

SOCKSGIVING

The background of the entire graphic is decorated with various autumn leaves in shades of red, orange, yellow, and green. Some leaves are floating in the air, while others form a dense border at the bottom.

Help the Belleair Teen Council collect over 500 pairs of new socks for the Thanksgiving season! We are collecting socks for all ages and genders to donate to RCS.

Collections: November 1-30

For more info, contact Rachel at 727-518-3728 or email rhobbs@townofbelleair.net

The 2017-2018 Belleair Teen Council is comprised of 31 teenagers ranging in age from 13 to 18 years old, who are dedicated to making a positive difference in our community. While Belleair is a small town near much-larger cities including Clearwater and Largo, our Teen Council does big things.

Each year, the Council chooses a charitable cause or organization to partner with, which have previously included UPARC, The Arc Tampa Bay Foundation, and the Belleair Community Foundation.

This past year; however, the Council partnered with two non-profit organizations: Religious Community Services (RCS) and Hands Across the Bay, whose focus is one providing help and hope for those facing homelessness, domestic violence, and hunger. The Belleair Teen Council chose to support these organizations because of their strong message to give back to the local community and people in need.

To further this mission, the Belleair Teen Council started "Socksgiving" in the month of November. Socksgiving was a sock collection event for all ages and genders that delivered all varieties of new socks to local persons in need. These donations provided a level of comfort for recipients to help them stay warm during the upcoming winter season.

With the help of the Belleair Community Foundation (a local civic group) and countless Belleair residents, the Teen Council exceeded its goal of 500 pairs of socks, and ultimately collected 683 pairs. These socks were then donated to the RCS and Hands Across the Bay, where they could directly help those in need.

Projects such as Socksgiving are an important tenant for the Belleair Teen Council, whose members are learning to appreciate serving others in these types of capacities. Belleair Teen Council Vice President, Jennifer Spencer says "The people that benefited from our Socksgiving drive have a lot to worry about, especially during the holiday season. Even though it is something simple as clean socks, I feel it is important to help relieve the struggles of people in our community in need by any means possible."



Belleair Teen Council gather with their bin of socks.



Belleair Teen Council Secretary, Miss Madison Vaughan (bottom); Mrs. Florida and representative for Hands Across the Bay and RCS, Ms. Devin Pappas (left), and Belleair Teen Council Liaison, Ms. Rachel Hobbs (right)

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JP MURPHY



INC. 1925

901 PONCE DE LEON BOULEVARD
BELLEAIR, FLORIDA 33756-1096

PHONE (727) 588-3769

WWW.TOWNOFBELLEAIR.COM

To Whom It May Concern,

Please accept this nomination for the Florida League of Cities "Youth Council Community Service Project Contest" on behalf of the Town of Belleair's Teen Council.

Belleair's Teen Council began around five years ago, and was founded for two main reasons: (1) to empower our local teenagers to learn more about their government and to be active in it, and (2) to encourage our teens to give back to their community. Each year, the Teen Council sits in on guest lectures from Town officials, attends public meetings, and assists the Parks and Recreation Department with special events and programs.

On top of this, our Teen Council takes on philanthropic project each year. This year, that project was "Socksgiving," an initiative to donate new socks of all kinds to victims of homelessness, domestic violence, and hunger. As Teen Council embraced this project, so did our community, and it was my privilege to watch the passion of these kids make a difference in the lives of others.

That being said, I highly recommend that the Florida League of Cities consider the Belleair Teen Council's "Socksgiving" project for the "Youth Council Community Service Project Contest" this year. Thank you, and please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

JP Murphy

Town Manager

March 30, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Devin Pappas and I am a Domestic Violence Advocate for RCS and Hands Across the Bay. I am also involved with helping the homeless families through Pinellas Hope, HEP and RCS.

The community support, for these programs, could not be successful without the organization, team work, effortless hours and dedication from Rachel Hobbs and her Teen Council Team.

I have had the pleasure of working with this group on many events such as collecting canned food for the food bank and raising awareness of domestic violence through the presence at the Belleair Rec Concerts but most recently, Rachel and her Teen Council Team held a "Socksgiving" drive to collect socks during the cold months.

This team collected 680 pairs of socks through their community outreach efforts and services. Because of this heartfelt event we were able to provide warm socks to women, children and men at the following non-profit organizations: The Haven of RCS, Hands Across the Bay, HEP and Pinellas Hope.

It truly is a blessing to have such a group of young teens care so much about the families facing crisis and are so selfless to dedicate their time and efforts in making a difference in our community.

Please recognize Rachel Hobbs and her extraordinary group of teens as outstanding role models in our area. We are very fortunate to have them.

Thank you,

Devin Pappas

727-657-9615