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Johnson wins \$500 for Wellness Education at Van Buren High School

Wellness education at Van Buren Community High School is now \$500 richer, thanks to the efforts of health-minded Youth Leadership Council (YLC) Member, Cassie Johnson.

A video created by the VBHS junior, Cassie Johnson, was awarded runner up in the "Youth in Action for a Healthy Iowa" contest which is sponsored by the Iowa Department of Education. For this honor Cassie won \$500 to be used toward nutrition education in her school.

Johnson produced, directed and starred in the video which was shot and edited with the assistance of the YLC Coordinator. It showcases the variety of ways VBHS promotes healthy lifestyle choices. Cassie had many great ideas for the video and finding the healthy options to shoot was not tough given the multiple programs and offerings the school has made available to ensure student nutrition and fitness in the last few years. The video was chosen as a runner-up entry in the high school category by a panel of judges. Over 50 entries were received by Team Nutrition, a Department of Education branch that focuses on promoting healthy choices in Iowa schools.

Cassie chose to spend the money equally on nutrition and fitness information for the school. She used a majority of the money on fitness supplies to enhance the PE program and the student weight room. A series of updated videos were purchased that can be used during the aerobics unit for all students in PE. They could also be used by students and staff in the weight room before or after school or during the summer. Also purchased were new wall charts that will be hung in the weight room to show proper weight lifting techniques and muscles impacted. Cassie spent the other portion of her winnings on supplies to do an all-school smoothie demonstration. She found a recipe, purchased the ingredients and the machine to make mixed berry smoothies. She demonstrated how easy it was to make smoothies and that they could be a healthy summer treat – an alternative to ice cream! The smoothie maker used to demonstrate the smoothies was a unique single serve machine that goes from a mixer to an on-the-go sports cup. This mixer will be available for use by staff and students.