Motivational speaker visits Mount Logan Middle School

By Kelly Cannon  Jan 13, 2013

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Event titles were extremely hard to come by for Preston’s track & field team…
Local businessman Rigo Chaparro took to the stage in the Little Theater at Mount Logan Middle School last week to help motivate young students who are part of the Gear Up program to seek higher education.

Chaparro is an insurance salesman with State Farm Insurance and the president of the Chamber of Commerce in Smithfield.

He told his life story to the students — about how he and his family left Mexico when he was 14 and moved to Star Valley, Wyo. There, he and his brothers and cousins became loggers.

After a particularly hard day at work when the boss was chewing them out, Chaparro and his brother decided to quit and enroll in college. He and his brother eventually got their degrees in accounting and have since become successful.
Chaparro stressed the importance of higher education and of good decisions to the group of 11- and 12-year-olds.

“If one of these kids tonight (had) something flick in their mind and they thought ‘Oh yeah,’ cause that’s kind of what happened to me, it would be worth my night,” Chaparro said. “If someone says, ‘I do want a higher education. I do want to go on and be somebody else other than perhaps what my parents are.’ Just kind of venture out and do something more and do something better.”

Chaparro has helped organize Latino Nights at Sky View High School for the past four years in order to help Latino parents know what options are available for their kids.

The night was hosted by the Gear Up program, a federal grant that is administrated through USU.

Mount Logan Middle School is the only school in Cache Valley that receives the grant, and it helps the more-than 900 students at the school.

The purpose of the grant is to get students where no one in their family has ever attended college to not only attend college but to graduate.

“Our goal is to teach them the basic skills but also give them experiences up on the campus, try to teach them how important it is to go to college and eventually we’re going to work with them on how they’re going to fund college and how they’re going to be able to choose careers,” said Kris Monson, the Gear Up coordinator. “What I really wanted to do is emphasize that you can be anything you want to be but you’ve got to work to achieve it and you’ve got to start setting your goals when you’re young.”

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