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Jackson Area Collaborative Knowledge Source. This community resource guide is designed to improve the lives of children and strengthen families in the Jackson community by providing fun and useful information.

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Stefanie Riggs
Publisher
jacksfamilyguide@gmail.com

Morgan Riggs
Managing Editor

Evan Zigler
Distribution

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How to Say 'Yes' Passionately & 'No' with Less Guilt

By Alex Cash
Cocreative Life Coaching



Most of us live in a sea of different commitments. We have them to work, family, friends, and hope-

fully, to ourselves. When we take on too many commitments, we may lose some connection with ourselves and we are spread too thin. In this state, we are no longer a reliable service to ourselves or others. I will show you how to not only connect more deeply with yourself and how to say yes more passionately and reliability, and say no with less guilt.

I won't be referencing the work and family commitments that are obligatory for you. Though, I could argue that even things that seem obligatory are voluntary! To get you started on making more conscious commitments I am going to discuss the purely voluntary ones. Let's get into it.

Ask yourself: "If I say yes to this, what else do I have to say no to?"

Whether it is time with your family or even just time alone for yourself, you are giving up one thing to do another. When being asked to do something, consider what you must give up in order to do it. If making that sacrifice is something you are willing to do, then making the commitment is right.

Give it time

Taking time to think about an offer before making a commitment is both a gift to yourself and the other person. That way you can truly take the time to figure out if this commitment is right for you and you are



right for it. If you bring your best, most invested self into your commitments the organization, group, or committee, etc. will benefit the most from your talents.

Ask more great questions

In that time you are taking to consider the commitment as yourself some of the following questions. What relationships of mine will be impacted by this commitment? What resources will I need to be using? What habits of mine will need to change?

Say no to the task, not the person

Separate the person making the ask from the task itself. Don't assume that this person will take your rejection personally, in all likelihood they will find someone else to fill the role. Have enough courage to be selfish, and understand that you need to do right by yourself when choosing

what and what to not commit your time to. Express to the person that you value them, but this just isn't a task you'd like to take on.

Give something

Here is where the guilt comes in. You have decided that you have to say no. You've done yourself a great service, by being true to what was and wasn't important to you. If you can't quite fully make the commitment that the person asked for, consider offering just a little something. "If I can't do all of what you ask, but just do some parts, which part would you have me do?" That way the person still knows you value them.

Check out Cocreative Life Coaching on Facebook for more tips and tricks for living your best life. Also look into Cocreativelife-coaching.com if you'd like even more information about how to work with me to get all your commitments in order.

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Henry Ford Allegiance Health Receives Jackson Community Foundation Grant for Donor Human Milk Bank

Jackson, MI--Henry Ford Allegiance Health has been awarded a \$20,000 grant from Jackson Community Foundation's Community Needs Endowment Fund for the creation of a donor human milk bank. The bank will provide safe donor human milk for Henry Ford Allegiance Health infant patients when the mother's milk is unavailable. Once the new program has been established, expansion into other Henry Ford Health System locations, as well as other hospitals near south-central Michigan, is planned.

"When born prematurely, some infants cannot breastfeed," said Stephanie Belcher, Manager, Performance Analytics, Henry Ford Allegiance Health. "For numerous health reasons, some mothers cannot produce their own milk. We believe a donor bank would benefit the health and well-being of infants and their families tremendously."

In instances when a mother is unable to breastfeed, the Center for Disease Control and the Amer-

ican Academy of Pediatrics recommend donor human milk as the best alternative. Breast milk's health benefits to infants, such as protection from allergies, less stomach upset and reduced risk for sudden infant death syndrome are well established by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

"Henry Ford Allegiance Health is committed to ensuring all babies receive the advantages of breast milk right from the start. Establishing our own donor human milk bank program will support our efforts in a unique and practical way," said Wendy Boersma, Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends against the use of "informal milk sharing" (such as getting milk from other mothers found through social media), due to potential health risks related to untested donors and milk that has not been tested for safety. A donor human milk bank minimizes these risks because donors go through lab screenings

and milk is pasteurized to reduce levels of bacteria.

Organizers estimate the donor human milk bank will be fully operational in 2021.

