

Club tackles youth obesity at Olympics

by Mrs. Laura Hunt
Sunburst staff writer

The Keystone Club's Summer Youth Olympics and National Kids Day were Saturday at the Fitness and Sports Center.

The event was a joint project with the Boys and Girls Club of America and Nickelodeon to tackle the issue of youth obesity, said Ms. Matrice Adger, Keystone advisor.

"Our primary goal was to inform the youth and community about the concerns of child obesity and to develop an event to involve them in fun-filled exercise," she said. "With the help of Master Sgt. Thomas Cole and Capt. Angela Barney from the Health and Wellness Center, information on healthy eating habits was available for parents."

The HAWC also gave participants Gatorade, fruit, healthy snacks and goodie bags, Ms. Adger said.

About 45 youth age 6 to 18 participated in the Olympics, Ms. Adger said. They competed in events like track and field, BMX racing, swimming and gymnastics.

More than 100 youth came out for National Kids Day, she said.

The Holloman Keystone Club, known as the "Unusual Suspects," created the project.

Each year the 14- to 18-year-old club members focus on an important issue. Last year's issue focused on tolerance and racism and prompted Keystoneers to hold a Cultural Potluck. Several ethnic groups on base came to the event to share food and information.

The club won the 2004 Southwest Regional Keystone Club Outstanding Project Award for that event.

The Keystone Club has won several other awards, including The Boys and Girls Club of America TEENSUPREME Keystone Club Education/Career Award for their Teen Radio Broadcast research project.

That project was developed after the Keystone Club received a \$2,000 grant from Youth Empowerment Association in 2001. The club is now in the process of starting a radio station in the Youth and Teen Center and hopes to broadcast base-wide after meeting all Federal Communications Commission regulations.

Projects like this help club members develop the six core areas of Keystoning – character and leadership, service to club and community, free enterprise, education and career exploration, unity and social recreation, said Mr. Dan Salinas, Youth and Teen Center coordinator.

"The club is important because it offers the teens of the community a way to be involved," Ms. Adger said. "It gives them the opportunity to give back to their community."

The Keystone Club is open to teens ages 14 to 18. Meetings are at 6:30 p.m., every Wednesday.

For more information, call Ms. Adger or Mr. Salinas at 572-3753.

Recent awards

2002 National Conference -- recognized for National Project "Saving Lives", Southwest Conference winner for Advisor of the Year, Outstanding project in Social Recreation, Outstanding Service to Club and Community and the National Project

2003 One Keystoneer and advisor served on the national committee, National Award for Free Enterprise

2004 One Keystoneer and advisor served on the regional committee, National Conference winner for TEENSUPREME Keystone Advisor of the Year, and 3rd place for Keystone banner. Southwest Regional Conference winners of Education and Career Development and National Project "Staying United."



Torian Fields participates in the 1/4-mile distance run at the indoor track during the Youth Olympics.



Gary Newell hops through the tire section of the obstacle course during the Summer Youth Olympics Saturday. The course also included crawling under a barrier, jumping a hurdle, running and zig zagging through cones.



Nick Guadlip does a flip in the gymnastics competition during the Youth Summer Olympics Saturday.



Jonathan Barlow low crawls through the obstacle course at the Youth Summer Olympics Saturday.



Tre Fields leaps a hurdle during the Youth Summer Olympics Saturday.

Photos by Airman 1st Class Jessica Thornton