

# Orland teens get behind the retail scene at JCP

HEATHER WARTHEN, Editor

Orland area teens interested in fashion and business were treated to a unique opportunity Thursday, March 1.

Through the Bridge Teen Center's Behind the Scenes series, 10 Orland Park area teens visited JCPenney at Orland Square Mall to learn more about what it takes to operate a retail store.

"It really opens their horizons to see what's going on behind the scenes," Bridge Teen Center Program Associate Jennifer Jones said. "They get to see different professions and what people do. It's something they are not going to learn in school. It's a really unique learning experience for them."

Led by JCP store engagement manager Dan Peacock, teens were able to see what goes on behind the scenes of the department store that recently made headlines in February with its new pricing strategy, store transformations and updating of the

JCPenney logo and brand.

Store manager Ray Dubie joined the teens on the tour as well. Dubie started working for the company in 1973, washing windows at the downtown Chicago store.

"I've had the opportunity to work in many JCPenney stores," he said. "I've had a total of 16 different jobs with JCP. The opportunities at JCP are fantastic."

Dubie outlined his responsibilities as a store manager, highlighting that leadership as well as delivering "world class customer service" is important.

"We're very customer-service driven," he said.

Reasons for why teens chose this tour varied from learning more about the business side of retail to learning more about what goes on that customers may not see when walking into the store.

Katrina Mixson was excited to see the fashion side of things.

"I am fascinated by clothes and fashion," she said. "It's

cool to go behind the scenes and see what goes on."

Dubie told the teens the best part of the job is the people he works with.

"I have worked for the company for 38 years and moved a lot, but the people are like a second family to you," he said. "You get attached."

Providing the behind-the-scenes tour for the Bridge Teen Center Dubie said is

important.

"It's very exciting to have the partnership and very cool that we can help support them," he said. "These are our leaders of tomorrow."

Upcoming behind-the-scenes tours include trips to the Orland Park Chick-fil-A, Colonial Chapel and Terry's Lincoln.

For more information, visit [www.thebridgeteencentre.org](http://www.thebridgeteencentre.org).

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Elizabeth Hayes has over 26 years as a hearing officer and advocate for abused & neglected children, seniors, and people with disabilities. She is endorsed by the Firefighters Union; Local 1001 & Local 150.

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Teens from the Bridge Teen Center in Orland Park smile for a photo with JCP store manager Ray Dubie and store engagement manager Dan Peacock during a behind-the-scenes tour of the retailer Thursday, March 1, in Orland Park. HEATHER WARTHEN/22ND CENTURY MEDIA

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