

Daring to dream

‘Light of Chance’ seeks to inspire young people

By LORI HARRISON, The Messenger, Tuesday, March 6, 2007

Volunteers with Light of Chance, a nonprofit organization, hope to inspire the community’s young people to dream of the future.

“The purpose of the new organization, basically, is to help bring opportunity, change and awareness to the community,” said Executive Director Eric Logan.

Planning is under way for the group’s first events – a Teen Summit, talent show, dance and gala on May 19 and Gospel Explosion May 20. The theme for Light of Chance Revitalization Weekend is “Dare to Live Your Dreams.”

“I feel like Madisonville really needs something like this,” said Logan, who grew up here and will earn a master’s degree in communications from Western Kentucky University in May. “There’s nothing for the youth to do if they don’t play sports.”

Organizers of the summit weekend hope to “motivate and inspire you’re the persevere through adversities that might arise,” according to material from Light of Chance.

The summit will include interactive sessions on community culture and diversity, drug awareness, college prep, teen suicide, sex and relationships, how to reach goals, and express yourself through arts.

The day is aimed at youth who are 12 to 18 years old. Attendance is free, and includes breakfast, lunch and dinner. Pre-registration begins March 15 at www.lightofchance.org.

Events will be held in Byrnes Auditorium, will offer cash prizes to the top three finishers in each age category. It will be followed by chaperoned dance for teens and a gala for adults at Rizpah Temple, Logan said.

The Gospel Explosion, also held in Byrnes Auditorium, will be a communitywide church service. Plans call for featuring a community choir with members from several churches.

Organizers hope this will become an annual event.

Volunteers are sill needed, organizers said.

“We sent out 160 letters to the known churches in Hopkins County, and we had a response from three, which gives you an idea of the challenge,” said Charles Shepherd, associate pastor of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church and Logan’s uncle. He’s helping with public relations for the organization.

“We’re not attached to the church...but everybody who’s involved in this sees this as a Godly work,” Shepherd said.

Logan got the idea for the organization while at a birthday party for his grandmother in November 2005. A man who had watched Logan grow up, told him this area needs more people like him.

“I laughed it off at first,” he said, and then pondered the statement.

From that grew the idea for an organization that would inspire teens to reach for their dreams.

After the summit, the organization plans to offer quarterly activities and workshops, while also providing teens information about different opportunities.

“I just genuinely want to see the people in the community to just be the best they can be,” Logan said. “I just want to try to maximize the potential and the talent in the area that I’m from.”

They’re not sure yet how many people to expect at the summit and related activities.

“We want to run out of space.” Shepherd said. “We really do.”