

Courting students

Students get grant to transform courtyard at Salina Central

By MICHAEL STRAND
Salina Journal

It was a beautiful day Wednesday, yet the few students in the open-air courtyard at Salina Central High School were using it mostly as a shortcut.

But that could change, with plans to turn the area into more inviting space.

The project got a boost Tuesday with a lunchtime announcement of a \$600 grant from the Youth GrantMakers Council, an arm of the Greater Salina Community Foundation.

"You don't see grown-ups out here doing this," assistant principal Reuben Montoy said. "It's students working on this, applying for the grants and deciding who gets them."

And not even older students — two of those most involved are freshmen.

"It's something we've been talking about for quite a while," said Laurel Michel, who started working on the school's climate committee about a year ago, including over the summer between her eighth-grade and freshman years.

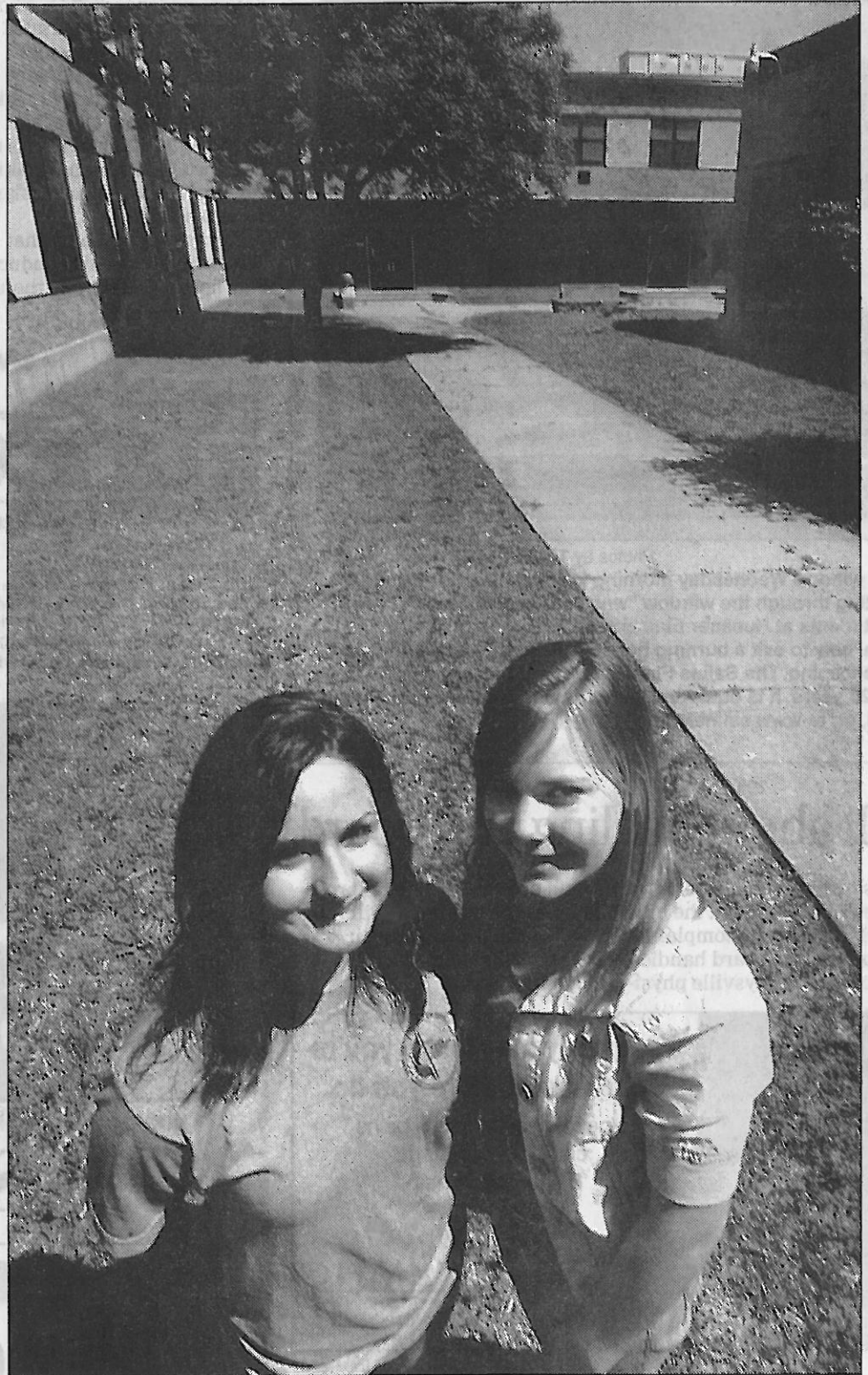
Michel wrote the application for the grant, asking for up to \$2,000.

"There was a lot of paperwork to do," Michel said, adding she learned a lot in the process of filling out the application.

Freshman Courtney Train was among the young people on the Youth GrantMakers Council who reviewed Michel's application — along with many others.

"We had a lot of people that we had to send out letters to saying 'Sorry,'" Train said. "But we hope they'll apply again next year."

Michel and Train said plans involve planting new



TOM DORSEY / Salina Journal

Courtney Train (left), 15, and Laurel Michel, 15, pose in the courtyard at Central High School west of the lunchroom. Students at the school are working to turn the courtyard into a place for students to hang out. Michel applied for a grant from the Youth GrantMakers Council to help with the project. Train is on the committee that approved the grant, which was announced at school Tuesday.

the courtyard. Some classes also may use it to learn about wildlife and plants.

said, adding there's been some discussion about art students helping with the

she said.

■ Reporter Mike Strand