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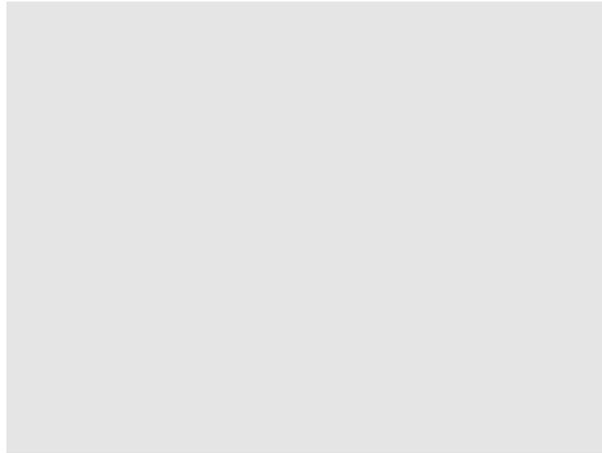
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Birge picked as new Junior Achievement

president

By DON SERGENT dsergent@bgdailynews.com

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Casey Birge

Submitted

Casey Birge, who has been developing curriculum that helps adults learn financial skills, will now be overseeing a Bowling Green nonprofit organization dedicated to teaching a similar curriculum to students in local schools.

Junior Achievement of South Central Kentucky announced last week that Birge, a 2018 Western Kentucky University graduate, has been hired as president of the local JA office in downtown Bowling Green. She replaces Drew Martin, who spent four years as the local JA president before resigning in August.

Birge will manage the organization's work readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy programs that currently reach almost 13,000 students from kindergarten through high school.

The Evansville, Ind., native sees the new role as a natural transition from her job as a learning consultant for Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville.

In that role, Birge developed instructor-led and electronic learning financial training courses for medical professionals.

“We created curriculum for the medical staff at the medical center, helping men and women use the financial skills they had learned,” said Birge, who earned degrees in business administration and organizational leadership at WKU. “Now I’m switching to teaching similar skills to youngsters.”

Birge, who also worked briefly as a leadership development consultant for a women’s nonprofit organization, will oversee an office that recruits volunteers from the business community to teach JA’s curriculum in local schools.

It’s a role she sees as important.

“I think that the southcentral Kentucky schools do an incredible job,” she said. “But there are always gaps to fill, such as the essential financial skills that students need to learn.”

Tim Maloney, current chairman of the local JA board of directors, sees Birge as a good choice to lead the organization.

“We had a lot of great candidates, but Casey was fabulous,” Maloney said. “She is young, but she has a maturity beyond her years.”

The local Junior Achievement office is also known for such fundraising events as Penguin Plunge, the Mini Corvette Challenge and the Chili & Cheese luncheon held in conjunction with WKU's homecoming activities.

While such fundraisers are important, Maloney indicated that the local JA office may be less event-driven in the future.

"We have three revenue streams: grants, corporate contributions and fundraisers," he said. "Our push now is to scale back on special events and concentrate more on corporate contributions. We won't grow our fundraisers, but we'll try to optimize them as much as we can."

Birge said she was attracted to this new role because of JA's "important mission" and also because of the opportunity to get back to Bowling Green.

"While at WKU I fell in love with the area," Birge said. "I'm excited to be back. I'm from Evansville, but I like to call Kentucky home."

The local JA office is part of Colorado Springs-based Junior Achievement USA. According to the JA website, the organization reaches nearly 4.9 million students per year in more than 200,000 classrooms.

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