

Ty Ankrom's Here's What I Think ...

I think many administrators who start out as teachers will agree that as you advance in education you work less with students.



It's unfortunate, because when I have the opportunity to encounter our county's young people today, I am nothing short of impressed with the maturity and leadership that they show.

This was made evident last Friday at the annual Pickaway County Student Leadership & Ethics Conference, held at the Circleville AMVETS. It is sponsored by the ESC, the Rotary Clubs of Circleville, the county schools' National Honor Society chapters and AMVETS.

More than 50 students, representing the four county schools, came together to discuss leadership and ethics and to gain training that will help them run student organizations more efficiently and effectively.

Students are broken into groups to allow everyone to meet students from other schools. All students rotate through four sessions: conducting a meeting, led by Brian Bigam of Circleville High School; leadership, led by Cpl. Jake Blankenship, Lance Cpl. Heath Ramey and Pfc. Lydia Minnard with the U.S. Marine Corps; swap shop, led by Aaron Rothey of Logan Elm;

and student ethics, led by Kathryn Schoonover of Westfall and Rachael Gorsuch of Teays Valley.

Guest speaker was Pickaway County Engineer Chris Mullins.

"Being a good leader is about putting other peoples' needs before yours," he said.

Leaders need to understand what the end goal is and how to get there, Chris said. The way to do that is by surrounding yourself with good people and allowing those on your team to excel by trusting their actions.

Chris said good leaders know when to take action and can't be afraid to admit when they've made a mistake.

"Mistakes are part of the building blocks. Own it. Don't pawn it off on someone. Don't hide it."



Chris Mullins, Pickaway County engineer, addresses students at the annual leadership conference.



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Mike Edge, a sophomore at Logan Elm, said the Marines' session was eye-opening as to how they deal with making hard decisions every day.

"Good leaders make tough decisions," said Mike, who is president of the sophomore student council.

Mason Skaruppa, a Teays Valley senior, said the Marines "showed us that there is always room for improvement."

Another point Chris made about leadership: "People are providing you with information. Listen to what everybody has to offer."

That resonated with Sydney Burch, a sophomore at Teays Valley, who said meeting students from other schools and sharing ideas was rewarding.

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