

ROBERTS STUDENTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE AT SCHOOL #36

By Rachel Graham, Biology Lab Instructor/Coordinator



This year the Math/Science Club is beginning our third year of working with School #36: the Henry W. Longfellow School in the Rochester City School District. Once a month, RWC students travel to School #36 to teach a hands-on science lesson to a fourth grade class. This year we are supporting three different fourth grade classes at School #36 and we have twenty-six college students and three faculty members participating. This program is about more than the science lessons that we teach each month. The college students interact with the students all year long and form relationships with them. The students at School #36 look forward to our visits and the opportunity to receive individual attention. RWC students are acting as role models for these young, impressionable students.

Over ninety-eight percent of the students at School #36 fall below the poverty line, and every single student attending receives free lunch. We see in this school both tremendous need and tremendous possibilities. We know that elementary school is a formative time. We want to encourage the students to reach their full potential, we want to motivate them to excel in school, we want to increase their academic enthusiasm, and we want them to know that as individuals they are important and loved.

This December, with help from the Joanna Fund, we had the opportunity to meet some of the physical needs of the School #36 students. With money from the grant, we were able to purchase 173 new winter coats to donate to the school. In addition, our club made scarves to go with each coat. We made the delivery of coats, scarves and school supplies donated by Karen Scheske's First Year Seminar class to School #36 on December 7th.

We are looking forward to the second part of our grant proposal that was funded: We are bringing our fourth graders to campus to do our last science lesson! Students and chaperones will participate in various activities on campus and eat lunch in the cafeteria while traveling with an RWC student as a guide. We are excited to show the students a glimpse of college life as many have little experience outside their own neighborhood. Our hope is that this opportunity will inspire and encourage students, and perhaps their parents, to set and work toward educational goals.



"Serving with the Adopt -A -School program at school 36 has given all of us involved an amazing opportunity to step out of our comfort zone and serve our local community while making an impact on the lives of the children we work with. This year the most rewarding experience was being able to provide winter coats and scarves for children in need. It's great to see the program grow and be able to provide for not only their academic needs, but also their physical needs." Gisela Ocasio '13