2014-2015
Partnership With Business Project
Chapter #13079
Pompton Lakes High School
New Jersey
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Description of Partnership Goals

A partnership, as defined by Merriam Webster, is “A relationship existing between two or more persons associated as joint principals in a business.” In order to create a successful partnership, our goal was to form a mutually beneficial bond between the Pompton Lakes chapter of FBLA and local businesses. An ideal partnership in our eyes was one that would teach our FBLA chapter about business, while benefitting the community.

During a brainstorming meeting, our chapter realized that among the numerous charities dedicated to providing Christmas presents to underprivileged children, there is a lack of charities who make these same children’s birthdays special. With this problem in mind, we were inspired to create a “Birthday Buddies” program to fill this void. Our next step was to reach out to a charity that could be benefitted by our partnership project. The Children’s Home Society of New Jersey (CHS) seemed to be the perfect receiving group.

In order to benefit this deserving charity, our chapter partnered with a variety of local businesses. All of the businesses we contacted were receptive to the idea of being involved with students at our high school to benefit the community. A true partnership benefits all parties involved and in that spirit, Pompton Speech Plus (PSP), the Children's Home Society, and our chapter would all benefit as a result of our project.

Our goals in implementing this project were to:

- **Create** interaction between FBLA members and busi-
Partnership with Business

Pompton Lakes High School

Development

ness leaders in our community

- **Develop** a greater understanding of business structure within charitable organizations
- **Teach** skills of empathy and consideration for others to the Children at Pompton Speech Plus
- **Implement** a project that focuses on developing communication skills on multiple levels
- **Learn** marketing concepts and other useful business skills utilized in business operations
- **Expand** past community lines and benefit people and businesses throughout the state

**Description of the Planning Activities used to Build a Partnership:**

**Establishing the partnership**

In order to achieve the goals established at the brainstorming meeting, our chapter decided to form a relationship with a business in our area, Pompton Speech Plus (PSP). PSP is a private practice that provides advanced therapy techniques for children with social deficits. These students’ cases range from mild to severe Autism, ADHD, anxiety, language disorders, and other various behavioral impairments. The children at PSP work on multiple social and friendship building skills in group and individual therapy. By working with a business like Pompton Speech Plus that directly helps children in our area, we saw a unique opportunity and learning experience for our FBLA chapter.

Our plan was to work with the kids at PSP to create a “Party in a Box” for those at the Children’s Home Society of New Jersey (CHS) in Trenton, NJ through our “Birthday Buddies” program. The Children’s Home Society is a shelter that provides after school programs, support, and a safe place for underprivileged and at-risk youth. CHS was an ideal receiving group for our project because they are a fairly stationary and stable group who would be able to receive the birthday boxes throughout the year.
Also, since the Children’s Home Society is located not in our town, but in our state capital, it allowed our project to cross community lines and benefit children throughout the state. The boxes would contain birthday presents and party supplies, such as balloons and candles.

We contacted the Director and co-owner of Pompton Speech Plus, Danyela Williams, who was eager to participate in our project, especially considering the impact it would have on her students and the opportunity to connect with students at Pompton Lakes High School.

Raising Awareness

The first step in developing our project was to raise awareness among the families of the children at PSP. The partnership team scheduled a meeting with the parents who were enthusiastic and supportive of our idea. During the meeting we explained how their children would be involved and answered their questions. The parents recognized how the project would benefit their kids and were eager to get involved and help in any way they could.

To update our FBLA club, we spoke at a chapter meeting in October to let the members know about upcoming volunteer opportunities and about how they could get involved. We then invited Danyela Williams to speak to our chapter about her role in the partnership. She explained to the FBLA members the preliminary aspects of dealing with socially and mentally challenged children and told the chapter about her experience in business ownership.

Businesses Contacted

In order to expand our project and involve more businesses,
we sent out letters and emails to establishments in our town describing our project and asking them if they would like to participate. The response from the businesses we contacted was overwhelmingly positive.

