

McLoughlin Students Serve Community, Honor Student

Payton K, Lynzie P and Hannah S, fourth and fifth graders at John McLoughlin Elementary School were distressed by news reports that children in Haiti were dying from cholera following the devastating earthquake there.

The trio decided to raise money to help Haiti curb this deadly, but easily treatable, disease. The students decided to design and sell bracelets to raise money and awareness about continuing need in Haiti. They raised over \$500 for Medical Teams International (formerly Northwest Medical Teams).

This is just one community service project McLoughlin students are undertaking as part of the Ashley Drew Leadership Project. Ashley Drew, once a student at McLoughlin, passed away in 2009 at age 14 from leukemia. The Youth Leadership Project honors Drew and her desire to help others. The project aims to support students in projects to strengthen their home, school, community and world.

It is great to see these young people take such an interest in the world outside themselves, Marlene Minor, Vice President at Medical Teams International says, It is a wonderful way to both honor this young woman and make a difference in the world.

Principal Carol Sanders explains that there is immense pressure piling up on academic standards. I often hear the lament that we don't have time for

this or that activity and we need to consider these other skills that make a well-rounded individual. So Sanders and part-time McLoughlin counselor Sally Brown created the Leadership Project so students could work on leadership, empathy and other skills.

Leaders can be everyone, not just a select few, Sanders says. Students submitted proposals and carried out the projects. Leadership can be messy. We learned a lot of lessons. Sometimes we had to discuss that leaders are inclusive and draw everyone into their projects, Sanders says. The students' leadership skills and self-esteem got a huge boost, she says.

The projects were varied. Brothers Connor and Hunter M worked at the Oregon Food Bank with their family recently. They bagged pinto beans into family-sized bags, attached cooking instructions and boxed the bags. They had lots of fun and felt good about helping others, their mom Shelly says.

Alayna W, Kira P, Hannah Z, Hannah B and Jordan W decided on a project to both help the school's Reading Incentive Program and raise funds to help Doernbecher Children's Hospital fight cancer. They decided to make and sell bookmarks, all one-of-a-kind creations. They sold like hot cakes, Sanders says.

A group of second graders were worried about worms getting squished on the playground. They did research and learned how worms help the earth. They

made posters and talked to fellow students about being careful outside. It was just wonderful for these tiny, little kids, Sanders says.

In March, Jelly, Zoey R and Amber J worked on a project to help the local animal shelter. They gathered donations of pet food. Fifth and sixth graders also made posters and wrote essays for a contest sponsored by the Oregon Humane Society.

A McLoughlin sixth grader created an antibullying program and presented it at an assembly for fourth to sixth graders. She focused especially on cyber bullying.

Ashley Drew was known for her community service, Sanders said. When she was in second grade, she was concerned about homeless people being cold. I urged her to make a presentation to the staff and also to the PTSO (Parent Teacher Student Organization). She led this amazing blanket drive, Sanders said. Drew followed up with other projects to help the community.

McLoughlin plans to continue the Ashley Drew Leadership Projects in coming years, even as Sanders moves to the central office. Says Sanders: It has been fun. It has brought some balance back for us and everyone remembers that we all have different talents.

