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Aultman Ambassadors Lead Students to Improved Health

The Aultman Ambassador program arms local high school students with the information and confidence they need to promote healthy habits in their schools. The program is a collaborative effort among Aultman Health Foundation, Aultman College, Malone University, Louisville High School and Canton South High School. Louisville has participated in the program for five years, while Canton South has been on board for three years.

“We had 15 student ambassadors this school year. They brought health to the forefront and got their classmates thinking about healthy habits that will last a lifetime,” said Aultman Wellness Coordinator Lynn Helscher. “Ambassadors shared information on topics including the benefits of drinking water instead of pop and the importance of portion control in maintaining a healthy weight.”

Students must apply to participate in the Aultman Ambassador program.

Applications are accepted at the beginning of the school year, and then students are interviewed by the Aultman Community Relations team. The students serve as ambassadors for one year and are able to reapply if they’d like to continue participating. “Each student has a different role,” said Aultman Community Wellness Nurse Linda Brunk, who leads Aultman’s participation in the ambassador program.

“We have duties ranging from committee co-chairs to videographer and photographer. When opportunities arise, they also serve as mentors to other students.”

Aultman recently welcomed the 2015-16 student ambassadors and school administrators for the presentation of awards, lunch and facility tours. This year, all 15 students earned \$250 awards for meeting participation and program goals. “This

means a freshman who participates in the ambassador program each year has the opportunity to earn \$1,000 over the course of his or her high school career,” Lynn explained. “One ambassador from each school who truly excels is named the Ambassador of the Year and earns an additional \$250 award.”

Linda is proud of all the ambassadors accomplished this year. “Louisville created posters and a skit around the topic of alcohol awareness, partnering with Quest Recovery, while Canton South created posters around smoking prevention and participated in the National 'Kick Butt Day' event. They coordinated an Aultman Walk with a Doc event and organized 'Wellness Wednesdays,’” she shared.

“Louisville created a NFL Play 60 classroom challenge to encourage physical activity. Both schools started their own Twitter accounts to educate students about the Aultman Ambassador program.”

It takes the effort of many people to make the Aultman Ambassador program a success. “We thank Aultman Health Foundation, Aultman College, Malone University, the high school administrators and staff for their dedication to the program,” Lynn said. “I couldn’t be prouder of Linda and her work with the students. The ambassadors strive to make positive changes in their schools and their communities.”