Children learn 'how to help people survive' at WMU School of Medicine

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KALAMAZOO, MI -- When Jeremy Dixon grows up he wants to be a nurse just like his mom.

On Wednesday, the third-grader got a glimpse of what life might be like if he followed her path into the medical field.

Dixon is a student in the Eastside Arts and Science Experiential Learning program, a seven-week, hands-on science and math learning camp for children in elementary grades offered by the Kalamazoo Center for Youth and Community.

In their second week of camp, students traveled to the Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine.

There, they got to learn how a heart beats, how bones work together and saw a demonstration of bodily functions using a simulation dummy.

"We learned how to help people survive," Dixon said. "I want to help people."

This is the first year for the Eastside Arts and Science Experiential Learning summer camp. "The main focus is relating whatever we do to academic learning," said Sam Leolofi, executive director of the Kalamazoo Center for Youth and Community.

Teacher Rebecca Joyce worked with Dr. Cheryl Dickson, an associate professor of pediatric and adolescent medicine and associate dean for health equity and community affairs for WMed, who helped put Wednesday morning's tour together.

"It was really neat seeing all of their curiosity," Dickson said of the students.

A handful of WMed student volunteers worked and interacted with the children, showing them how the dummies worked.
"We want them to do more learning not at their desk," Joyce said of the students in the camp. "This is the kind of learners we have today."

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