
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 9, 2008

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KEEFE TECH STUDENTS AND RETIREES MAKE TOYS FOR LOCAL SHELTER

FRAMINGHAM, MA- Children at a local homeless shelter will be the beneficiaries of a program between Keefe Technical School and Summerville at Farm Pond, an Emeritus Senior Living Community located in Framingham.

Summerville's Activities Assistant, Carla Bertonazzi, recently launched the Helping Hands Project, an intergenerational, community service program, designed to bring Framingham-based schools, businesses and faith-based organizations together to provide service projects for non-profit groups in the MetroWest area.

According to Bertonazzi, "We are very excited that our first community service project is our collaboration with Keefe. Under the direction of Paul Monroe, a carpentry instructor at Keefe, students from the school's carpentry program are building wooden trains. The toys will be primed and painted by the 'Farm Pond Oaks Elves,' residents of Summerville's Oaks Assisted Living facility, along with students in Keefe Tech's Visual Design program."

"In this intergenerational activity, the Visual Design program students will be paired up with a Farm Pond resident to paint and personalize each toy," explained Margaret Ellis, Keefe's Vocational Coordinator. "Our students will visit Summerville Pond on Thursday, December 11, to work with the residents on the painting aspect of this project."

"On Friday, December 19, we will host a holiday party here at Summerville to distribute the toys to children from the shelter," added Bertonazzi.

Keefe Tech's Carpentry program is a three-year program that is divided into two major parts. The first year, students receive basic instruction in the process of milling lumber into various components including cabinets and counter tops. The second and third year the students spend the majority of their time learning how to construct a house from foundation to finished product. The annual house-building project provides the setting for the "on the job" learning activities. In the Visual Design program, first-year students learn the foundation of design, including color theory, drawing, perspective and layout. In the second and third years, students focus on developing multimedia projects using desktop publishing and photography software. All students also take related instruction to support their practical experience during the academic week.

"Intergenerational activities benefit all participants," noted Ellis. "It's an opportunity for young and old to share talents, resources and experience. It helps older people remain active and feel valued and act as role models for the youngsters. Hopefully, it will encourage the younger generation to develop a healthier outlook on aging and get them involved in community activities," she added.

"Keefe students have participated in so many great projects in our local communities," said Patricia Canali, Keefe Principal. "Our carpentry students recently completed building a trophy case for Holliston High School. Last year our students built an Alice in Wonderland display for the children's section of the Ashland Public Library. We are very proud of our kids and are pleased to have another opportunity to be part of such a worthwhile project."

Keefe Technical School, located in Framingham, MA, is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. In addition to 13 different vocational programs, Keefe Tech offers a complete college preparatory program to students from the communities of Ashland, Framingham, Holliston, Hopkinton, and Natick.

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