The Jackson Community Foundation is dedicated to its mission to connect people and resources to causes that strengthen and build our community. For Jack-

son. For good. For ever. To learn more about the Foundation or how to establish an endowment your name, go to www.jacksoncf.org.

Henry Ford Allegiance Health (HFAH) is a 475-bed health system in Jackson, Michigan. HFAH complements traditional acute care services with primary and community-based to support patients across the health continuum at every stage of life. With its

Level II Trauma Center, Henry Ford Allegiance Health provides comprehensive care for severely injured patients. As a teaching hospital, Henry Ford Allegiance Health continually looks to the future with its Center for Health Innovation & Education and Graduate Medical Education program. Through its Health Improvement Organization (HIO), HFAH is also a national leader in forming community partnerships that innovatively address wellness and prevention needs across the region. Visit HenryFord.com/Allegiance to learn more.



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Stop By Imagine Planet This Holiday Break and Visit Hector the Hognose and His Friends

Contributed by
Imagine Planet

This month we are featuring another one of our snakes, Hector the Western hognose snake (*Heterodon nasicus*). The Western hognose snake comes from the western part of the United States. Its natural range extends from southern Canada through the central U.S., including Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, into northern Mexico. Here in Michigan we have a wild hognose snake, the Eastern hognose (*Heterodon platirhinos*). The Western hognose is a little easier to keep, as its diet consists of rodents, while the Eastern hognose eats mainly toads, frogs, lizards, and other non-mammal food.

Both species of hognose snake have a cute little upturned nose, resembling a pig's nose, which they use to dig in and burrow in loose sandy soils and search for prey. The Eastern hognose is sometimes mistaken for a rattlesnake, unfortunately resulting in the death of this harmless reptile. Here in Michigan, we have one venomous snake, the Massassaga Rattlesnake, and they are shy, small, relatively harmless rattlesnakes.

The Western hognose is probably best known for its wide array of harmless defensive ploys, sometimes accompanied by a loud hiss that is achieved by the snake forcing air through its unique skull and nose bone structure. Added to this is the Western hognose's abil-

ity to flatten, its body when threatened (this might be an attempt on the snake's part to appear larger and more dangerous to would-be predators). Often while in hissing



mode, a Western hognose will also flatten out the ribs along its neck, or "hood" like a cobra. An alarmed Western hognose will also strike, often repeatedly with a closed mouth in a series of either forward or sideways movements. When a Western hognose does strike, it hits the predator with its heavily keeled snout, but does not bite.

Finally, on occasion the Western hognose—most often younger animals—will play dead when it has exhausted its other defenses to ward off danger. The snake rolls over onto its back, with mouth

agape and lolling tongue. When flipped upright by hand, it will resume its death feign by rolling back onto its back. This death act is also sometimes accompanied with the

Western hognose squirting a foul-smelling musk from anal glands located on either side of the cloaca. I recommend checking out videos of this behavior—Hector does not display it, as he is not frightened enough.

Female Western hognoses can grow to a maximum size just short of 3 feet, with a weight that normally does not exceed 800 grams. Males are somewhat smaller, averaging between 14 to 24 inches. Western hognoses may live up to 18 years in captivity.

These snakes are diurnal, or

active during the day, so full-spectrum lighting should be provided. Also, a under-tank heater under about one-third of the tank gives enough warmth for this species.

There is quite a bit of discussion among hognose enthusiasts about whether the hognose is venomous or not. Some enthusiasts characterize the hognose as having specialized saliva, some as any reaction being an allergic reaction. A little research in scientific journals yields the fact that this genus of hognose snakes is, in fact, venomous. It is not, however, dangerous. These snakes have modified saliva glands that produce a mild venom that is delivered by small fangs far back in their throat. In the unlikely event of a bite that results in venom being released, the reaction is similar to a bee sting. The snake actually has to be chewing on your finger to inject enough toxin to be no-

ticeable. Biting is not a defense mechanism in this group, just a method for eating. In other words, use tongs while feeding and don't let your snake mistake your finger for a mouse. This is not an issue with visitors here at Imagine Planet. As with any animal, please handle Hector only under the supervision of an adult volunteer for your safety and for his.

