

Center Academy students attend conference



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY KELLY J. STIGLIANO

Kaitlin Carter, left, Bridget Winn and Ally Browning from Center Academy in Orange Park attended the 3rd Annual Girls Going Places Conference at the University of North Florida.

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ORANGE PARK - When the offer was made to girls ages 15-18 in Clay, Duval and St. Johns counties' public and private high schools to attend the Third Annual Girls Going Places Conference, three girls from Center Academy in Orange Park responded.

Ally Browning, Kaitlin Carter and Bridget Winn were among the first 100 to apply and therefore were afforded the benefit of a day of learning about owning a business.

Held at the University of North Florida, the GGP Entrepreneurship Conference allowed attendees to network with successful local female business owners.

The girls learned what owning a business is all about and how to manage their personal finances. They played an investment game and heard the stories of female entrepreneurs, inventors, and teenage

girls who had started their own businesses. They were given random articles in a box, created an item out of them and developed a marketing plan for it.

"I learned that finances are hard," Browning said. "We learned when to invest and that it won't always go your way. Some things will go bust and you have to get over it." Ally says she'd like to be a psychologist when she finishes her education and eventually own her own practice.

Winn's favorite part was the product in a box game. It gave her the opportunity to collaborate with other girls in designing their product and discuss their partnership.

Carter also enjoyed the games. She felt her creative juices flowing as she and the other girls on her team worked with the items in their box. To her, it was like assembling a craft.

A long day, the girls felt it was worthwhile. "It taught me a lot about business," Browning said.