



HCHS's Napier puts leadership skills to good use after HOBY

Promptly shares new skills with teammates and UK Lady Cat Coach Mitchell

Morgan Napier is entering her junior year at Harlan County High School with more confidence and understanding of the important leadership role she can play among the student body and in the community.

She was selected for and participated in the Kentucky Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership Summit held this summer on the campus of Eastern Kentucky University. About 300 students from Kentucky high schools attended.

The focus for the HOBY seminar was on personal, group and societal leadership. Napier admits, she learned a lot and has already put some of the new skills to use.

A highlight of the seminar for her was a presentation by Devine Carama on the "Power of Words." Carama, a motivational speaker, told the participants "about the power of words and how being nice to people can change their lives."

His presentation focuses on poetry and hip hop and how those forums can be used as an alternative outlet in expressing feelings instead of lashing out or fighting. Words are a way to inspire others, she said.

Carama's main focus is on how words we use have power and whether one selects to use that power in a good or bad way.

By the conclusion of the seminar, Napier said she had "more confidence" that she will be able "to make friends with people who aren't exactly like me."

"You can be a leader in different ways. You can be aggressive or you can stand by and offer support," she said.

Napier and her colleagues were kept busy throughout the event with seminars and team building activities, along with performing community service in Madison County. She was involved with constructing walls for a Habitat for Humanity house being built for a family.

They were on the go from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. and only made necessary "dorm dashes" to get items necessary for the next task. Her team won the scavenger hunt which sent them around Richmond to find assigned objects and to perform certain tasks.

"They teach you tons of cheers," she said. With that said, she returned home and joined her high school basketball team on a trip to a camp at the University of Kentucky. She was able to put her new team

building skills to use during that camp and even taught UK Lady Cats Coach Matthew Mitchell some of them.

Napier was all smiles telling about her experience of the team sitting in a circle and her teaching Coach Mitchell a HOBY skill.

Napier said the experience was rewarding and she would consider being a facilitator in the future.

“It is a lot different than you think it would be,” she said. “It is a lot of fun. It certainly changed my opinion by the end of the seminar. I am going to try to apply more of what I learned to my life and take action in my school and community.”

A college fair was held for students and advice presented on applying for colleges. Currently, she is undecided on her college plans but is interested in the medical field. Advice she received is to apply for as many colleges as she can and to start visiting campuses.

In addition to HOBY, she has been active in basketball, Beta Club, First Priority Leadership, takes dual credit classes and has maintained a 4.0 grade point average. She is the daughter of Luke and Kathy Minor and the late Scottie Napier.