

June 2013

Fox Valley Lutheran Schools are Amazing!

Over the course of two days in April 2013, 18 different schools came to Fox Valley Lutheran High School (FVL) in Appleton, Wisconsin to pack 285,120 meals that were destined for the Dominican Republic (DR). As part of a service-learning project – a powerful teaching method that enriches learning by engaging students in meaningful service to their schools and communities, Fox Valley named their service project “Willing Hands – Thankful Hearts.” Combining service objectives with learning objectives with the intent that the activity change both the recipient and the provider of the service, Fox Valley teachers and students created a huge impact in the Dominican Republic, *and* in the Appleton and Green Bay areas.

Throughout the school year, the students raised money while learning about life in the Dominican Republic and those that live there. During the April food packing days, students had the chance to hear first-hand from a Wisconsin teacher who taught in the Dominican schools for two years. Over 3,000 kids, parents, teachers and volunteers were a part of this experience. Following the food-packing event, a group of students and adults participated in a one-day Leadership Development Training with ImpactLives Chief Learning Officer, Cathy Bergland. The focus of the training was strengths-based leadership and global/cross cultural competencies. Both of these subjects were taught to enhance the participants’ leadership skills and to prepare them for a global ImpactQuest experience.

Wheels Up! June 2013 Destination? The Dominican Republic! Two teachers, one parent, two sisters, and nine students from FVL Schools traveled to the DR on an ImpactQuest trip with CEO-President Dr. Ramon Pastrano and Bergland. They not only delivered food to Haitians and Dominicans, but they also developed relationships with adults and children in Jalonga, built a house in LaChina, and made new friends in Kilo 16. Three FVL students on the trip hope to pursue careers in the medical field, so a visit to a local public hospital to tour their health care system received high marks.

“I was amazed at the power of the leadership training in conjunction with the service projects. It helped me engage more thoughtfully and reflectively in the process. The ongoing encouragement was outstanding – and always constructive and positive. I appreciate that we were pushed out of our comfort zones at times.”

The group was also exposed for the first time to leadership development subjects such as Intrinsic Motivation and State-of-the-Heart Leadership. For many it was their first time out of the United States and they gained a new understanding for people and cultures around the world – at first glance so different from us in the Midwest, but upon deeper learning, not that different from us after all.

