

Adopt A Class



Sharing the Gift of Giving

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The classrooms that are adopted by the local businesses and organizations around the city were showered with love, laughs and great holiday celebrations! All of our students were ensured a great Christmas as they spent valuable time with their Adopters and celebrated the Season. I wish you could have been with me in Ms. Hopkins' classroom when the Seton High School Adopters were spending time with her students...perhaps you would have a tear or at least welled up a bit!

Throughout the year, Ms. Hopkins' students take part in the University of Cincinnati StEP Program, teaching good spending and saving habits through everyday activities and responsibilities. Students can save their StEP dollars or spend them every time the 'StEP Store' comes to Roberts. Some save for a while and others spend the dollars as soon as they can, as

the money burns a hole in their pocket. The entire class planned ahead of time, saved and saved. They brought in all of

their homework to increase the amount of StEP money they receive. The class spent their StEP dollars to buy each of their Seton Adopters a Christmas present (Aren't you welling up right about now??). I happened to walk to a desk, just to visit, and I witnessed one of the sweetest things...a 4th grade student was so excited to give his Adopter the gift he bought a few weeks

prior. With the biggest smile on his face, he pulled out the ring he bought and put it on her finger. Needless to say, the Seton Adopter was so surprised by the gift and the random act of kindness (I KNOW you need a tissue!!). Some of the Seton girls received pens, pencils, jewelry, school supplies... most of all, they received a very special *(continued on page 2)*



Seton and Roberts students bond over a craft project.

A Surprise from Marriott Sales Center

When Lexie Kremer's first-graders arrived at their Holiday Party this December, they were expecting to see their pen pals from the Marriott Sales Center, but they were not expecting to see a surprise visitor—Rosie Red! Ms. Kremer describes her students' reaction: "They have enjoyed every visit from their pen pals, but certainly the Holiday Party was a highlight of the year. As if seeing their pen pals wasn't excitement enough, my students walked into our classroom to find pizza, presents, and Rosie Red. Excitement does not even begin to describe the feeling in the room!" Kremer, who teaches at John G. Carlisle in Covington, goes on to say: "Being part of Adopt A Class has been a wonderful experience for my students and for me. It was truly wonderful to see my students have the opportunity to be children and revel in the magic of Christmas. So often as a teach-

er I ask my first-graders to act and do things that are beyond their years. It was refreshing to see them "act their age."

Even more so than the pizza and toys, and Rosie Red—I think my students most appreciated seeing their pen pals and sharing Christmas with them. I am so thankful for our Adopters and the fun and excitement they bring my students every time they visit. I know my students feel the same way." Christy Al-



Ms. Kremer's class gets a surprise visit from Rosie Red

well from Marriott Sales Center echoes Kremer's sentiment. She says, "Being a part of Adopt A Class has been amazing! The kids give us something to look forward to each week. We love watching them grow and learn and we are looking forward to the second half of the year."

Board Member Spotlight: Darlene Kamine

This month we would like to share a letter to AAC Founder Bill Burwinkel, written by Darlene Kamine. Darlene has been an advisor and friend to AAC since its inception. She currently serves on the AAC Board of Directors and is a member of the Junior League/Adopt A Class group at Academy of World Languages. Darlene is the Executive Director of the Community Learning Centers Institute.

Dear Bill—Thank you so much for your wonderful message last night. Your words were the capstone on an unforgettable and deeply moving day. I shared with many throughout the day your early and constant message about the way in which Adopt a Class adds so much more meaning to the holidays for the Adopters. I had the opportunity to experience this firsthand this year.

Growing up, Hanukah was regarded as a minor holiday as it is not so much religious as historical. In American, it was typically just a weak version of Christmas. But this year I really had to study and think hard about the significance of the holiday as I was asked to present to our class of 1st graders at the Academy of World Languages. My husband and I looked at maps of the area where the battle occurred and found great books that gave different perspectives. We listened to hours of Hanukah music that might be fun background for the kids and we even bought a big new menorah appropriate for the a classroom setting (electric - not real candles!) In the end, the holiday is about religious freedom which could not be more meaningful and poignant than in a class that includes many refugee children who escaped the same kind of persecution that is much like the story of Hanukah. It was a great surprise and so heartwarming when I

found that the children knew all about Hanukah - and not just the dreidel and candy parts. They knew the history and understood it well. They were actually cheering when we gave them the little tiny wooden dreidels.

My Adopt A Class experience enriched the holiday for me in a way that I will never forget. You are doing this for thousands of us throughout the city and adding an important dimension to the humanity and compassion of our city. When we find that a friend or colleague is part of Adopt A Class, it binds us together like being part of the best club in town! Your leadership and generosity and goodness are rare and have made us all a better version of ourselves.

Endless thanks and love to you and Beth for making miracles and magic every day.



A student at the Academy of World Languages participates in the multi-cultural holiday celebration.

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gift from a group of amazing Roberts students. Seton student Lindsey Berting said, "I knew that the kids would [receive] a toy from us, but I had no idea I would receive one in return. When the kids went and got their presents for us, you could tell they were very proud to give us a gift. They worked very hard to earn tickets in order to give us gifts, and I could tell my buddy put a lot of thought into my gift."

For the fourth-graders, the joy of giving is evident. Fourth-grader Olivea Jent says, "I was excited to see [my Seton Adopter's] face when I gave her my gift. It was great to see her surprise and excitement. The look was priceless."



Students from Roberts and Seton enjoy a craft activity

Olivea's classmate Shamon Mingo explained his gift to his Seton Adopter this way: "It is nice to give to others. I wanted to give her a gift because it is joyful and kind to give a gift at Christmas time."

WELCOME NEW ADOPTERS!

3 Women Inc.
5/3 Emerging Leaders Group
Academy of Kung Fu and Tai Chi
Artswave
Avon Roses
Children's Hospital A4S Nursing
Children's Hospital—
Anesthesia Imaging Nursing
Children's Hospital Customer Service
Cincinnati Fire Department
Cornerstone Ins. Broker Service Agency
Emery Federal Credit Union
John Casablancas Modeling Company
P&G Military Team
Prus Construction
Rockdale Academy PTO
The Standard