

Today's students work with schools to give back, serve others

By SALI McSHERRY

HATHAWAY BROWN

In November, Hathaway Brown students led children in nutrition awareness, arts and crafts, baking and other activities with a focus on apples at the East End Neighborhood House in Cleveland, said Stephanie Hiedemann, director of HB's Center for Service Learning.

The program was planned in conjunction with East End's Thanksgiving celebration, she said. Kids tasted three types of local apples, prepared wholesome cookies, with applesauce replacing butter, and they also decorated placements and created centerpieces, she said.

"This programming is truly unique and tells a great story about the benefits of interdisciplinary programming, having the opportunity to take risks, the importance of community collaborations, etc.," Ms. Hiedemann said.

Junior Vanessa Smith said, "I chose to volunteer for the Peer Education program at HB because I wanted to be a part of something that made a difference in the community. I think lessons on wellness and healthy lifestyles should be taught at a very young age in order to promote good habits and good health in children for the rest of their lives."

Junior Zoe Harvan said she joined the program because, "I hope to gain a better understanding of how to teach children, as well as more knowledge on nutrition and physical wellness."

Physical education department Chairwoman Denise Keary said she has "enjoyed watching unsuspecting students emerge as leaders among their peers."

She said she sees it as an ongoing program because of the "resounding" interest in the program by students. It's an opportunity for them to work with children, it addresses an area of interest, and it's a chance to connect with the community, she said.

"The partnership will only strengthen between these two organizations because of their mutual commitment to the Cleveland area. There are some additional ideas connected to this program that include a focus on civil leadership as an area of study at HB and developing a leadership training experience with some of the older children at East End," Ms. Keary said.

URBAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Urban Community School is in its third year of selling holiday cards designed by students and has raised more than \$2,500, said Thomas Gill, director of development.

Sue Sherwin, a former board member and long-time supporter of the school came up with the idea, he said. It helps that UCS's art teacher, Mary Green, is recognized continually as one of the best art teachers in the state, "who is able to dive into projects at unprecedented depth for elementary schools students," he said. Using markers, acrylics, pastels and watercolors, students have created dozens of designs, from a basic nativity scene and a winter wonderland

scene to a lovely red cardinal.

"The key is that they are clearly done by children who put considerable time and imagination into the project," Mr. Gill said. The product is high quality but also is done with the touch of a child at UCS. It really is the best of both worlds." He said, "UCS is an ecumenical in the Catholic tradition so there are many different religious customs in our school at this time of year. The kids learn so much from one another and this diversity is one of several things that make us unique," Mr. Gill said.

The program allows the school to showcase the work of students, he said. Additionally, the money raised goes to support scholarships for the children. Also, this project really spreads the word about UCS. Many people unfamiliar with our school will receive a card this year that was made by a student at UCS," Mr. Gill said.



CHAGRIN FALLS INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

At Chagrin Falls Intermediate School, People Always Willing to Serve (PAWS) was dreamed up about 10 years ago by teacher Sarah Read, teacher Katie Adick and former special education teacher Leslie Moore.

The group meets twice a month and most importantly gives students "learning opportunities," Ms. Read said. "We want the kids to be the ones to drive what projects we do and what programs we support," she said.

Over the years, the kids have sold Candygrams to raise money for Autism Speaks because there was a student whose brother had autism, and coordinated a silent auction to raise money for the American Cancer Society because there was a student whose brother had terminal cancer.

PAWS has partnerships with Rescue Village and Therapeutic Riding Center as well as the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society through Pasta for Pennies program in which PAWS has raised more than \$20,000, Ms. Read said.

The latest initiative is an intergenerational program designed to create relationships among seniors and students in grades four through six. Through a partnership with South Franklin Circle, kids visit once a month and participate in programs designed to maximize interaction between generations, Ms. Read said.

For instance, last month students read aloud "Rivka's First Thanksgiving" to seniors, which led to the sharing of Thanksgiving traditions and memories. This month, they will concentrate on winter holidays, and in January, the theme will be diversity.

"We believe that our kids are learning to serve others, to extend themselves beyond their comfort zones, and to discover what life is like for retired adults in a senior community," said school counselor Richard Bondy. "For me," he said, "I get a kick out of seeing the impact that our kids have on others."

For more information, visit hb.edu, urbancommunityschool.org or chagrinschools.org.

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