

Leaders of the Pack

Resident Services Programs Teach Youth About Giving Back to their Communities

As a member of the Lackey Task Force in Yorktown, Virginia, CHP's Assistant Resident Services Director Tiffany Little helped establish a six-week leadership academy for children. Each participant applied by writing an essay about what qualities make a leader. Formal invitations were then sent to the parents of 5 boys and 3 girls that live at the Woods of Yorktown, Yorktown Square, or the Rivermeade Apartments. Leadership Academy members are of middle to early high school age.

The Lackey Leadership Academy, which ran from January 14 to March 5, addressed issues such as effective communication, identity formation/self-esteem, goal setting, teambuilding, and community awareness/community service. The program also included a visit with Young Emerging Professionals of Williamsburg (YEP) to gain insight into how the organization functions and works with other groups in the community. Participants also voted to celebrate their graduation from the program by taking a limo to a local restaurant for dinner. In the next 6 months the children will continue to meet on a weekly basis and work on a community-based project with the Chesapeake Preservation Group. The service project will involve a 5-day clean up of the Chesapeake Bay to be followed up with a kayaking adventure on the bay led by a business sponsor.

"We're so excited by the success of this program!" exclaimed Little. "We have seen such a transformation in the kids -- they have really matured during the past 6 weeks," she added. "The participants are so enthusiastic about the Academy and have really committed to improving themselves and their community. Each one of them has even improved his or her grades since being a part of the program! We're so proud and we hope the program will eventually expand to other communities."



Cheryl Ferreira, a member of the Lackey Task Force and an employee with York-Poquoson Social Services, prepares the Leadership Academy participants for a ride in a stretch limousine as a reward for completing the program.



Healing in Haiti

Staff and residents at Ansell Gardens Apartments in Portsmouth, Virginia immediately went into action after hearing of the catastrophic earthquake that devastated the island country of Haiti on January 12. Altogether, they collected 1,265 new or gently used stuffed animals to give to the children of Haiti. Once boxed up, the toys were shipped to Haiti courtesy of the U.S. Coast Guard.

"Looking into the eyes of all those children in Haiti that are without parents now, without anyone to hold them and comfort them, is so heartbreaking," said Ansell Gardens Property Manager Sylvia Gaines said. "I remember when we had a fire here at Ansell and the Red Cross came with teddy bears for the children...it gave them hope to know someone cared about them and it also provided the kids with something to hold on to. So we decided to send the children in Haiti something that might put a smile on *their* faces and offer a little bit of solace."

Young residents at Ansell Gardens Apartments celebrate the success of their stuffed animal drive, which resulted in over 1,000 furry friends being sent to the children of Haiti.