

Jesus in Our Community-Sharing the Christ Who Cares

Anita Angulo, Teacher & Vice Principal, Chinook Winds Adventist Academy, Calgary, AB

It has been proven that when a group of people have a goal in mind, and they work hard for that one goal, mighty things start to happen. This school year at Chinook Winds Adventist Academy (CWAA), we have seen wonderful things happen. For years now, the Alberta Conference has been encouraging our schools to work with the HET program (Highly Effective Teaching). This program focuses on the idea of teaching life skills and empowering students to be effective citizens for today and tomorrow. At CWAA this year, we used these life skills to launch a school theme that has taken our students on a spiritual journey. We have been practicing the life skills of cooperation, effort, responsibility, integrity and pride. Our school's theme is *Jesus in Our Community- Sharing the Christ Who Cares*. The theme is perfect for what we want our students to learn at CWAA. We are training future citizens not only for Canada, but also for eternity.

Our focus is to plan events that show how our school cares for our community. To encourage this spirit in our school, staff members were given a t-shirt with one of the eighteen life skills. Each time the school has a joint assembly, we wear these shirts to remind our student-citizens about the life skills we need to practice on a daily basis. If you have the opportunity to visit our school, you will see bulletin boards and classroom doors promoting our theme. I have learned over the years that it is one thing to teach, but quite another to put into practice what we teach.

Every month at CWAA we have "Food Bank Friday", an event which happens on the last Friday of the month. Students bring a can of food for families in need in our school community. The students in the elementary division do not have to wear their uniform that Friday if they bring a non-perishable item. The junior/senior high students get points for their class for each food item brought. It is an exciting event each time we do it. However, the most exciting event happened in December just before Christmas. We wanted Christmas 2009 to be special for every family at our school. We knew there were some families who needed food, so we began our "food drive" on a Monday. By Wednesday we had gathered so much food that the table we were putting our food on looked like it was going to break! Students began to pile the food on the floor. By the end of the week, we had enough food to help six families. The staff and some parents fund-raised \$500.00, which gave us the opportunity to help even more families.

The Lord is good, and showers of blessings are poured upon us when God sees his children working together. This Christmas our whole school community used the life skills of cooperation, problem solving, and resourcefulness. I am very proud to be part of a school community where Jesus is shared on a daily basis.