Imagine Planet will be open Monday through Thursday and Saturday from 11 am to 6 pm. Like our Facebook page for updates on special events in 2020!

AWARE Receives DTE Energy Foundation Award

Contributed by
AWARE

AWARE Inc. is one of the 44 domestic violence shelters to receive a one-time grant in the amount of \$10,000 from DTE Energy Foundation. During National Domestic Violence

Awareness Month in October, DTE Energy announced their intention to provide grants to state-approved domestic violence shelters across Michigan.

The grant is in support of Emergency Shelter Services and necessary train-

ing for the organization to ensure future viability. On average, AWARE provides services to over 3,000 survivors, potential victims, and their children every year. Potential services may include 24-hour crisis and referral services, temporary

shelter, housing advocacy, counseling support, public awareness and community education, legal advocacy, and supervised visitation and safe exchange services.

About AWARE Inc.
AWARE's mission is to

eliminate domestic and sexual violence while promoting social change and empowering survivors by offering free shelter and services. AWARE is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization and a United Way partner.

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WWW.JTV.TV



Kicking Off a New Year at Jackson School of the Arts

By Amy Fracker,
Assistant Director,
Jackson School of the Arts



Happy New Year Jackson! I'm so excited to start 2020; it's going to be a great year! I'm

really looking forward to all of the fun we have to offer. We have some parties planned, educational opportunities, and before you know it, the fairies will be appearing.

We start off with the Descendants Art and Dance Camp Friday, January 24 from 5:00 to 7:30PM \$25 for 2 1/2 hour party with dinner and supplies included! This kids' night out is conveniently scheduled

for a Friday night and lasts for 2 1/2 hours so parents can sneak off for a night on the town. Our magical Art & Dance Camp attendees will not only enjoy a fun dinner, but will dance along to your favorite Descendants songs, work on some art creations, and meet some new friends at our Descendants party.

I'm really excited about the opportunity entitled Elements of Dance Sampler, a 12-Week Winter Session. This is a new, shorter-term dance session that allows younger students to experience dance during the winter and early spring. At the end of the 12-week session, students will have experienced various dance genres such as ballet, tap, jazz and hip hop. The class culminates with a studio showcase, as opposed to a

full recital performance. Elements of Dance will keep your child happy and active during the winter months and allow them to determine if a full year of dance is right for them. The program starts the week of January 14, \$24 to \$35 a month based on sliding fee income scale

• Ages 2 to 4: Wednesday 4:30-5:15PM / Pre-Ballet & Tap

• Ages 5 to 9: Tuesday 6:15-7:15PM / Tap, Ballet, Jazz & Hip Hop

Look to our website for more information at Jacksonarts.org. We are pleased to announce a way to support Jackson School of the Arts and have your plans secured for Valentine's Day. Our Love of the Arts Fundraiser this year will be quite the bash. The Love of the Arts - Disco



Party is Friday, February 14 from 7:00 to 10:00PM at The Foundry.

Cost: \$35/individual ticket. Corporate/VIP sections available as well.

Sweep your sweetheart off of their feet at this unique disco-infused Valentine event! All proceeds go to support Jackson School of the Arts mission to provide affordable arts education to the Mid-Michigan community. This event

features dancing, delicious munchies, a cash bar, and never-seen-before entertainment. The event will be disco-themed, so feel free to come dressed to party. Ages 21 and Over — Cash bar available.

This is going to be a blast, so line up your babysitter and get your tickets now.

We wish everyone a Happy New Year and hope that 2020 will be filled with much happiness!

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Firefighters Donate Winter Coats to Local Kids in Need

By Aaron Dimick,
City of Jackson Public
Information Officer



Firefighters from the City of Jackson and Summit Township recently went on a special call to Frost/Cascades Elementary School to deliver a warm surprise. Just in time for freezing cold temperatures, the firefighters gave out winter coats to 110 students in need.

Through fundraiser events and donations, the firefighters raised \$3,500 to buy 180 coats to distribute to three Jackson area schools. Fundraising efforts were facilitated through their Summit/Jackson Firefighters Charity.

Principal Martin DuBois says staff at the school identified which students could benefit from receiving a coat. DuBois says the school is thankful for the help from local firefighters.