Stop and Shop contributed by donating a gift card that would allow us to buy the cake mix and frosting to be included in each party box. Becton Dickinson, a pharmaceutical company in our area donated toys for the birthday boxes as well as a brand new acoustic guitar to be used in the music program at the Children’s Home Society. Wise Potato Chips donated a bag of chips for each child. In addition, they agreed to provide a truck and driver for the day to transport the boxes from Pompton Lakes to Trenton. Bed Bath and Beyond donated over 50 white gift boxes that would be decorated and filled with presents and supplies.

Marco’s Emporium, a local toy store, agreed to host a shopping night at which children from Pompton Speech Plus chose presents for the birthday boxes with the help of FBLA volunteers. Additionally, Marco’s gave a 15% discount on all items purchased. Most notably Screaming Parties, a birthday party facility in Springfield NJ donated gift certificates to be included in every box. Screaming Parties features giant slides, inflatable climbers, bouncers, obstacle courses, and video games. Howie Abraham, the owner of Screaming Parties, is the father of one of the kids at PSP. After hearing about our project, he was eager to get involved, and contribute something unique to his business. Using skills of communication and networking, our chapter was able to involve more than ten businesses in our project.

Developing Fundraising Ideas

In order to raise money for our additional project expenses, we hosted a fundraising night at our Development 5 FBLA member helping kids from PSP load up a cart of icing and cake mix at Stop and Shop
local Panera Bread restaurant and bakery. We also held a bake sale in our school cafeteria the day before Thanksgiving break. Families of the kids from Pompton Speech Plus assisted our fundraising efforts by generously donating new toys to be included in the party boxes. A variety of broadcast, display, and social media techniques were utilized to publicize the fundraisers. Fliers were posted throughout the school to promote the bake sale. We also utilized the morning announcements to reach the entire student body during homeroom. For Panera night, fliers were distributed by FBLA members, and the information was shared on social media through Twitter and Facebook.

Roles of business leaders and chapter members in developing the partnership

The relationships we formed with multiple business leaders in our community dramatically helped our project to reach its true potential. Danyela Williams worked with us to improve and perfect our project with her ideas and business experience. For example, part of our initial idea involved all of the children at Pompton Speech Plus to going shopping for presents. Mrs. Williams pointed out that a majority of the children she works with are not high functioning enough to handle that. Accordingly, we had to modify our plans for the number of children in the groups we worked with to ten and under at a time, so that we could give each child the attention and guidance that they needed.

We consulted our school’s marketing teacher, Mr. Olive, to help us create a promotional plan to make our fundraisers a success. He taught us about promotional styles and helped us pick a method that would best fit our project. The techniques we chose were “Cloud Marketing”, which refers to the type of marketing that takes place on the internet and “Cross-media Marketing,” which utilizes multiple channels of communication like emails, posters, and web pages to promote a cause.
Our FBLA advisor, Carol Helm, helped us with networking strategies and showed us the most effective ways to contact businesses. Pam Cipriano of the Children’s Home Society was a crucial contact who we communicated with throughout our project. She helped us coordinate dates and activities and provided insight about careers in Corporate Volunteerism to our chapter.

**Description of the activities implemented to learn concepts of business operations:**

As a result of our meeting with the parents at Pompton Speech Plus, it was decided that donation boxes would be decorated by FBLA members, and then placed in the waiting room of the office at PSP for toys and decorations to be filled for the birthday boxes. Due to the generosity of the families at Pompton Speech Plus, we received an overwhelming amount of donations.

To continue the theme of “Birthday Buddies” at the office, Mrs. Williams focused on friendship building skills in therapy. The groups talked about what questions you ask a new friend. With those lessons in mind, the children wrote “Friendship Questionnaires” with the help of FBLA volunteers to send to the kids at the CHS in Trenton. The questionnaires included questions such as, “What is your favorite color?” and “do you have any hobbies?” Writing the questionnaires helped the kids at PSP develop the friendship building skills that they work on in therapy.

