

More than 50 Northwest young adults, ages 11 to 19, attended “survival” summer camps, where they learned to prepare for and respond to an emergency.

Northwest residents are often advised to be prepared for any emergency. An earthquake. A big storm. An unforeseen event that requires our individual know-how and community cooperation.

In August 2019, more than 50 students attended summer camps sponsored by the Tulalip Reservations Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and the Killoqua FEMA Youth Preparedness Camp. The youths, ranging in age from 11 to 19, spent a week learning how to prepare for, and respond to, an emergency. They also took home life skills they will need to rely upon not just in a disaster, but every day.

Those skills included budgeting and financial planning. The lessons were delivered by Jen Reed and her community relations team from Sound Credit Union.

Utilizing the Bite of Reality app, made possible through a grant from the Northwest Credit Union Foundation, each camper was assigned a financial profile with a randomly assigned a persona, occupation, income, and family size.

They were also assigned some sort of debt, like a credit card bill, student loans, or a mortgage.

“Jen Reed was instrumental in the success of our youth preparedness programs in 2019,” says Chelsea Treboniak with Critical Ops, a company that offers survival trainings nationwide.

“The credit union team facilitated an interactive experience that left the kids motivated and interested in planning for their financial futures.”

Between August and December 2019, the Sound Credit Union team took more than 145 participants through the Bite of Reality exercise. Their work is part of the credit union commitment to helping the next generation master budgeting and financial management. In fact, in 2018, Washington state credit unions provided financial education to 76,287 students in grades kindergarten through 12.

“We’re extremely passionate about this,” Jen says. “We want the members of our community to have the tools they need to succeed. That’s what makes all of us stronger.”



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