Events

The Third Annual Women of Courage Award was presented on December 12th to Ms. Patty Virginia Sarden. Two students in Robin Fife’s Service-Learning class studied the numerous nominations submitted for the award. Sarden was chosen for all of the many “little” ways in which she contributes to her community, which add up to a great deal. Her contributions to various organizations inspire us to help our neighbors in whatever ways we can. Another group of students helped a local resident, Mr. Bobby Blue, to clean up and reclaim an old burial ground, adding crosses to mark graves and obtaining a large sign to identify the cemetery. Other groups tutored ESL students in elementary schools and one group worked with Habitat for Humanity.

Bonner Leaders Program

The Bonner Leaders went to Caretta, West Virginia, just before Thanksgiving Break. They stayed in an old “haunted” school building, which now serves as the Caretta Community Center. After all nearby coal mining operations pulled out of this area 20 years ago, the residents have had to struggle to keep the community together. An organization, Big Creek People In Action (BCPIA), invites volunteers from various colleges to help restore the school building and the community. In a great whirlwind of activity, the Bonners put together hundreds of food boxes and treat bags over a few hours, a task that would have been nearly impossible for the Center’s full-time staff of three. The Center hosted parties for Seniors, children, and their families, and gave away the food boxes to brighten their holidays. The local community was more than grateful for the Bonners’ efforts and treated their guests to fun flat-footing dance lessons at the local Bluegrass Hall.

The Bonners were very busy last block. They held a video discussion on The Color Purple, which was a huge success! Chairs were brought in from the next room to accommodate the large crowd and a lively discussion on issues of race and women’s rights followed.

Some of the Bonners organized an SOS (Service on Saturdays) outing to Plaza Towers with several other TC students. They made homemade Christmas cards to hand out to residents as they sang Christmas carols to them. Twelve students from both the Bonner Leaders Program and the Service Learning classes signed up to be Bell-Ringers in front of Greeneville’s K-mart on December 1st! All proceeds raised go to the Greenville/Greene Co. Food Bank, which supports those in need of help with heating bills and food in Greene County.

Our Bonner students ended the semester by throwing a Christmas party at the Boys & Girls Club. Before waiting in line to speak to Santa, they played a wild game of musical chairs and created their own ornaments. Cookie decorating was very popular, but everyone got his or her face painted at least two or three times!