

# Essential Life Skills

Community Service Project

#ToteChallenge 2018

Tonawanda, NY

Upon learning a unit about civic values and responsibilities, Mrs. D'Amato's & Mrs. Christian's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> period Essential Life Skills classes decided to do a community service project.

After doing some research, they decided to address the issue of plastic Shopping bag pollution. Some facts they found out about the negative effects of plastic shopping bags on our environment are:

- They can take up to 1000 years to decompose
- 100,000 animals are killed by plastic bags each year
- They are made from polyethylene which consists of petroleum, a declining natural resource.
- Burning them emits toxic gases
- The poisonous inks that are used in printing can end up in our soil & food
- The Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a mass of plastic and debris in the Pacific Ocean and is now bigger than France, Germany and Spain combined

Students were moved to try to make a difference!

- Each student did research to write 1 announcement to help educate our student body on the harmful effects of using plastic shopping bags.
- Each student also made a poster or flyer to hang up throughout the Building.
- We started a “collection competition” for the person who brings in the most plastic bags will win a prize
- Students researched to find out what we could do with the plastic bags that are collected. We will bring them to a local store (Tops) for recycling. Recycled plastic bags can be made into other useful things.
- The next phase of our project was to bring in old t-shirts to make into reusable shopping bags. We called several places to see who we could donate the reusable bags to and decided on St. Francis Food Pantry.

## Essential Life Skills used:

- ✓ Working with others
- ✓ Using a washer and dryer to clean the shirts
- ✓ Writing and researching
- ✓ Organization
- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Civic Responsibility
- ✓ Volunteerism
  
- ✓ and many more.....

# Cutting and Painting



# Showing their artistic abilities



# Hard at work!







# Message attached to each bag

Approximately 100,000 marine creatures each year die from plastic entanglement. This is an example of the dangers plastic shopping bags can cause. This plastic is made from dangerous oils and poisonous inks that get into our soil, food, and animals. This year the Essential Life Skills Class at Tonawanda High School has decided to help make a difference.

Help us make this change by using our reusable bags. Enjoy!



The classes made 40 reusable bags and donated them to our local food pantry

We collected **2075** plastic shopping bags to dispose of properly!!

