Summer learning at GHC

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Biology and tennis in the morning, sign language and basketball in the afternoon.

For some this may sound like a rigorous day's work; however, for 70 young men this is just one day out of this year's two-week-long Foundation Camp at Georgia Highlands College.

The camp is for boys age 10 to 14 to help them realize their full potential.

"We want them to start thinking of themselves as having a possibility of going to college," Jon Hershey, professor of English at the college. "We give them academic subjects that might excite them."

The Foundation Camp is put on through a partnership between Georgia Highlands College and 100 Black Men of Rome-Northwest Georgia.

"We have grown each year. The first year, it was one week long and we had 24 students," explained Greg Shropshire, president of 100 Black Men of Rome-NWGA.

Students are selected for the camp on a first-come, first-serve application process. Hershey explained that more students could attend the camp if the program received more money.

The camp is funded largely through private donations but also receives some grant money.

The camp seeks to combine athletics, academics and social lessons.

"We combine familiar activities with things they've never done before," said Hershey. "It's a huge confidence builder."

"When you're learning to do something new, you still have fun," explained camper Ruffino Perez, 11. Antoine Ellis concentrates in biology class Tuesday morning as he dissects a sheep's brain during Georgia Highlands Foundation Camp.

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