

**'STEAM AHEAD'**

# Educationally Exposed



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Motivational speaker Tim Lewis (center) connects with middle-school students (from left) Preston Buff, Gregory Huffman and Damien Beam.

## Women's group sponsors trip for middle-schoolers

Special to The News Herald

The Burke Women's Fund sponsored a trip to the STEAM Academy for a select group of middle schoolers on Thursday. The students, about 50 in all, were treated to a breakfast Timberwoods catered and a morning filled with networking with professionals, learning about forensics science and touring STEAM.

Representatives from Burke Middle College, Western Piedmont Community College, Blue Ridge HealthCare, Motion Capture Technology and Burke Development Inc. were on hand to share career

advice. Before returning to their schools, the students heard from motivational speaker Tim Lewis, who encouraged them to realize their gifts, cultivate them, protect them and have a vision for using them. As a reminder of their trip, the middle schools students received lime-green T-shirts with "STEAM Ahead" printed on them.

The Burke Women's Fund is made up of 150 women who focus on helping other women and families in Burke County by seeking to better understand the issues they face, empowering them and impacting them financially. The group

chose to help send middle schoolers to STEAM to expose them to more rigorous courses and a variety of careers.

The Burke County Public Schools, in conjunction with the North Carolina School for the Deaf, Western Piedmont Community College and the N.C. School of Science and Math opened STEAM this school year. STEAM is the science, technology, engineering, agriculture and math academy in Jeter Hall on the deaf school campus. While high school students can enroll in classes at the academy, the school system is exposing elementary and middle school students to the academy through field trips, such as the one the Women's Fund sponsored.