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Daughters Day motivates, inspires



PHOTO BY JULIE WEISBERG

Young women and mentors get moving with a dance exercise.

By JULIE WEISBERG
Staff Reporter

Women's County Network, was organized to provide a setting for the girls to interact with successful adult women, and also to help boost their confidence and self-esteem.

The event was created in 1993 by network member Dr. Susan Carroll, inspired by the annual "Take Your Daughter to Work Day."

This year, for the first time, girls from Northwestern Regional Middle

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TORRINGTON — More than 20 local eighth-grade girls were given the opportunity to rub shoulders with area businesswomen and female professionals during a special one-day mentoring program last week at the Torrington Elks Lodge.

Daughter's Day, a program sponsored and organized by the Litchfield

» DAUGHTERS

School and St. Anthony School in Winsted took part. Northwestern had a total of 12 students participate and St. Anthony had nine.

Previously, only students from Torrington Middle School took part. The city school was a participant this year as well.

Northwestern Middle School Principal Candy Perez said the program provides an important opportunity for the girls to learn from the mentors, but also each other.

"Our young women are extremely talented and bright. And this helps them to interact with girls in other schools and to see other women," said Perez, who also serves as the mayor of Winsted, during a break from the day's events. "They'll learn skills that will serve them in the future."

St. Anthony's School Principal Patty Devanney agreed.

"Sometimes, hearing it from someone out in the 'real world' impresses them more than hearing it from us," Devanney said.

She added that the event also provides an excellent opportunity for the educators and businesswomen to interact and exchange ideas, as well.

"We shared some awesome concepts," Devanney said.

This year's workshop was facilitated by Michele Bredece Craemer. Craemer, an author and speaker based in Massachusetts, said the program is a great way for the girls to gather and find support from each other and their adult mentors.

"In an off-site setting, they may talk about things that they would not talk about at school," Craemer said. "Also, seeing the success of the mentors who they had the chance of meeting and talking with must have been very informational and inspiring for them."

This is the first time Craemer has run the workshop for the network. She said her main goal was to set an appropriate tone.

"I like to make the workshop interactive and form a comfortable setting for opening up thoughts and questions for participants. I also wanted them to have fun with the movement segments," she said.

Grace Teardo, a Winsted resident and eighth-grader at St. Anthony's School, said she especially enjoyed meeting the adult mentors.

"It's interesting learning how the people got where they are today," Grace said.

Brianna Schwindt, a Colebrook resident and eighth-grader at Northwestern, said the workshop for her was a "wonderful experience."

"I got a lot of information about the jobs I am interested in," Brianna told The Journal. "It definitely helped out a lot. And it was fun."

For more information about the Litchfield Women's County Network, visit lcwn.com.