

Holiday Food Baskets for ECTS Students

Hope Abiding Church contacted the Admission Coordinator in November asking if we had students that would be in need of food baskets at Christmas time. Analee Crea, an ECTS instructional assistant in Early Childhood Education belongs to Hope Abiding. The church was working with the Millcreek Kiwanis Club to distribute the baskets throughout the county and Analee suggested working with ECTS. I contacted the home school guidance counselors and they identified 7 families that would benefit.

The baskets were delivered to ECTS on December 21. They were egg boxes containing a complete Christmas dinner and more. Each box had a ham, 10 lbs. of potatoes, a gallon of milk, eggs, fresh vegetables, canned vegetables, macaroni and cheese, rolls, and a pie.

I called each student to the office and told them we had this complete holiday dinner for their family. Each student was humbly grateful. I realized that there is no humility when a person is hungry.

Two students live in the same household and were able to carry their box home. Another student was able to take his box and a secretary, Jennifer Douglas knew one of the families and delivered it. That left four that were not able to go with students due to their size and lack of space on the bus.

Andrea Lucarotti and I spent three and one-half hours one afternoon delivering the remaining four boxes to homes in the county. We drove over 70 miles and witnessed firsthand the difficult environments some of our students live in. One student has been declared homeless and has moved five times since the beginning of the school year. She has a one and one-half hour bus ride each way and her home is in such bad condition that Andrea and I drove past it several times thinking it was abandoned. Another home was a grandmother that has taken her grandchildren in and was very grateful for the help. The last two homes were trailers in very worn down, dilapidated condition.

Couple a difficult home life with hunger and it is easy to see the daily obstacles to learning some of our students face. Students in need continue to increase in our building and throughout Erie County. During our travels, Andrea and I became aware of the haven that school often provides for students. All that staff and the JOC do for students is necessary, appreciated, and worthwhile.