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Bus Offers Job Lessons

James Gallagher / Staff Reporter

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Xavier Ozen is looking toward his future.

Josey High School sophomore Kenneth Scott, 16, and senior Maishia Favors, 18, use computers to learn about careers and responsible money management on the Wheels of Dreams bus which made a stop at Josey High School Thursday afternoon February 19, 2004. The senior at T.W. Josey High School plans to study recording arts or computer animation at Full Sail Real World Education College in Winter Park, Fla. But a classroom education can only take him so far. "I want to learn about being an entrepreneur, because I might want to start my own business," he said.

Enter the Black McDonald's Operator Association's Wheels of Dreams, a mobile computer lab that teaches pupils about finding a career, saving money and starting their own businesses. The bus, which features eight computers and a television, toured Josey and Evans high schools Thursday giving pupils the opportunity to learn more about business issues in the real world. "We are here to build future leaders with good credit and money in their bank accounts," said Patricia Johnson, the program's instructor.

The program teaches pupils how to find a job, what job is appropriate for them, how to save money, what to wear to an interview and how to craft a résumé, among other skills. "I learned a lot about time management," said Dexter Kelly, a freshman at Josey. "This was fun. It was more hands-on than what you get in class." Pupils at Josey were given the opportunity to sign up for the Wheels of Dreams program. Quentin Motley, the school's principal, said about 60 pupils would spend time on the bus.

He said he hoped the program would give them a new perspective on the world of employers, helping them get jobs. Each student who goes through the program also is given a job application for McDonald's, though not all pupils are guaranteed jobs. "We're not training them for McDonald's, we're training them for their career," Ms. Johnson said. The bus was developed through the inner-city games program sponsored by Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Dee Crawford, a member of the Black McDonald's Operators Association and the owner of five McDonald's restaurants in the area, said the bus adds to the education pupils get in the classroom by providing them information on valuable life skills, such as how to dress for an interview. "I don't think many students realize you can grow up to own a McDonald's," she said.