



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/CHRIS McLEAN

Brad Padula (left) answers questions about his film 'Beyond the Medal of Honor' during a presentation Tuesday of several copies of the documentary and study notes to his alma mater, East High School. Looking on is Medal of Honor recipient Pete Lemon and East students Daniel Rottinghaus, Federico Alire (dark jacket) and Russell Gallegos, (right).

Pueblo documentary shown in high schools

By GAYLE PEREZ
THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN

East High School senior Sharayah Brooks knows little about the lives of Pueblo's four Medal of Honor recipients.

"I learned a little bit about them when they dedicated the statues (at Heroes Plaza outside the Pueblo Convention Center) but I don't know much about their lives," the 18-year-old student said. "I guess that will all change now."

On Tuesday, Sharayah's class in the History of Americas was the first to receive a copy of the locally produced documentary "Beyond the Medal of Honor," which highlights the lives of Pueblo's four medal recipients Ñ William Crawford, Carl Sitter, Jerry Murphy and Drew Dix.

Copies of the two-hour film, produced by East alumnus Brad Padula, were presented to representatives from all Pueblo high schools on Tuesday morning as part of a nationwide distribution of the film funded by Texas millionaire Ross Perot.

The Perot Foundation paid for the production of the film as well as to put a copy in every high school in the nation in an effort to teach them about the Medal of Honor and the men who have received it.

The documentary premiered in early October at the gathering of the Family and Friends of the Medal of Honor event held in Pueblo. PBS aired the program earlier this month.

Approximately 17,000 public and private schools will receive a copy of the film on Nov. 29.

Pueblo's high schools received their copies on Tuesday at a special ceremony held at East, which featured Medal of Honor recipient Pete Lemon and Padula.

Lemon, who lives in Colorado Springs, told the students in Ray LeMaster's History of Americas class that Pueblo is unique in having four Medal of Honor recipients.

"You have some very, very phenomenal men who have come from your city. Not only are they unique because they have come from Pueblo, but all have unique stories," he said.

Lemon said the stories on the video depict not only the heroics of each man, but the stories of their lives.

"It not only captures what they did in battle but who they are and we wanted to pass that story on to you," he added. "When you watch it, you will be among a million other kids from around the U.S. to watch this film about four remarkable people in Pueblo."

Padula, a 1987 East graduate, said he was proud to return to his alma mater to present it with the first copy to be given to a school.

"I think it is symbolic to be at East High School to distribute this to the principal here today," Padula said. "This has been an awesome feeling to have met these men and do their stories."

Principal Alan Nelms said East was honored to be the first school to receive the copy of the film.

"This definitely will be used as part of our curriculum for the U.S. history classes," Nelms said. "It's going to be especially meaningful since the men are from Pueblo. Our students can relate to them."