

News



Mark Brett/Western News

BUSINESS PROFESSOR Ron Spence of the Penticton campus of Okanagan College works with Similkameen Elementary Secondary School Grade 9 students Emilie Hitchen (right) and Erika McCabe. High school students were at the college this week as part of the Junior Achievement of B.C. economics of staying in school program.

Program gives students insight into economics

Western News Staff

Grade 9 students from several middle and secondary schools in the South Okanagan found themselves jumping a few grades and ending up in college classes last week.

The college classes were part of an expansion of Junior Achievement programs in the area, kicking off with *The Economics of Staying in School*, aimed at Grade 9 students and taking place at the Okanagan College Penticton campus on Monday and Tuesday.

More than 400 students took part in the two days of classes, working with teachers and volunteers from the business community. While there, the young students participated in a range of activities to teach them about money management and how to develop a life plan that will lead them to financial success.

"We encourage students to get real about the costs that they will be facing upon graduation, and

encourage them to make sound financial decisions now that will impact them in the future," explains Darlene Brule, Junior Achievement's program manager for the Okanagan Region.

Junior Achievement has operated in Canada since 1955, working with students from grades 5 through 12 to develop leadership and entrepreneurial skills, as well as an understanding of how businesses operate.

Working with volunteers is also a big part of Junior Achievement's mission, Brule said, adding that they do their best to represent a wide range of businesses in the community to act as role models for the students. It's critical to the success of programs like this one, she said, as the volunteers are able to share their real world experiences.

"The program also strives to enhance student understanding that they have control over their future success and that life is a series of personal choices," Brule said.