"Some of our families need help with basic needs like coats, so this is awesome. Firefighters and police officers help our community greatly. We want our kids to be comfortable around them, and we want to show them that they're here to help and they're great people," DuBois said.

Firefighters met with students at Frost/Cascades Elementary and helped them try on their new coats. Firefighter Tim Gonzales from the Jackson Fire Department says it was wonderful to see the smiles on kids' faces as they put on their new coats. "This is a great way to give back to the community. We often go on calls for house fires and see kids without coats. Thanks to the support of firefighters and the community, we were able to help out this winter," Gonzales said.

This is the first year Jackson area firefighters raised funds for coats. They also delivered coats to Townsend Elementary School and Vandercook Lake High School.



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Family Involvement in Education Matters

Contributed by
Community Action Agency

A parent is their child's first and most important teacher. The latter holds true even after a child begins school. Children whose parents are actively involved in their education tend to earn higher grades, have better social skills, have fewer behavioral issues at home and at school, are more likely to graduate, and to attend college or vocational training. That is why it is so important for parents to get involved and stay involved in their children's education. There are several ways for parents and educators to work together to give a child the greatest chance at success, both as young people and as adults.

Ask any educator and they will tell you attendance, being at all school every day, is critical. If a child is not at school, it is much tougher to make academic and social growth. Children who attend school regularly tend to earn higher grades, have an easier time socially, and seem to display fewer behavioral concerns at school and at home. Even as early as preschool, attendance is crucial as it helps to build future helpful habits.

Regular communication with a child's teacher is also key. Parents and

teachers should be partners in a child's education. Ask a child's teacher how they are doing. Ask how their academic progress is measured; is it through testing, homework, something else? Attend parent/teacher conferences and review your child's progress reports and report cards. Help teachers get to know your children better. As parents know their children best, letting a teacher in on what may work for your child can help a child grow socially, behaviorally, and academically. Listening to feedback from a child's teacher is equally important. This partnership works better when both partners value and consider what the other has to say. Ask what can be done at home to help a child's academics. When communication is a priority, children do better.

Reinforcing your child's learning at home is critical to educational success. There are several simple ways to support your child's learning at home. One of the simplest ways is to read to your child and encourage them to read to you when they are able. Children who are read to regularly do better academically. Checking your child's homework over when it is completed is another way to actively participate and invest in a child's education.



Simply having a conversation with a child about their school day, and what they are working on, can do wonders as well.

Parental involvement in a child's education is important for a child's future success and well-being. Going to school every day and participating is crucial. Parent/teacher partnerships are vital. Communication between parents and teachers is critical. Reinforcing a child's education at home is imperative. When parents become involved and stay involved in their child's education, that child has a greater chance at future success.


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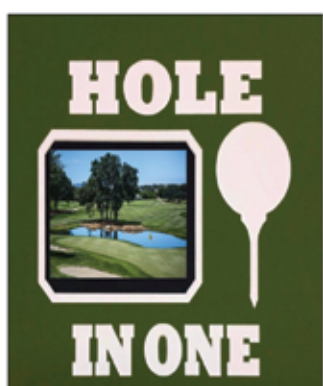
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Three Simple Ways to Encourage Learning Through Play

By Barb Barnes
North Star Montessori
Founder, Director, and
Montessori Educator



Children are learning all the time and building the person they will become in the future. How they interact with others, develop their movement and coordination, create and problem solve all happen in their daily routines and activities. Here are 3 simple ways you can encourage best outcomes in children's learning. Observe your child and take note of their interests and abilities, choose hands-on activities based on your observations that allow children to make choices independently, and finally plan ahead and make time everyday for uninterrupted play.

Make Observations
Each age and stage of your child's development will be different. Thus, making careful observations will help you to choose activities that are appropriate and that will meet your child's needs. At North Star Montessori our preschoolers who are 3 and 4 years old love to manipulate small objects. One activity that children enjoy that builds pre-reading skills is sorting different objects like little colored bears into the appropriate colored cups. Additional activities include organizing items by size, shape, texture, and likeness. If your child shows interest in letters and building words, you can introduce a puzzle with letters that builds a word (as pictured). At North Star, one of the kids' favorite word building activities is Melissa & Doug's all natural wooden letter matching cards that are non-toxic and eco-



friendly.

