

FCCLA Student Body project teaches fifth graders about healthy choices

Written by Darci Tomky

- FCCLA members Kimberly Peña and Heather Duester sponsored an exercise event for Holyoke Elementary fifth graders on Monday, March 2.
- The goal of their program was to teach students about the importance of exercise and healthy choices.
- Peña and Duester are involved with FCCLA's peer education program called National Programs in Action: Student Body. The event is part of their preparation for STAR event competition at the State Leadership Conference in April.
- Through interaction with the students, the team members aim to teach them to "eat right, be fit and make healthy choices."
- Peña noted they chose to work with fifth graders because they will be entering junior high next year. The project will equip them with the knowledge and motivation they need to form healthy habits now that they can take with them to junior high next year.
- At the event, Peña and Duester led the fifth graders through both team and individual activities. They played a game of dodgeball as well as knock out basketball. The students finished up with some time with the jump ropes.
- The team wanted to show the students it is easy to exercise and there is a variety of games and activities they can do at home or with friends.
- Following the activities, the students got to enjoy a healthy snack of pretzels and granola bars. In addition to proper exercise habits, the team aimed to teach the students about healthy food options.
- A week prior to the exercise event, Peña and Duester spoke with the fifth graders about healthy choices. They discussed healthy foods versus junk foods and explained the food pyramid. The students also learned about tooth decay and obesity.
- Duester said, "It's important they know how to eat right and stay active so they can be healthy."
- The fifth graders have also kept track of the foods they eat with an eating log. The team had the students fill out a survey with questions about healthy choices. In a couple weeks, they will give a follow-up survey to see if the students' habits have changed as well as give the students feedback about the healthy choices they are making.□