

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **West Jones Elementary School Wins Wellness in My School Contest**

Jackson, MS – The Winner of the 2009 *Wellness In My School* Contest proves that elementary students can get very involved in coordinated school health. This year's winner is West Jones Elementary Student Health Council. Their leader is Marie Coleman, Physical Education Instructor at West Jones Elementary School in Laurel.

"The West Jones School District is to be commended for their commitment to the implementation of school health policies and programs. Their focus on student involvement is a great approach that will provide opportunities for success in the classroom and beyond," Director Office of Healthy Schools Shane McNeill said.

Marie was recognized for her work with this health council at the 2009 Mississippi Alliance for Student Health (MASH) Conference in Tupelo. The health council received a \$500 first place award and a \$1,000 Sustainability Award for their efforts to promote health and wellness in their elementary school environment. This year's award was sponsored by MASH.

The *Wellness In My School* Contest originated in 2007. Contest objectives include:

- Students to learn about their school's Wellness Policy and to carry out an activity to promote wellness in their school.
- Students to work together to organize a Student Health Council and to formulate a plan for creatively promoting the Wellness Policy in their school.
- Students to collect information and put together an entry to include the activity that they have completed to learn about and promote wellness in their school.

West Jones elementary students formed a Student Health Council and learned about their school's wellness policy. They got involved with wellness issues by talking to first grade students about eating the right foods and participating in physical activities with them. They planned and executed the Mustangs on the Move Event for the entire school.



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They hosted the annual Thanksgiving Luncheon, and learned about the food pyramid. They assisted with the promotion of blood drives at their school and held a Jump Rope for Heart event.

Student enthusiasm for health topics is an exciting thing to see. West Jones Elementary School Health Council and Marie Coleman are to be commended for their efforts to make coordinated school health a priority in their school.

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