

All about relationship, TeamMates chosen to lead Harvest Festival parade.

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Thursday, 15 September 2011 13:44 -



For Gothenburg High School sophomore Brittany Melvin, having Jamie Brundage as a mentor gives her another listening ear.

“She’s always there to listen, give advice and help me with my homework,” Melvin said as she and Brundage finished lunch together in the high school media center Thursday. “She’s someone to talk to besides my parents.”

Elsewhere throughout the school, other adult mentors met with students to eat, talk, play games or to do homework.

The duos are members of TeamMates, an organization chosen as grand marshal of Saturday’s Harvest Festival parade because of the positive influence mentors have on their mentees, according to Community Development Office director Anne Anderson.

“We want to say thank you to them for the time they devote to his program,” Anderson said. “They are making Gothenburg a better place to call home.”

During the five years they have been TeamMates, Melvin said Brundage has helped mold her into a better person.



For Brundage, meeting with Melvin helps her gain perspective on her own son who is an eighth grader.

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“It’s also nice to have a girl to listen to and talk to,” she said with a laugh.

She noted that it’s important for Brittany to release what she’s feeling during the week.

“As a teen, you are so emotional and have a lot of thoughts and feelings,” Brundage said.

In a conference room in Dudley Elementary, sixth grader Kim Hiskett was eating lunch with mentor Jan Gill.

She said Gill has helped her learn how to meet new people without being shy.

Hiskett also likes playing the card game Uno with Gill, noting that “I beat her all the time.”

Gill said school, and homework, can be difficult.

“TeamMates gives us a place to talk about challenges and offer suggestions,” she said.
“Another listening ear helps.”

With TeamMates as part of their lives, Gill said evidence shows that more kids complete high school and have fewer problems.

Gill said the program has also helped her—a recent retiree—feel like she still has something important to contribute even though it’s not a paid job.

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“It gives me a real purpose and it’s fun,” she said.

At the other end of the table, Jewel Johnson was playing Pick Up Sticks with her mentee Jordan Lewis.

Lewis said she has fun talking and playing games during their time together while Johnson said TeamMates helps her keep up with what kids experience today and makes her think younger.

“It’s a lot different from when I was a child,” she said, adding that she’s enjoyed attending some of the activities Lewis has been involved in such as Children’s Theater last summer.

Johnson said she joined TeamMates after coordinator Lindsey Tederman talked about the program at the Senior Center.

“She urged us to connect with kids so I thought it was a good thing to try,” Johnson said.

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