

Our Steps to Success Students Brought Smiles To Homeless

On a few recent afternoons, our Steps to Success students made sandwiches, collected bags of chips and cookies, and picked up boxes of water.

Then, the middle school students in our after-school program brought everything to a group of homeless people at a pavilion in John Prince Park in Lake Worth.

But it wasn't just a quick drop-off.

The students sat with the men. They talked to them, heard their stories. And they brought smiles to their faces.

"Our kids wanted to really help these folks," said Rhonda Rogers, executive director of Lake Worth West Resident Planning Group, which runs the Steps to Success program with support from Impact 100 grant. "So they researched what the homeless people needed. They really did their homework."

In the process, the students learned just how quickly a life can unravel and someone can be left homeless out on the streets. For some, it's a matter of losing a job, getting hit with a devastating medical bill or losing everything to drug addiction.

Rhonda said part of the after-school's curriculum is to do a community service initiative, as required by the Impact 100 grant. The students decided to feed the homeless because some of the students and the program's staff had seen the men gathered in the park pavilion and wanted to reach out and help them.

The students took up the initiative on their own, planning the food drive and eventually the delivery to the park. The

program staff helped buy the food and accompanied the students to the park, but the students are credited with organizing everything and bringing joy to the faces of the homeless.

“I’m really proud of them. They did this on their own,” Rhonda said.