Set up Your Space

If we want children to be able to choose activities independently, we must set up and organize the space to make it easy for them. Children love order and if they have an uncluttered environment where activities are organized and easy to get out, they will have the freedom to choose materials to work with independently. At North Star we set

boundaries and expectations. For example, children can choose one or two activities to get out at a time and when they're finished playing with those they return them to the shelf and can choose more during class time.

Plan Ahead

Schedule time each day for play. Children need an uninterrupted play time whether they do it independently, with family members,

or a combination of both. Pack up those devices, turn off the TV, and create a space where learning can happen. Be in the moment, and available to guide your child as needed. You can introduce how to use new tools through activities such as painting with watercolors or cutting out shapes using Play-Doh. The most important thing is making time each day for your child to play and engage in learning.

Program Offers Scholarship, Internship in Computer Science

(BPT) - According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2020 there will be 1.4 million computer science-related jobs available, but there will only be 400,000 computer science graduates with the skills needed to apply for those jobs.

Although computer science is the fastest-growing profession within the fields of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), only 8% of STEM graduates earn a computer science degree in school - with only a small percentage of those students from underserved backgrounds. To discover the untapped talent among today's high school and college students, scholarship opportunities can provide the encouragement and financial means for more students.

The Amazon Future Engineer program is part of the company's \$50 million investment in STEM and computer science over the next five years. This four-part, childhood-to-career program funds opportunities like after-school coding classes for kids in grades K-8, robotics programs and Intro and Advanced Placement (AP) computer science courses for high school students.

One of the highlights of the program is the Amazon Future Engineer Scholarship, awarding 100 high school seniors from underserved communities scholarships of \$40,000 over four years to study computer science at a four-year college or university of their choice. The scholarship also includes an offer for a guaranteed, paid internship with Amazon, after students complete their first year of college. It is one of the only computer science programs to offer a scholarship and guaranteed internship placement to students.

What are the scholarship requirements?

- Completion of an AP computer science class in high school
- Intent to pursue a computer science degree at a four-year college or university
- Teacher recommendation

Other factors considered include the applicant's academic performance, demonstrated leadership, participation in school and community activities, work experience, a statement of career and educational goals, and financial need.

The inaugural class of

scholarship winners announced in April 2019 includes 100 students from 32 states. All of the recipients demonstrated financial need and more than half of the students awarded scholarships were from under-

represented groups in the computer science field, such as women, first-generation immigrants and people of color. These students are attending some of the top universities and computer science programs in the

country.

Applications for this year's scholarship will be accepted through Jan. 17, 2020 for current high school seniors. Interested students can apply at AmazonFutureEngineer.com.



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LEVELING UP

How One Dedicated, Passionate Teacher is Helping Children Learn How to Read at the Jackson District Library

For more than 35 years, Nancy Evanson took her job as a reading recovery and classroom teacher in Napoleon Community Schools seriously. The work paired Evanson with students who needed extra support to learn how to read at an appropriate level, and she found that it was difficult to find suitable, developmentally-targeted materials for her students.

"I found myself creating my own reading plans for my students, because oftentimes what the publisher recommended was off base," she said. "It was either too difficult, too easy, or it didn't build on itself from level to level like you'd think it should."

Evanson would often go to the local library to find materials, and after enough trips, she said, a light bulb went off.

"The Jackson District Library has beautiful, rich books with all kinds of authors and genres," she said. "But, it was too difficult to find appropriate books for young children to learn to read. So I decided to do something."

Beginning in 2010, Evanson has spearheaded the leveled readers program at JDL, starting with a collection at the Napoleon, Carnegie, and Meijer branches.

The readers are leveled 1 through 20, with usually four to five books as well as instructions included in the packet, which can be checked out of the library by anyone interested.

"The program is used to give parents, teachers, home-schoolers, and instructors the tools they need to help their pupils learn to read," Evanson said. "It's that simple. If you're able to continue the program to completion, through Level 20, you'll be able to read at a third to fourth grade level, and continue on to read anything."

