

'S STUDENT LEADERS

## **2 BUSY SENIORS GET INTERNSHIPS AT IN PROGRAM FOR NONPROFITS**

**By SAMANTHA KOON | The Virginian-Pilot**

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### GRASSFIELD

When he is not busy serving as president of Invisible Children club at Grassfield High School, or playing in the marching band, Caleb Riddle is working toward his Boy Scout Eagle certification.

His classmate, Ashley Bullock, spends her days working with her church's youth group, student council and yearbook club.

So, for their countless hours of volunteer and service work, the two rising seniors are being recognized this summer by the Bank of America's Student Leaders program. Only 230 students nationwide were selected for the program that matches students with nonprofit organizations. Through the program, Riddle and Bullock received paid internships at local YMCAs. Bullock is stationed this summer at the Greenbrier location; Riddle is at the Great Bridge/ Hickory branch.

Given this economy, Bullock says she feels very fortunate to have a job for the summer. Some of her friends applied to as many as 10 places looking for summer employment.

Riddle and Bullock are learning about every facet of the YMCA business. Each week, they work in a different section of the company, from child care to summer camps to the fitness area.

"You get to see how nonprofits work," Riddle said.

Prior to beginning work, the honorees from across the nation gathered in Washington for a four-day workshop where they got to network with political figures like Fourth Congressional District Rep. Randy Forbes, and spend a day on Capitol Hill.

Riddle especially enjoyed the mock congressional session, where he got to see how much work goes into passing a bill.

For Bullock, getting to meet other teenagers with similar interests was the highlight.

"It's refreshing to see we aren't the only teenagers who care," she said, adding she and her peers got to learn and practice important business-etiquette skills.

Of course, it is not only the students who benefit from the internship. Charlie Henderson, the Hampton Roads marketing president of the Bank of America, said he hopes students will take the skills they learn in their internships and use them to make the world a better place.

"Our student leaders, including Caleb and Ashley, enter the program with leadership experience and a passion for community service," he said. "We further develop their inherit abilities and, in the process, provide them with meaningful employment at nonprofit organizations that are vital to the community."

Bullock said she learned what her strengths and weaknesses are as a leader. And she is excited to use the new skills in her school and volunteer work in the fall.