Kids from Pompton Speech Plus met FBLA members at Stop and Shop to select the underprivileged kid’s favorite flavored cake and icing, based on the “friendship questionnaires” that the kids at Pompton Speech Plus wrote. We filled the boxes with personalized presents, cake mix, and party supplies based on the completed friendship questionnaires. With the help of the friendship questionnaires, we were able to personalize the party boxes to create a truly individualized birthday experience for the kids at CHS.
To raise funds, we held a bake sale that FBLA members worked during their study periods. In planning the event, we created a spreadsheet of members’ names and study periods so that we knew how many more volunteers we needed. Sign up sheets were distributed at a chapter meeting to bake and sell for the sale. Throughout the bake sale, our chapter learned skills of budgeting and pricing from Mr. Olive.

Marco’s Emporium, a local toy store, not only agreed to host the shopping night, but also provided us with a generous discount to help our cause. With the proceeds from our fundraisers, the older kids from PSP went shopping at Marco’s. Using the completed Friendship Questionnaires from the Children’s Home Society, the volunteers and children were able to select personalized gifts for each underprivileged child.

For the younger and lower functioning children at PSP who work better in controlled, familiar environments, we held a sorting night at the PSP therapy office so they too could go “shopping” via donated toys using the surveys. The next day, the boxes were assembled by FHLA volunteers and PSP students. The boxes were then prepared for delivery and packed into the truck the following morning.

**Roles of Business leaders and chapter members in implementing the project:** Numerous business leaders contributed to our project’s success. Pam Cipriano, Director of Corporate Development and Volunteerism at the Children’s Home Society was helpful in teaching the FBLA chapter about networking for charitable purposes. She also taught us about the hard work and satisfaction that comes with providing service to the community. Ms. Cipriano helped us coordinate the logistics of our project, such as survey distribution and delivery days.
Implementation

Danyela Williams taught our chapter about how to interact with children who have disabilities and what it takes to be a successful business owner. Mrs. Williams also helped the Partnership Team develop and perfect the project so that all parties involved would be benefitted as much as possible. We met with Mrs. Williams at the beginning of our project to discuss our ideas, and with her help we were able to modify our plans to make the project more realistic. One of the suggestions that she made was to have smaller groups so that they could each get the individual attention and supervision that they needed. These changes helped educate our chapter about how to interact with children who have special needs and gave us a deeper sense of understanding and empathy for dealing with this special group of kids.

Mr. Olive, a marketing teacher in our school taught us about marketing strategies and promotional techniques that were vital to the success of the project. He also helped us to devise our pricing systems for the baked goods sold and helped us create a budgeting strategy to use throughout our project. Mrs. Helm, our FBLA advisor, taught us valuable networking skills that we used to connect with multiple businesses in our area.

By reaching out to businesses in our area for donations, we were able to connect with and learn from many more business owners. Howie Abraham from Screaming Parties, Elizabeth Harrelson from Becton Dickinson, the community service managers of our local Stop and Shop and Bed Bath and Beyond are just some of the contacts we made. We learned from Howie Abraham the process and work that goes into donating to charities when you own and operate your own business. Working with Elizabeth Harrelson showed us that even corporations as large as Becton Dickinson are eager to get involved in their communities, but that opportunities for volunteerism are hard to come by in the corporate structure.
Our FBLA chapter was extremely helpful and supportive over the course of this project. Members worked the bake sale during their free periods and baked delicious treats to be sold. They also served as “High School Helpers” during the shopping night at Marco’s Emporium, leading the kids throughout the store, helping them read the surveys and pick out appropriate gifts. At the sorting night at Pompton Speech Plus, FBLA members helped the kids sort through the donated toys and put them in categories of age and gender. Finally, at the wrapping night, FBLA members assembled the boxes and packed them to be sent to the shelter in Trenton.

