

Career Tech Matters

by Dennis Franks • Sept. 21, 2018

When Madison Uhrig got to the Scioto County Fairgrounds last week for the annual Senior Olympics, she was ready.

Madison was one of 100 Health Science students who volunteer each year at the event, helping residents from senior citizens facilities from 15 counties in Ohio and Kentucky.

The Senior Olympics has been held since 2000 and Jennifer Payne, a Health Science instructor, was familiar with it from when she took senior citizens to it in her job with Adena Health System.

When Jennifer joined Pickaway-Ross, she contacted event organizer Linda Slone about bringing students to help.

"These 100-plus students are the arms, legs, eyes and ears for the residents. And that's what we need," Linda said.

Pickaway-Ross students spent the day with residents from one of 28 facilities, taking them to the games and to lunch.

Madison had gone on the field trip last year as a junior and said she was really excited about going back this year.

"I think it's a really good experience for juniors," Madison said. "We get to take care of a senior citizen without the pressure of health care."



Jennifer said that the event is a good opportunity for students to become comfortable working with an older population. Before the field trip, she spends time with juniors talking about attitudes and myths about aging.

But once there, the focus moves to having fun. Junior Oriana Green said she didn't want the day to end.

"We had a blast," Oriana said of her resident, Miss Bethel. "We played basketball and she showed me up. Then we were sitting and resting and a song came on the radio that we both knew so we got up and we boogied."

Oriana said she has always had a passion for helping others and wants to be a nurse practitioner after high school.

Spending the day at the Olympics opened her eyes to another part of health care, she said.

"(Miss Bethel) just had a passion for life," Oriana said. "She inspired me to want to do more with nursing homes."

Oriana's reaction is not a surprise to Linda.

"Students get back more than they give," she said. "It's a beautiful experience for everyone."

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Juniors and seniors in the Health Science program spent one day last week volunteering at the Senior Olympics, helping residents from senior citizens facilities in Ohio and Kentucky. Pickaway-Ross has been involved in the event for the past 10 years.

