

CEO praises program for community service

Mary Libengood, president and CEO of Meyersdale Medical Center, believes that her commitment to The Challenge Program Inc. has motivated high school students to strive for excellence in all that they do.

"I've always felt it was important to cultivate youth in the community," Libengood said. "I have always encouraged people to grow, reach forward and be all that they can be."

Meyersdale Medical Center sponsors The Challenge Program at Salisbury Elk-Lick and Meyersdale high schools.

The program provides \$250 cash incentives for high school students in the sophomore, junior and senior classes who excel in the four areas of academic excellence, academic improvement, attendance and community service.

Of the four categories that The Challenge Program offers, Libengood favors community service.

"I know that community service encourages youth to give back to their community," she said. "Community service also instills positive attributes in young people. I can easily say that the most rewarding thing in my lifetime has been helping others."

Libengood has worked with the Conemaugh Health System since she graduated from Conemaugh School of Nurs-



FAITH MILLER
The Challenge Program

ing in 1969.

Through the years, she has served as a pediatric nurse at Memorial Medical Center in Johnstown. She also has been a staff nurse, charge nurse and coordinator for infection control at Meyersdale Medical Center.

Later, Libengood became the director of nursing and associate executive director at Meyersdale. In 1996, she became the president of the hospital.

"I do not think it has been hard work to obtain the commendable reputation, title and respect from my community," she said, "because, my personal philosophy is to treat my patients the way I would treat my own family.

"If this is truthful, then the rest will follow."

Recently, Libengood spoke to Meyersdale students about applying the program's lessons to their everyday lives.

Libengood said The Challenge Program is one of the greatest motivators for high

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school students to further their education, develop time-management skills and execute hard work during and after their high school years.

"Education does not stop at your high school doors," she said. "In this life, you will always be required to learn more and more."

"The Challenge Program is just the beginning of a huge success story for many of your lives. I am 62 years old and still learning about my profession every day."

The Challenge Program Inc. is a nonprofit organization that partners with business to motivate high school students both in and out of the classroom. This partnership creates good habits in students and provides business with tangible results on their investment.