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Camp at King Center needs more sponsors

Ark Angels summer program to
teach leadership.

JOSEPH DITS
Tribune Staff Writer

SOUTH BEND -- Ron King's plan for an eight-week summer camp is rich in ideas for teaching youth about being a leader, having a career, communicating with other races and -- if it works out -- cooking dinner.

But it's poor in sponsors.

King is looking for businesses and regular folk to chip in so that needy kids ages 10 to 14 can participate in the camp at the Martin Luther King Center.

Of course, he's also looking for families that can afford the \$30-per-week fee, which includes breakfast, lunch and snacks, and field trips and care for kids from 7:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

And, King says, he needs mentors and guest speakers to talk about their vocations.

King is founder of Ark Angels, a nonprofit youth program that works in other community centers.

His curriculum is a new part this year of the annual summer camp at the King Center. It elevates the camp, making it more of a tool for developing leaders, said Maurice Scott, the King

To help or sign up

Sponsors, guest speakers and participants are needed for the summer camp at the Martin Luther King Center. The camp will begin June 12, take the week of July 3 off and end Aug. 11. The cost is \$30 per week per child. Call Ron King at (574) 904-1707 or send e-mail to kingronnie@sbcglobal.net. For more information on Ark Angels, go to the Web site www.strivingforexcellence.org

Center's director.

"It's pretty much a way to empower young people," he said.

King says it's also a way to divert youths from gangs and risky behavior.

In past camps, youths took advantage of the center's computer lab, did arts and crafts and played games, says Janice Miller, the center's academic coordinator.

The theme this time will be "Dreams: Is it in you?" Each day, King says, the youth will learn about health and relationships. Lessons will come from Stephen Covey's "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People."

King says he needs community help to cover 50 youths. He has room for a total of at least 75 youths in the camp.

Last year, the camp only drew 30 to 35 though there was room for 50, Miller says. It's unclear why. But King points out that only five parents could pay last summer.

The food will come from the free summer meal program through the schools, Miller says.

King says the camp fee will give a little pay for teenagers who will help with the program -- part of his ongoing efforts with other youths -- and pay for weekly field trips and materials such as clothing for a musical the kids will perform. He adds that the fee also will compensate King and an assistant who will be at the center throughout each day of camp.

Staff writer Joseph Dits:
jdits@sbtinfo.com
(574) 235-6158

