

Projects aiding the poor strengthen mentoring ties

Written by

Wednesday, 28 April 2010 14:37

Participants in the Big Brothers Big Sisters "Beyond School Walls" program will donate 18 hand-made blankets to homeless families and their children at People Serving People in Minneapolis. As part of a service learning project, mentors (Bigs) from Comcast and mentees (Littles) gathered at the KIPP: Stand Academy to create tie quilts from fleece donated by Comcast's St. Paul headquarters.

After working together to create the blankets, Bigs and Littles participated in a scavenger hunt for which they researched local homeless shelters to learn about the services they provide, who they serve, and what their mission is. Using the information they learned, the group voted on which shelter would receive their donation.

"My Little Brother Bennett and I shared a very rewarding experience completing the tie quilt project," said Comcast Big Brother Jeremy. "It took us a few sessions to complete, but as we wrapped up the final ties on the blanket, I could really sense that Bennett felt proud of sticking to it and completing the project with a little grit and determination. We both felt good that we were able to complete something we hadn't done before and knowing that it was going to someone who could benefit from it made it that much more enjoyable."

"It was about donating to homeless people because that's what God would have wanted me to do!" said Little Brother Ben.

During this service learning project, several of the Littles were able to share their personal experiences with shelters and talk to their Bigs about the support their families received and about the great work they do in the community.

"His desire to share this [information] with me demonstrated that these organizations have a greater impact than you can put in to words," continued Big Brother Jeremy. "It also showed that making a blanket with someone can serve as more than just a craft activity!"

"These blankets will be given to homeless families who often are able to fit all of their personal items into one garbage bag. They don't have many personal belongings. A handmade quilt can be very comforting and is something they can take with them when they move into a home of their own. On behalf of the families and children at PSP, we are grateful for this donation from Big Brothers Big Sisters and Comcast," said Jim Minor, President and CEO of People Serving People.

"I thought it was kind of cool. I never did anything like that before. I think it's nice for them to have something to sleep with," said Little Sister Ta'Nysha. When asked what it was like working on a service project with her Big Sister, she said, "It makes me feel like she's actually my big sister. I'm not around my real big sister much. The program makes me feels safe."