

A Great Day of Community Service in The Upper School

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The third Wednesday in October is always a challenging day in the Upper School. The sophomores and juniors are required to take the PSAT exam in the morning making it impossible to have a “normal” day of school. For the last few years, the day has been known as X day and a variety of activities have been scheduled to take the place of regular academic classes.

This year our annual X day on Wednesday, October 15th was an opportunity for every student in the Upper School to participate in a half-day of community service either at school or in the Tulsa area. Nancy Baumann, the faculty community service coordinator, and Annie LoVoi, the student council community service chair, organized a variety of activities in the morning for the freshmen and seniors and in the afternoon for the sophomores and juniors.

Off campus activities included trips to the following sites:

- Oklahoma Food Bank
- Tulsa Zoo
- Iron Gate at Trinity Episcopal Church
- Happy Hands
- Make-A-Wish Foundation
- Re-Store (Habitat for Humanity)
- Emergency Infant Services
- Margaret Hudson Program

On campus activities included:

- Preparation for the Dig Pink volleyball fundraiser
- Clean-up from the Freshman Orientation trips

Nancy Baumann asked me to drive a bus load of freshmen and seniors to the Oklahoma Food Bank. Along with faculty sponsors Bob Butler and Lauri Lenora, we accompanied a group of 40 students to the Food Bank where we spent the morning sorting and labeling canned goods for distribution to those in need. All who made the trip would agree the work was monotonous and repetitive, but we all were aware of the valuable service we were providing to this organization. It was particularly meaningful to me to hear one of the supervisors describe the work of the Food Bank, the variety of services they provide, and the staggering number of families in eastern Oklahoma who struggle with hunger every day and for whom the food bank is a much needed lifeline.

When I greeted other groups as they returned to school from their service activities, every story was positive. Our students were cheerful and enthusiastic workers and they represented Holland Hall with class and distinction. In addition to the valuable assistance they provided to these organizations, every student was exposed to individuals and

circumstances that were outside their normal experience and perhaps eye-opening to many of them. In that regard, the day was an educational experience as well as an opportunity to serve. All who participated now have a clearer idea of the challenges faced by others who are less fortunate and what we can do to help.