

## YWCA Begins Program for 7th Grade Boys

Seventy seventh grade boys from all four St. Joseph middle schools recently participated in a new, eight-week life skills course offered by the YWCA.

The program, DECISIONS, matched the boys with mentors from Missouri Western State University Men's Athletics Department.

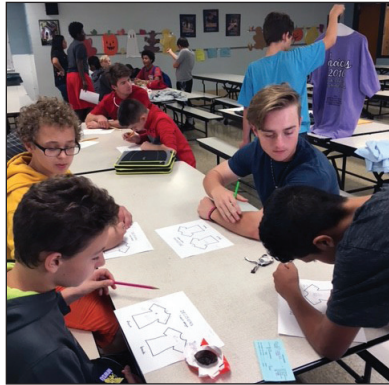
Thirty-one Missouri Western athletes from Men's baseball, cross country and track teams served as mentors. Ellen Kisker, YWCA Prevention Educator, said their youth, energy, work ethic and status in the eyes of middle schoolers put the athletes in a solid position to be effective role models for seventh grade boys.

Seventh graders stayed paired with the same mentors for the full program and explored common, real-life topics such as girls, bullying and peer pressure that can be difficult and come with consequences for adolescent boys. At the end of the program, they visited the Missouri Western campus for a tour and pizza party.

YWCA DECISIONS is designed to be the other half of YWCA's outreach to middle school students. The YWCA has offered CHOICES to seventh grade girls for several years, matching girls with Missouri Western women athletes to address issues facing adolescent girls and to support them toward making good choices.

The YWCA's mission is to eliminate racism and to empower women. Adolescence is an important stage of development to reinforce the importance of people treating each other respectfully. Along those lines, Kisker said, "We want to raise self-esteem of both girls and boys and show youth that our community cares about them, especially those who might be living in adverse home environments, during what can be a challenging time of life when their own decisions about how to interact with others carry the potential for life-long impact."

To learn more about DECISIONS, CHOICES, or other programs of the YWCA, call 816-232-4481.



Here, a group of 7<sup>th</sup> grade boys at Truman Middle School work on a t-shirt design contest as part of DECISIONS, a new, eight-week program of the YWCA.

## Two Men Celebrate 50 Years of Employment



At an annual employee recognition ceremony, two employees of Specialty Industries of St. Joseph, Inc., were recognized for 50<sup>th</sup> work anniversaries: Dennis Gage (left) and Jerry Vaughn (right). Specialty Industries has provided meaningful employment to individuals with disabilities in the community for more than 50 years. All employees who have provided the highest quality of service to customers were celebrated at the event.



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Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Inc.	St. Joseph Safety & Health Council
The CENTER, a Samaritan Center	The Salvation Army
Children's Mercy	Specialty Industries of St. Joseph, Inc.
Community Missions (CMC)	United Cerebral Palsy of Northwest Missouri
Family Guidance Center for Behavioral Healthcare	YMCA
InterServ	YWCA
Legal Aid of Western Missouri	

## Family Guidance Center Adds New Programs

Family Guidance Center for Behavioral Healthcare continues to adjust to community needs as they help people who are living with mental illness or addiction disorders.

New this year, the agency is starting a formal medication assisted treatment program.

Also, in July, they began providing adolescent substance use disorder treatment.

"We continue to expand our programming to help meet the behavioral health needs of the community we serve," said Kristina Hannon, Vice President of Behavioral Health.

Family Guidance reports serving 11 percent more people during their 2016/17 fiscal year than during their 2015/16 fiscal year. The non-profit provided services to 5,045 area individuals who were experiencing a mental health illness, a substance use disorder, or a serious emotional disturbance from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

To learn more or for mental health services, call 816-364-1501. During a mental health crisis, call the 24-hour crisis line at 1-888-279-8188.



### HOLIDAY VOLUNTEER & GIVING GUIDE

Give the gift of yourself by volunteering during the holiday season.

Stay on top of volunteering and giving opportunities related to the holidays as they become available in our community throughout November and December.

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