The first collection of leveled readers in 2012 cost roughly \$21,000, with all the funds donated from foundations and organizations Evanson lobbied, including the Jackson Community Foundation, the John George Student

Loan Fund, and the Pat Willis Foundation, among others.

Evanson has since retired, but she continues to spearhead the leveled readers program at JDL, and plans to have all 13 branches with a set of leveled readers in the next year. To date, all but four branches have them thanks to what Evanson estimates to be roughly \$100,000 in donations from organizations and individuals.

"She's dedicated, and she's driven," Jackson District Library's collections manager Lorraine Butchart said. "She has a passion for children and the value of reading in their lives."

Butchart has worked with Evanson since 2010 to build the leveled readers and put them into circulation.

Evanson seeks out the funding and filters through the materials while Butchart and her team compile what Evanson has suggested and process it before putting it into circulation within Jackson District Library.

"There are few people with the motivation and willingness to follow through like Nancy has," Butchart said. "She's done an amazing job of fundraising in the years we've been working together."

Evanson has also received support from the Robbie Curtis Charitable Foundation, the Hurst Foundation, Dr. Todd Robertson, Pat Willis, and the family and friends of Merrie Patch.

"The family chose to honor Merrie's memory through a donation of a set of leveled readers to the Carnegie Library," Evanson said.



Photo contributed by Jackson District Library

Nancy Evanson sits in the Carnegie Library with a leveled reader, part of a program she has helped to create since 2012.

Patch was an educator at Jackson Public Schools, the coordinator for the Gifted & Talented Program, and served on the JDL Board of Directors for a number of years.

"It's been inspiring to watch this program grow from where it was nearly 10 years ago to today," JDL Director Sara Tackett said. "On behalf of the library, we thank all the people who have supported this endeavor and we thank Nancy for working so hard to make it a reality."

Michigan Automotive Compressor Inc. and the Western School District Implementing a Hands-on, Learning Experience

*Contributed By
Western High School*

Michigan Automotive Compressor Inc. (MACI) and the Western School District are pairing up to offer an innovative approach to educating the future talent of Jackson County. Working together, they are implementing a hands-on, multi-tiered learning experience in the areas of robotics, engineering, and advanced manufacturing.

The Robotic's System course is taught in conjunction with MACI engineers and Western teachers. Three days a week the students stay at Western High School and work through

curriculum and systems modules housed on campus; two days per week the students visit the MACI training facility and learn directly with the technical training group. Students work on modules pertaining to hydraulic systems, mechanical fabrication, mechanical drives, pneumatic systems, root cause analysis, robotic control, and development.

WHS Junior, Kasey Carroll states, "I appreciate that we are learning engineering principals with more than just words and diagrams. We are learning using actual robots and programming." Senior Brennan Kim adds,



"My time at MACI has furthered my interest in the engineering field as a whole, and has given me skills and knowledge that I could not have experienced in a classroom."

While spending time at the MACI facility, students are also exposed to multiple careers surrounding manufacturing, while growing their career awareness

and exposure. Senior parent, Steven Kim shared, "The experience my son has had at MACI has been a game changer. MACI has given him the opportunity to apply concepts and theories from the classroom directly into the world of work. In addition, it has helped in his college planning and given him a glimpse into a future career."

Another important perk to this collaboration is the mentorship and cultivation of relationships between students and professionals. Students create a network and gain viable employability skills directly from local employers. Steve Weller,

Western High School teacher and Robotics System's Instructor, also agrees there are great benefits from this partnership. "This is a tremendous opportunity for students at Western High School to experience working and learning in a manufacturing environment.

They have the opportunity to see careers in the skills trades and engineering. Successful students may apply to work for MACI and bypass the temporarily hired position, or if their plans include engineering studies at college, they will have a preferred application to MACI internships program."

Perfect Vision in 2020

By Theresa Horn
 Certified Personal Trainer,
 Fitness Nutrition Specialist,
 Certified Fitness Instructor



Is 2020 the year you are planning to get some things done, get back on track, and follow your dreams?

Great, let's get to it.

Here is a three-step process to prepare you for the deeper work of vision casting, goal setting, and transformation. The step process is Know, Do, Love.

