

Teens are told greatness resides within them

By Carol A. Clark

Internationally recognized keynote speaker Dr. Earl Suttle is an author known for his motivational presentations to the NBA and NFL and for his business consultations with Fortune 500 companies. Suttle was in town this week at the invitation of the Los Alamos Juvenile Justice Advisory Board to present his motivational talk, "Enjoying Excellence: Becoming the Greatest Teen You Can Be" to local teens. He told the teens gathered at Griffith Gymnasium Thursday that talking with students is his favorite audience of all.

"There's so much greatness and potential in this room," Suttle told the 270 or so students who seemed to sit a little tall in the bleachers.

Fifty percent of success is just showing up for personal growth events, he said, commending the students for being there and encouraging them to seek out other such venues.

Suttle also encouraged the youth to repeat positive word affirmations to themselves throughout the day to strengthen their self esteem.

"You make better choices and you make better decisions if you feel good about yourself. If you only read textbooks you'll survive – but if you also read personal growth books then you'll make a fortune," he said. Suttle recommended the students read publications such as "Success Magazine" to discover how others have become successful.

"All of you in this room right have a window of opportunity; don't waste it. Develop an attitude of gratitude," he said. "Work on your associations, start taking a look at the people you're hanging around with and if you're hanging around with negative people, I suggest that you stop and look for friends with positive attitudes."

He encouraged the students to step forward when volunteers are called for and to sit in the front of the room at events.

"If you want satisfaction in your life you've got to take risks and take action – taking action is the key," Suttle said.

By the end of his talk, Suttle had the teens standing and cheering and responding with conviction to his questions. He called for students in the crowd with someone in their life going through rough times to step up to the microphone and share who it was and the nature of the difficulty.

Student after student came forward. Suttle gave them each a brand new tennis ball to give to the troubled person to let them know the teen was thinking of them.

One student said she wanted to give a ball to her friend whose brother was contemplating suicide.

Another explained that she will give a ball to her grandmother whose own mother is dying.

Yet another told the crowd he wants to give a ball to his sister who is going through tough times as a single mother.

Other students came forward sharing their stories as well. Suttle thanked them, reiterating how valuable they all are and that they have the potential to become whatever they choose.