Center of Hope project completed

SCTD students come together to aid less fortunate

Darcy Leigh Maddox, a bachelor’s degree student in interior design, has spent most of her life helping those less fortunate. But her time working on the Salvation Army’s Center of Hope project has made the most impact.

“It’s so wonderful to see how others are contributing to each panel every time I go in,” she said of the murals she helped create. “So many people from the school are giving of themselves and their time to make the quality of life of the residents of the Center so much better – what greater tribute to the interrelatedness of humankind than that!”

In the fall of last year, the Center of Hope held a candlelight vigil where the final project was revealed. At the event, SCTD’s deck and children’s play area, situated on land between the women’s shelter and the building housing the kitchen and cafeteria, was revealed to the public for the first time. SCTD also delivered 205 new and gently used blankets for distribution to the homeless.

The last minute preparations for the reveal were hectic:

• Only days before, Lowe’s partner on the project, Ed Bruno, added a crossbeam for the swings and secured the swings to the nearly complete playset.
• At 4 PM on the day of the reveal, Tony Jackson, Interior Design bachelor’s degree program graduate, was adding finishing touches to the mural backdrop on the outside wall of the kitchen that flanks the play area.
• Interior Design student Juanita Curling was transporting and spreading mulch around the play area.
• Clem Curling, Juanita’s husband, was repairing the external wall of the food pantry, a wall that serves as the back boundary of the play area.
• Instructors C.R. Davis and Carla Wallace were using wheelbarrows and rakes to clean the area of debris and transport mulch.

SCTD is committed to giving freely and frequently to the community, and service learning is a critical instructional strategy instructors use to provide real world experiences for students.

“Engaging in service helps students increase their technical, employability and personal skills while they gain confidence and a sense of control over their lives. At the same time, critical needs in the community get addressed effectively,” said Academic Dean Dr. Sheree Koppel.

“The Center of Hope was/is a school-wide project during which everybody won,” said Craig Niemann, the chair of the Graphics and Web Development departments. Matt Yates, Director of the Center of Hope, said, “The project exceeded my expectations completely. Thanks and God bless.”

The college is grateful to Lowe’s for the company’s generous grant support, $10,000, and the assistance of its commercial employees. SkillsUSA made the grant available and supported the fine work students and faculty and staff members have done at the Center of Hope.