1. Know. Get to know yourself better.

Knowing means to be aware of, to perceive, understand, appreciate, and recognize. Can you honestly say you know yourself? Begin by taking an inventory of what you know to be true about yourself. Resources that may be helpful might include any self-evaluations you have done in the past or have done in conjunction with a coach, teacher, trainer or therapist.

If self-exploration is new to you there are several books and online courses that may interest you and can help you see your strengths and growth areas more clearly.

Some books and online resources that may be helpful include: Discover Your Spiritual Gifts the Network

Way by Bruce L. Bugbee, The Road Back to You: An Enneagram Journey to Self-Discovery by Ian Morgan Cron and Suzanne Stabile, The Four Tendencies by Gretchen Rubin, The Emotionally Healthy Leader by Pete Scazzero, and NERIS Analytics Limited, <https://www.16personalities.com/>. Another excellent resource for those who need to do deeper emotional work of healing but prefer an online format is mysouldetox.com by LaTara Venise.

Remember we are collecting data to help us move forward with intention. Data, however, holds no power. We use the data to understand. It does not determine our destiny or limit our possibilities.

2. Our next step is Do. What are you currently doing in life?

Make a list of all the roles in your life that you hold. Start at home and branch outward.

Some examples might be Daughter, Wife, Mother, Friend, Worker (your job title), Business owner, Church member, Volunteer.

Looking at what we currently do often motivates us to want to change and either do less of the things we truly no longer value and more of the things we sincerely do value.

3. Last but most important is Love. What do you love to do?

What are you passionate about changing or mak-

ing better? This can also be identified as what impasses you or what thy motivated to change. What are brings you joy? How do you express? Do you know your love language?

The things we love are tied to our passions. Passion is the driver of our destiny.

We are all created with gifts and talents to bring to the world. Passion for our ideas, likes, dislikes, passion for creations, and passion for others motivates us to dream.

Dreaming, and dreaming big is the next step. 2020 is the perfect year to get started!

Work on you. Know, Do, Love, and get ready to dream big in 2020. Let's Go.

Join Theresa for the Create Your 2020 Vision. Find out more at www.sisterhoodofstrong.com.

Theresa is a Certified Personal Trainer, Fitness Nutrition Specialist, certified group fitness instructor, and soul care practitioner.

As she approached 40 years old weighing 330 pounds she made the decision to have weight loss surgery. It led her on a journey of seeking wholeness and healing: body, mind, and soul as she learned her weight was not about the food.

You can follow Theresa @sisterhoodofstrong on Instagram or facebook.com/sisterhoodofstrong



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A Healthier New Year

Focus on Fitness and Well-being Through 10th Annual Shape Up Jackson

By Bonnie Gretzner
Communications and Marketing Director, Jackson YMCA

In the first days of the new year, your thoughts may turn to improving your health, boosting your fitness, and losing weight. Even if you don't make a resolution, you often set goals at the start of the new year.

However, you may not know exactly what to do – or how to do it – and those goals may soon fade.

If you are committed to improving your health and fitness, consider applying for a spot in the 10th annual Shape Up Jackson. Shape Up is a free annual weight-loss competition hosted by K105.3, in partnership with the Y. This year, the Y and St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea will provide resources and encouragement to help 50 contestants learn how to adopt a healthier lifestyle. Shape Up runs Jan. 27 through March 23.

Ashley Smith, the promotions director at Jackson Radio Works, which includes K105.3, said she has organized many contests, but "Shape Up Jackson stands out as one of the most positive and rewarding. Year after year we see these contestants support each other in their health journey, and the Y provides coaches who work right alongside them the whole eight weeks."

