

Richards receives Emerging Leader Award

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ASHTABULA - LEADERShip Ashtabula County held its annual meeting on Wednesday, June 19, and special recognition was given to several individuals during the meeting.

Pam Palermo presented the Emerging Leader Award to LEADERShip Class of 2013 graduate Ryan Richards, employed with the Huffman Mayer Wealth Management Group of Wells Fargo Advisors.

"What a good year it's been for LEADERShip," Palermo said.

Richards was a member of the 25th graduating class of LEADERShip Ashtabula County, and this class helped create the Leadership Legacy Scholarship for third- and fourth-year students at Kent State University at Ashtabula. Already the class has raised \$12,000 of the \$50,000 necessary to establish the endowed scholarship.

Palermo praised the whole class, but she said each year someone is selected to be honored as an emerging leader. This year, Richards received the honor.

"This individual truly embodied the meaning of leadership," Palermo said.

She said Richards changed during the course of the class, starting out as someone shy and ending up as someone displaying confidence, charisma and vision.

"I'm definitely surprised, for sure," Richards said as he accepted the award.

Richards said James Mayer pushed him to get involved in LEADERShip, and he's glad he did. Richards said he hopes to continue to be involved in the program in the future.

LEADERShip officials also recognized two outgoing board members, Doug Hladek and Joan Billman, and outgoing, long-time Treasurer Tony Long, who will remain as a board member.

"It's been a great ride, believe me. There's been many, many happy times that have gone with it," Long said. "I probably have gained more than what I contributed."

