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Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School takes on global water crisis

Submitted by Robin Anderson



Students carry a water jug containing five gallons of water, weighing over 40 pounds, at a Sept. 25 assembly at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School in Moraga. Children and women in Africa carry one of these for miles daily to get water for their families. Photo provided

building community, and working to help communities. During the assembly, to teach how hard life is in some countries, students carried five-gallon jugs of water weighing 40 pounds across the auditorium. "Children and women in Africa carry one of these for miles daily to get water for their families, often for water that is brown and not clean," Lockett said.

After the assembly, JM teacher Kristin Anderson and the leadership class were so moved by the presentation that they set a school goal to raise the \$8,000 and fully fund a well providing access to clean water for an entire community.

"While listening to it I couldn't help but compare these children in Africa that we're hearing about and how their days are spent just trying to survive," said Anderson. "The idea of community is emphasized in Leadership, so I was grateful for an opportunity for Leadership students to assist in something so meaningful."

"We had our advisory lesson that morning focused on the assembly," said Lockett. "Classes watched a short video, answered some questions about fresh water, and came up with a class goal." Every \$25 raised sponsored one person for life with access to clean water, Lockett explained.

"Initially we did not think we could raise the amount for a well so we were focusing on how many lives could we save," Lockett said. The fundraiser ran through Tuesday, Oct 2, but some additional money came in the rest of that second week to get them over the top.

"I had told the presenter that in the past we raised between \$1,500-\$2,000 for an ECO-sponsored turtle fundraiser, and that in my experience people often are more willing to donate to help baby turtles than people," she said. "Yet this year proved me wrong. JM really came together to help."

For information about Thirst Project, visit www.thirstproject.org.

Over the years, Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School has had many classroom competition fundraisers, typically raising up to \$1,900, involving a few classes per grade. This year, however, every single class participated (on their own), raising \$8,000 for Thirst Project, a nonprofit organization that educates students about the global water crisis and challenges them to fundraise to build wells in developing nations and impoverished communities to provide people with safe, clean water.

"Thirst Project is a great example of an organization started by youth wanting to make a difference in the world," said JM science teacher Kim Lockett. "The world can feel very overwhelming at times and it is great to show students that youth can work together to truly make a difference."

Lockett had seen a Thirst Project assembly at a YMCA Model United Nations Conference, and she brought the topic up to the ECO club at JM. "Everyone was on board with bringing it to the school," she said.

At a special assembly on Sept. 25 a Thirst Project representative spoke to students about community, building community, and working to help communities. During the assembly, to teach how hard life is in some countries, students carried five-gallon jugs of water weighing 40 pounds across the auditorium.

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