

Community 101 – A lesson in Giving

BY ISABELLA GUYNES, SENIOR AT DAVID DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL

David Douglas High School in East Portland has a lot going on in terms of community involvement, especially through the student leaders who are involved with the Community 101 program.

Community 101 is a program of The Oregon Community Foundation, with support by the PGE Foundation. It takes place in the classroom and provides students with life-changing experiences and opportunities to grow, better the community and learn more about themselves in the process. Students go through a process in which they discuss issues and needs within their community, develop a mission statement to support these issues, and, then select non-profit organizations to support. Then the students must logically divide a \$5,000.00 grant from the Baron/Gilbert Trust of the Oregon Community Foundation and determine how much each organization receives. The money the non-profits receive can be spent according to the specific necessities of that organization.

Publisher's note:

Last November Tualatin Life ran an article about The Children's Center's mission of helping victims of child abuse. The story highlighted "Alexis" who was one of twenty-two children killed by abuse in 2010. Tualatin resident and David Douglas High School Teacher/Counselor, Eric Wadsworth, was so moved by the article that he shared it with his "Community 101" class and the impact



Eric Wadsworth

was so significant that his students decided to rally around this cause and support it. The Children's Center runs occasional articles to remind locals of the importance of their mission and it was gratifying to see the triangle created between TL, David Douglas High School and the Children's Center. This was a win/win/win and I can't thank Eric Wadsworth enough for setting this process in motion by his own care and initiative. The world needs more people like Wads! – JC



(From left to right) Madison Adrian, DDHS Senior; Lisa Brown, Representative from Children's Center; Rosemary Nguyen, DDHS Senior.

The current Student Council senior class decided upon six non-profit organizations after much debating and discussions on why each should be selected to receive a grant. The final decision included Friends of Trees to help promote a healthier environment, Children's Healing Art Project (otherwise known as CHAP) who assists children with serious and terminal illness express themselves through the power of art, Birch Community Services who provides assistance to families in temporary need, and Northwest Children's Center. In addition to these four agencies the Community 101 program allows us to support causes within our school. We selected Celtic Heart, who provides students with clothing, school supplies, personal hygiene materials, and other items. We also began a program to support families who have a child experiencing medical crisis. This year we fundraised over \$4,500.00 to support a first grader in our district who suffers from Cystic Fibrosis. The money raised will help this student and his family with his day-to-day needs to function and live a more quality life. Each nonprofit has a purpose that is designated to giving back to the community in some way, whether it is clean air or therapeutic art work.

The senior council class at David Douglas High School decided to support the Children's Center after Activities Director/teacher, Eric Wadsworth explained its mission: "To support and medically assess children who are suspected victims of abuse and neglect",

which means that any child who walks through the doors is given a head-to-toe physical examination as well as a neutral interview to seek out any signs of abuse. The thing that sold the seniors on supporting this organization is the fact that they never turn a child away. This organization works efficiently and tirelessly to make sure the children they serve are well cared for and are on the path toward recovery. The Children's Center is solution-oriented and work to define strategic plans that ensures the safety and well being for those who enter their facility. The cost of these assessments is very expensive and The Children's Center works extremely hard to annually raise funds to help offset the fee associated with the process. On May 2, 2014 the students of the David Douglas student council were proud to present The Children's Center of Oregon City a \$1,000 check that will go toward paying for these evaluations.

If you would like to donate to or support the Children's Center as an active business partner please visit their website at www.childrenscenter.cc or call 503-655-7725.



Isabella is a Senior at David Douglas High School. She serves on the student council and is active with cheer, band, and the school newspaper. She plans on attending Western Oregon State University in the fall to study nursing.