

South Shore counselors get firsthand look at fire academy

MEYERS – South Lake Tahoe counselors came together June 4 to discuss various career paths available to students through local academic programs.

Lake Valley Fire Protection District Station 7 in Meyers was the site for the informational workshop hosted by Virginia Boyar, director of Career and Technical Education at Lake Tahoe Community College.

The workshop focused on all career and technical education programs available at the college, with a special emphasis on the Lake Tahoe Basin Fire Academy.



Lake Tahoe
Community
College Fire
Academy cadets
put on a
demonstration.
Photos/Tracy
Owen Chapman

Counselors from the middle school, high school and LTCC discussed the career paths and CTE programs that are most inquired about by students, and the differences they

experience when counseling students who are interested in receiving training that will lead immediately to a career as opposed to transferring to a four-year university.

Attendees learned about the new physical therapy aide program that will launch this fall at LTCC, as well as updates on collaborative efforts with the high school in the areas of dental assistance, culinary arts and digital media arts.

With South Tahoe High School able to construct a slew of buildings from the voter approved \$64.5 million bond and subsequent matches from the state, it has also meant an expansion in programs. The Theater Arts and Design Academy will be open for the 2011-12 school year. This will enable the school to offer more classes in the digital arts, which in turn will prepare them for classes at LTCC.

One of the most successful CTE programs at the college has been the fire academy. The next crop of cadets graduates at the end of the month.

Leona Allen, fire academy administrative coordinator, briefed the counselors on the ins and outs of the Lake Tahoe Basin Fire Academy.

Students from various backgrounds (a recent female high school graduate, 40-year-old local businessman with a family, and a student who self-identified himself as being at "high-risk" in high school) spoke to the counselors about the challenges and growth opportunities they have experienced while participating in the academy.

A former cadet and current instructional aide for the academy talked about his time in the program and subsequent professional experiences, including being "first in" at a recent Kirkwood structure fire.



Tere Tibbets of LTCC finds out what it's like to be a firefighter.

Counselors were then able to observe the academy in action. Students demonstrated skills related to donning breathing aparatuses and personal protective equipment, tying knots, raising ladders, and charging hoses. Three counselors (Pete Dixon and Tere Tibbets from LTCC, and Bob Sullivan from STHS) went a step further and learned how to put on SCBAs.

Other workshop participants included JoAnn Hernandez (South Tahoe Middle School), Michelle Riley (South Tahoe High School), and Aaron Barnett, Norine Hegy, Esta Lewin, Tracy Owen Chapman, Janice Tait, and Tracy Thomas (Lake Tahoe Community College). Tom Greene (vice president of Academic Affairs and Student Services at LTCC) and Jamie Rhone (CTE technician at LTCC) also attended.

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– Lake Tahoe Community College staff