The Shape Up Journey

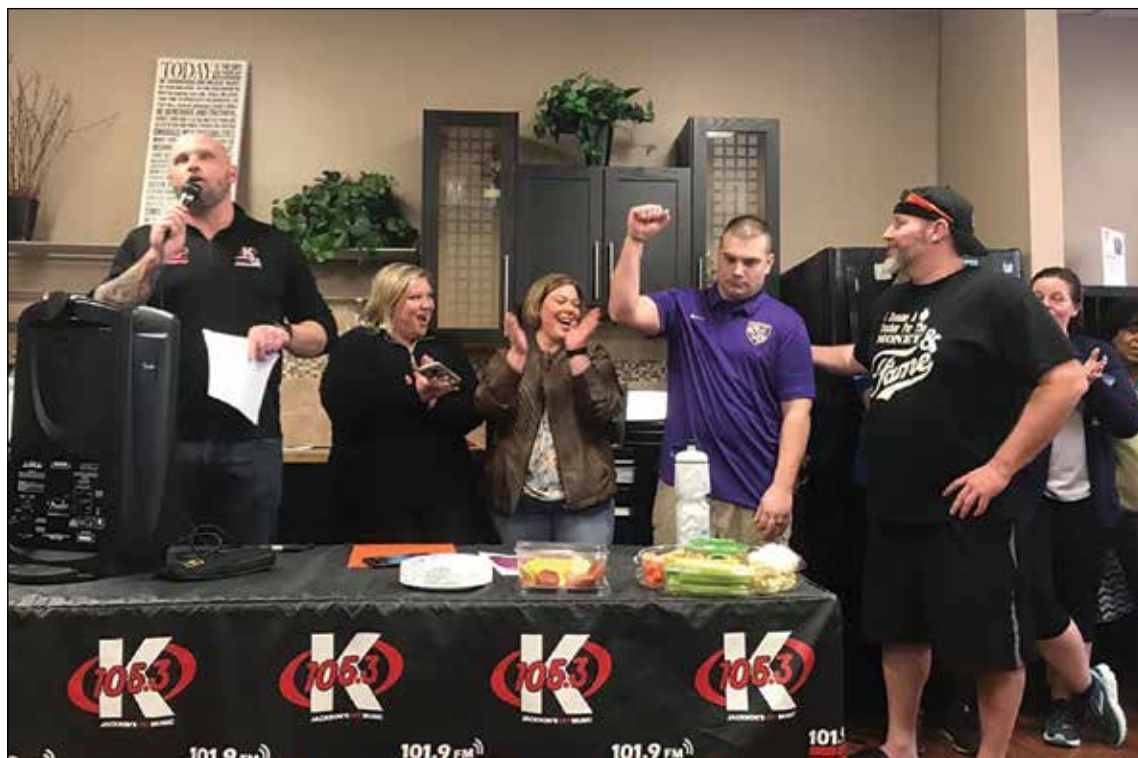
Shape Up Jackson begins with an application at www.k1053.com/shapeup-jackson. The most impor-

tant question is: Why do you want to be considered for this contest? Only 50 applicants can be accepted – so be open and honest in sharing your story. What is prompting you to make a change? What do you hope to accomplish? How can Shape Up make a difference in your life?

Applications are accepted Jan. 2-17; coaches from the Jackson YMCA then review all the applications and select the participants through a scoring system. Each contestant is paired with a coach and a team of three or four other participants. During the eight-week period that starts Jan. 27, contestants weigh in weekly at the Y. K105.3 reports on weight loss percentages (not pounds). At the final weigh in on March 23 at the YMCA Summit Branch, winners are announced, and prizes are awarded to contests who have lost the most weight percentages and the most inches.

"Our contestants can join a private Facebook group, and many people have said that is what they appreciate the most," said Christine Gensel, the Jackson YMCA Healthy Living Director. "Everyone in that group is supportive and encouraging, and it gives people a place to talk with others going through the same things they are."

Along with the coach and peer support, St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea will be offering a series of nine free health classes for the community. Topics will include



"Tracking Food and Exercise," "Food Triggers and Mindful Eating," "Dining Out Sensibly," and "Take Charge of Your Thoughts & Stress Management." The classes will provide the education and tools attendees need to help maintain health goals; they will be held Mondays during Shape Up at 6:15 p.m. at the downtown YMCA. Look for registration information on both the YMCA and St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea Facebook pages.

Said Smith, "We are so fortunate to be able to partner with organizations like the Jackson YMCA and our sponsors who go above and beyond to provide such a welcoming and supportive environment for not only our contestants, but everyone who signs up for a chance to be a part of Shape Up Jackson."

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