

Local

BHS's new principal starts first year here

BY SAMANTHA O'CONNOR
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Baker High School has begun a new year with its new principal Greg Mitchell.

Mitchell grew up in Kelso, Washington. He began his career in education primarily as a theater teacher, teaching acting in different camps and a few years at Binghamton University in New York. He has been in education for 20 years, twelve of which he was an administrator.

Mitchell attended Willamette University as an undergrad and also received his MAT doing student teaching in the Salem district. He earned his MFA in acting in New York where he taught acting as part of his graduate assistantship, teaching as a graduate assistant teacher for a few years.

He was hired as a guest artist at Cornell University in New York where he taught and performed in their theater productions. A few years after being at Cornell, he went into regular public education in Salem for eight years as a language arts teacher and drama director before he received his Leadership Administrative Certificate. Mitchell then moved to Lebanon as a vice principal for a year.

"That's when the budget crunch hit in the



BHS Principal Greg Mitchell.

Samantha O'Conner / The Baker County Press

early 2000s when we got slammed and they were laying off all the assistant principals. I was the only assistant principal left that they still had in the district," explained Mitchell. "I was at the middle school and then they eliminated my position."

After his time in Lebanon, he went to Glencoe High School in Hillsboro for eight years as a vice principal, where he did curriculum and instruction. Mitchell was the principal at Central High School in Independence for three

years before coming to Baker.

Mitchell is working on a needs analysis for the high school, finding what the staff wants to see as primary things to work on and where they want to go with the high school.

"We know we want to serve the community," stated Mitchell. "We want to be in alignment with the district office's goals and vision for being the center of economic vitality for the region. I'd like to see us continue to grow and providing a support to our

kids so that we are training a viable work force for the economic development in our community. I know there's been a lot going on with that and so however we can serve, that's what we want to do."

The high school is currently in the double digits with their test scores, above the state average. They are looking to improve the math scores, which are lower than the others.

"We're doing pretty well and I'm pretty happy to be here," Mitchell said.

Community Bank awards \$16K for good grades

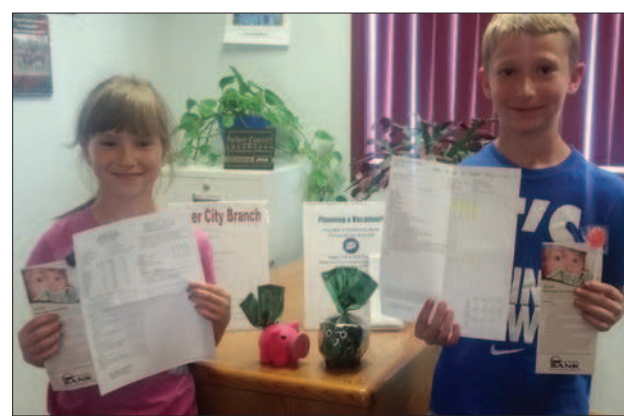
The sixth year of Community Bank's Earn While You Learn Program has set an all-time high in cash awards paid to student-customers for their academic success. For the 2016 pay out period, 730 students in the Eastern Oregon and Southeast Washington area cashed in on their good grades. Community Bank's student customers earned a total of \$15,910!

Since the bank's program began in 2011 earnings have steadily increased. In the first year of the Bank's Earn While You Learn Program just five years ago, 190 students were paid \$3,895. A total of \$6,975 was paid to over 275 student-customers in 2012. A big

increase occurred the following year with \$11,173 paid out in 2013; \$11,939 to 531 students in 2014. Last year \$12,581 went to 576 students. This year nearly \$16,000 brings the program's grand total of academic award money to \$62,473.

The Baker City branch awarded \$754 to 36 student-customers.

The program is designed to encourage students in their academic success by awarding Community Bank Youth Savings accounts customers for their good grades. During the months of June and July, all Community Bank branches accepted end-of-the-year report cards from students in grades 1st



Submitted Photo.

Emese and Axel Marvin of Baker City

through 12th. For every top grade in a main school subject (A-, A, A+ for middle and high school, and S+, E, etc. for grade school) that appeared on the report card, Community Bank deposited \$1 into their Community Bank

Youth Savings Account.

The Earn While You Learn Program is an annual reward of \$1 per top grade, up to \$50 annually per student, with payments given for the whole school year in June and July.

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