years. He is looking to give athletes with exceptional ability a chance at many boys’ childhood dream - to play Major League ball. He scouted for the Montreal Expos for ten years and the Florida Marlins benefited from his ability to recognize talent for the past four years. This year he joined the scouting staff for the Pittsburgh Pirates.

Rettig is exceptionally energized about this opportunity. “I’m excited about it because the Pirates are determined to find local talent and not let it slip away to other teams,” Rettig said.

“This is a natural fit for me.” Dave is in the perfect position to find the most talented players in our region. “With (NCEF), I’m visiting high schools in this region all the time. Whenever I do, I also ask administrators about their student athletes.”

Rettig believes that attitude and character have a lot to do with athletic performance. If the student works hard he or she will then reap the benefits of their dedicated effort. “My job is to find the sleepers for the middle to late rounds. A kid’s character plays a big part in terms of his work ethic, and work ethic and the right attitude is how those kids make it,” said Dave.

Rettig knows the importance of good character and hard work. “It’s a big part of what we do at NCEF to build character,” he said.

This former international baseball player, president of NCEF, and the one of the newest additions to the Pirates’ scouting staff is all about giving students not only a chance at playing pro baseball, but also pushing them to overcome any obstacle necessary to achieve his or her wildest dreams.

A TRIBUTE TO GOOD CHARACTER

The National Character Education Foundation hosted the “Student for Good Character Tribute” at the PA Capitol’s Ryan Legislative Building in Harrisburg on May 2. Nearly 100 students, educators, and administrators from schools across Pennsylvania participated in The Tribute. The Speaker of the House, John M. Perzel, joined with General Assembly members, Representatives Thomas L. Stevenson, James R. Roebuck Jr., and Rod E. Wilt, in addressing the group on the importance of good character and character education in our schools.



Hot Topics (continued)

Over 35 other members of the General Assembly attended this good character salute. "The event's goal is to voice our appreciation to the General Assembly for their support of character education programs," said Stanko NCEF's Vice President of Operations. "We all see the issue that teachers, students and communities are facing. If we don't build a foundation on good character, unfortunately the issues we see in the newspaper - school violence, school bullying, and lack of respect - are going to be the foundations of our youth." The tribute gave students all across PA the opportunity to express their opinions about the benefits of good character and share the importance of integrity and courage. Students joined with state representatives in discussing the importance of programs that will battle against issues such as drugs, school violence, bullying, and lack of self-esteem.

Some Interesting Facts

- We have our new website up and running, check it out at www.ncef.net
- An all Pro-Action Team Assembly was held on June 6th at Dorseyville Middle School. Randy Thornton spoke to the kids about overcoming obstacles and perseverance.
- The second annual Kids Expo was held on June 16th featuring Charlie Aeschilman. It will take place at the Butler County Airport from 9:00am - 1:00pm.
- NCEF has broken the 300 assembly mark. Since their inception the NCEF has conducted over 300 Character Education Assemblies. This year assemblies were conducted in 26 different counties and the NCEF held 214 Character Ed Sessions in PA
- Four new speakers were added to the All Pro Team for 2006-07 school year
- New Programs focusing on: Goal Setting For Elementary Students, Drug/Alcohol Abuse, School Violence, Peer To Peer Mentoring

On the Drawing Board

Glad to be Alive

In September, the NCEF plans to launch a new music based character program that will enhance the skills of students in the areas of helpfulness, organization, fairness and many more. This program targets grades K-5th. Glad to be Alive will incorporate music into teaching the meaning of character building qualities. This program was written by Dr. Kathryn Atman, a former professor at the University of Pittsburgh.

Group Peer to Peer Mentoring

This program encourages students to invest in the lives of those around them. Students are trained to help their peers overcome tough issues. This mentoring program was designed by Bill Sanders, the award winning host of Teen Talk. Peer to Peer mentoring will also connect adults of influence with the students who will lead sessions focused on: the character qualities of a leader, understanding the pain of others and how the students can make a difference in the lives of others.

Beyond the Borders

Calling You to Partner with Schools in New Orleans

The hurricane destroyed the majority of schools in the New Orleans area. We have a vision that schools all across the nation would partner with us and provide help and support in a variety of ways to the New Orleans schools. If you would like to know more about this opportunity to support the New Orleans schools while teaching your students the importance of service and helping, please contact Bob Stanko at the National Character Foundation. This could be a project that will impact not only your students, but kids hundreds of miles from here in the Katrina stricken area.

Blogs: For the Whole World to See

When I was a little girl I would have to hide my diary key in a secret place so my two brothers wouldn't find it and read the writings of my seven year-old soul. Today this little locked book is often replaced by blogs- an on-line web log. Students set up an account with places such as Xanga or Blogger. They are then able to write out their thoughts and post it on a page for the whole world to see. Giving kids the ability to express themselves is a good thing, but much too often this good thing turns sour. Blogs are viewed by as many as 700 million online strangers. Students need to be careful about the amount of information they provide about themselves. A picture of a student in his or her team jersey is enough for a predator to locate the child. According to a recent article in the Washington Post, "The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children reported 1, 224 incidents last year of 'online enticement' of children by adults and estimates that one in five children get sexual solicitations online." This is just something to be aware of. It's an issue that has been ignored for too long. For safety tips log on to www.blogsafety.com, www.safekids.com and/or www.safeteens.com.

Randy Thornton at Dorseyville Middle School

Dorseyville Middle School Welcomes Randy Thornton

Randy shared with the middle school the importance of respect and perseverance. Thornton told the kids about the devastating effects Hurricane Katrina had on his family. He revealed to the students how he is working to overcome the obstacles this tragedy presented in his life and he encouraged them to follow their dreams no matter the circumstances.

Randy showed a short movie clip of some of the damage in the city of New Orleans. Several days after the assembly, the school's administration began to take steps toward partnering with the NCEF in helping schools in the New Orleans area. **The school presented Randy with more than \$7,500 to help in the Hurricane Katrina relief effort.**

The assembly challenged the students but also entertained them. Thornton showed his mighty strength by rolling a frying pan and breaking eight bricks with his elbow. The students responded by giving him a standing ovation.



Randy spends time talking with the students after the assembly.

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The official registration and financial information of the National Character Education Foundation may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.