

VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Leading Businesses.
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April 27, 2011
For Immediate Release

Local Volunteer Chooses to Make a Difference

Valdosta, GA—Each school day 7,000 students become dropouts nationwide. The Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber is working diligently to address this epidemic in the local community through the CHOICES Program. This program empowers our future workforce to make the best educational decisions possible by putting them in front of business volunteers who share how decisions made now directly impact their future.

CHOICES volunteers gathered at the Chamber on Tuesday to participate in presenter training, which teaches program guidelines, but encourages presenters to incorporate personal experiences in their workshops.

Upon registering to become a CHOICES Presenter, one volunteer shared why he believed this program is one of the most direct ways one can give back to the community. Andrew Wardle, *Valdosta Daily Times*, told how his grammar school teacher helped him overcome an early diagnosis of dyslexia. At 10 years of age, Wardle's teacher's compassion and support impacted his life by showing him that nothing is capable of preventing his success. This relationship empowered Wardle to make a CHOICE to succeed.

Through Wardle's experience he believes in the positive impact adults can have on our children, which speaks volumes as to why he chooses to give back through the CHOICES program. Wardle credits his teacher for his many accomplishments including attaining a Masters of Business Administration and working throughout the world.

Wardle along with nine other volunteers will present the CHOICES Workshop on Friday to 333 eighth grade students at Lowndes Middle School. During the course of the year, nearly 1,500 eighth graders throughout the community will have an opportunity to participate in CHOICES.

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Challenge yourself to give back by joining this effort to make a difference in the lives of our future generation. Visit www.ValdostaChamber.com to register for upcoming CHOICES Presenter Training or contact Keyara Hamilton directly at 229-247-8100 or khamilton@valdostachamber.com.



Andrew Wardle signs the CHOICES Champion Presenter Commitment Form at the conclusion of the CHOICES training conducted by the Chamber.

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