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LaRue County teacher inducted into YMCA Hall of Fame

By AMY SMITH THE NEWS-ENTERPRISE
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Kendrick Bryan supports LaRue County High School students in and out of the classroom.
Submitted

Getting to know Kendrick Bryan

Kendrick Bryan and his wife Lindsey have two children, Coakley and Emrie.

He and his family attend Parkway Baptist Church in Hodgenville.

He has served as an election precinct officer five times and ran for magistrate.

He is a clock keeper for LaRue County basketball.

Favorite food: Fried chicken

Favorite movie: "The Lincoln Lawyer"

Favorite color: Orange

Favorite vacation spot: Panama City Beach

Favorite genre of music: Country and Christian

Kendrick Bryan is a history and social studies teacher at LaRue County High School, but his influence carries far beyond the classroom.

Bryan was recently inducted into the YMCA Hall of Fame.

"I always wanted to be in the Kentucky YMCA Hall of Fame, and I made a plan to emphasize the YMCA at LaRue County (High School), Bryan said. "Now it's one of the top chapters in the state."

Recruiting students from various backgrounds, Bryan said the club has 70 members.

"For a school our size, that's pretty good," Bryan said. "We tried to find every student we could to join the YMCA and to attend our conferences and make connections across the state."

Favorite recording artist:
Need to Breathe

Favorite TV series: "The West Wing" and "Shark Tank"

Favorite season: Summer

Favorite memory: Reading with with his grandmother. Her name was James Dobson.

The people who most influenced his life: His parents and teachers, especially Rita Highball

Favorite book: "The Last Lecture"

Favorite sports team: WKU

Advice: "Write down your goals and make a plan."

Nomination Box

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Bryan said all four class presidents at LCHS are members of the Y Club as well as three of the starting five basketball players.

"Most of our Governor's Scholars the past ten years have been Y club members as well," Bryan said. "I've tried to recruit and make our club a very diverse organization."

As the Y Club sponsor at LaRue County, Bryan helps his students participate in mock government groups such as the annual Kentucky United Nations Assembly (KUNA) each year.

"We have the Congo, and the students advocate for Congo issues, the environment or food security," Bryan said. "They address what the Congo delegates would be advocating for at the United Nations."

Bryan continued saying, "For KUNA, my students are writing a resolution about food security and how the United Nations oversees the food program and strengthens that."

Bryan also helps chaperone students for the trip to Kentucky Youth Assembly in Frankfort each year.

"The students sit in the actual chambers and act as representatives," Bryan said. "They write the bills and take ownership of their research and ideas, and some of those ideas actually become state law."

Bryan said it is important for students to debate with other students and learn how to articulate their ideas.

"I want students to know they have power and should be involved in any way they can in their communities," Bryan said. "I want them all to register to vote. I've had students serve as elections officers, and some have texted me after they voted and shown me their sticker."

Ben Schell teaches at LaRue County High School and co-sponsors in the student Y. He appreciates the work Bryan does with his students.

"I have known Kendrick Bryan for over ten years, and I will definitely say that he has had a great impact on the students of LaRue County High School," Schell said. "Kendrick is dedicated to improving student knowledge about how the government works at the state and national level. He is a role model for many LCHS students and has made it his life mission to instill the importance of being involved in a community in whatever way possible."

Bryan stresses the importance of finding their voice to his students.

"I never want students to feel overlooked or like they're not part of the process but to know they are part of the process," Bryan said.

He sees education as a means to that end.

"Education is powerful and opens doors for students," Bryan said. "I want to be a part of that and help students find what they're passionate about."

Practicing what he preaches, Bryan graduated from Western Kentucky University in 2009 with a bachelor's degree in history and social studies. In 2012, he went back to get a master's degree in school counseling, and in 2020 a master's degree in history.

In 2017, Bryan was selected as the James Madison Fellow from Kentucky.

As important as classroom teaching is to Bryan, he knows relationships must be forged elsewhere as well.

With that in mind, he coached girls' volleyball for ten years.

"It was fun," Bryan said of coaching. "It helped in building relationships outside of the classroom and it helped me connect with students I didn't teach. I coached ten seasons, but I taught very few of those students, and it helped me connect with them."

While Bryan was coach, LaRue County Girls Volleyball team had ten consecutive regional appearances.

"We had outstanding parents," Bryan said.

Bryan continued talking about his coaching experience saying, "I enjoyed coaching because I helped students know how they could grow and set goals. I think goal setting is very important."

Bryan also serves on the Civics Education Advisory Group for the Kentucky State Secretary of Education and served two years on LaRue County High School's site base committee.

He is also involved in formulating LCHS's comprehensive school improvement plan.

"That's a governing document that helps the high school develop our future plan for the next year; what we're going to focus on, what are the strengths and the growth areas of the school," Bryan said.

Superintendent of LaRue County School, David Raleigh, sees the positive impact Bryan is having on the school.

"As a teacher, he is beloved by students, families, and colleagues," Raleigh said. "He is an ambassador for LaRue County Schools and public education in general. He provides authentic, real-life opportunities for students, while also teaching them to be servant leaders in their communities."

Raleigh went on to say, "We consider ourselves to be very fortunate to have Mr. Bryan as a member of our Hawk Family!"

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