

Ambitious students making the world a better place for us

It is common for students getting ready to graduate from college or high school to refer to their next step in life as “the real world.” That’s because students spend a lot of time discussing how the world ought to work. Then, they get to take those ideals and see if they can put them into practice in, well, the real world.

Several ambitious students at Hidden Valley High School have decided there’s no need to wait for graduation. They’re making their mark in the real world right now. Students involved with the Future Business Leaders of America club at HVHS have formed the Josephine County Foundation.

The foundation’s inaugural foray into the community was a vision clinic held last weekend at the Josephine County Fairgrounds. In a move that showed savvy beyond their years, they had the staff at the Siskiyou Community Health Center make referrals for patients who could benefit from the eye clinic, rather than simply announcing an “all call” for anybody who wanted to show up. The Siskiyou Clinic, the largest clinic for low-income patients in the area, was a logical choice. This way, students were assured that those arriving at the vision clinic were genuinely in need of a service they could not otherwise afford. About 200 people ended up benefitting from the clinic.

It helps that one of the foundation’s organizers, Cedar Wilkening, has a father who just happens to be an optometrist. Nothing wrong with that. In fact, it shows a lot of wisdom to start with something you know and then expand from there. Furthermore, the students used resources such as the Grants Pass Lions Club, which already has a program to gather used eye-glasses for those in need, to make sure people at the clinic who did need glasses would be able to get them.

According to a report this week in the Daily Courier, one of the goals of the new foundation is to help other nonprofit groups in this area. Hint, hint: If you’re involved in a local nonprofit organization, maybe you should inquire about working with these energetic and motivated high school students. They’ve set their sights high and plan to make our real world a better place.

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