**Results, concepts learned, and impact of the project provided:**

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our FBLA chapter, partnered with the inspiring leadership of Danyela Williams, CHS is now able to provide over 50 underprivileged children with birthday celebrations in the coming year. Furthermore, due to the help of role models from Pompton Lakes FBLA, Pompton Speech Plus was able to provide over 60 clients with a series of thorough lessons in empathy and consideration for others. With our newfound skills of networking, budgeting, and marketing, we were able to involve more than 10 businesses in our project.

On delivery day, Danyela Williams accompanied the partnership team to the Children’s Home Society. After being introduced to Danyela Williams, Pam Cipriano informed her about the special needs branch of their education program. Last year, the organization received a 3 million dollar grant for education. They are investing this money in training their teachers and developing a more specialized system of care for the special needs children that they help. Ms. Cipriano invited Mrs. Williams to hold a training session at an upcoming workshop for teachers.
who work with kids who have social and emotional issues. Mrs. Williams plans to introduce this method of teaching to staff at the Children’s Home Society, who plans to integrate it into their current curriculum. In this way, our project is reaching even more people, and has far more impact than we had hoped for.

Our interaction with CHS continued when Ms. Cipriano invited the partnership team to attend an informational seminar for parents of special needs children in Trenton. One of our goals for this project was to learn about the similarities and differences between how for-profit, and non-profit organizations operate, so we were enthused by the opportunity. At the seminar, we gave a presentation about our project, and handed out some of the birthday boxes to the parents of the kids who would be receiving them. It was amazing to meet the real people our project was benefiting, and learn more about what working at a nonprofit organization like CHS is like.

Our chapter learned many business operation techniques from the business leaders we worked with. Marketing techniques were used when promoting fundraisers. Communication and networking techniques were utilized throughout the project to stay in touch with the businesses we contacted. Budgeting skills were used in setting a price limit for shopping at Marco’s, and in shopping for cake mix, decorations, and other supplies. Scheduling and organizational skills were learned by setting dates and times for volunteer nights, fundraiser days, and delivery day.

**Examples of publicity and recognition received as a result of the partnership:**

After the completion of our project, Ms. Cipriano at the Children’s Home Society was so pleased and thankful that she asked permission to put together a bulletin board about our project. The bulletin board displayed pictures of each phase of our project from beginning to end, along with a descrip-
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tion of what was accomplished. It was hung in the shelter near Ms. Cipriano’s office. Additionally, a story about our project was included in the Children’s Home Society monthly newsletter. A few weeks later we were overjoyed to see that Ms. Cipriano sent us a certificate of recognition signed by the CEO of the Children’s Home Society to acknowledge our efforts.

Following the shopping night at Marco’s Emporium, the mother of a girl named Shreya who attends Pompton Speech Plus shared her feelings about the project with us. She said, “Shreya has been so excited for this night all week. We moved here from India only 3 months ago, so there aren’t many opportunities for us to help others, or for Shreya to socialize with other children and make friends. I think it is wonderful what you are doing for these kids.”

Another parent of a child from Pompton Speech Plus, Julie Callaghan, wrote us a thank you note that included her feelings about the project. “What a wonderful opportunity for my child to learn empathy for others and to build the self-esteem that comes from helping and giving... All while making the world a little brighter. Thank you Pompton Lakes FBLA.”

Pompton Speech Plus posted about our project on their Facebook page, thanking us for hosting the Marco’s Emporium shopping night, and a parent commented, “This was wonderful and I’m glad my daughter was a part of it.”

The Suburban Trends also published an article about our project on December 12, 2014. Additionally Northjersey.com posted a story about the Birthday Buddies program on December 25, 2014. The newspaper, Argus, published an article about the project as well on January 6 2015.
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**Pompton Lakes High School students help others in need**

Published December 25, 2014

**Argus article**

**Northjersey.com article**

**Pompton Speech Plus**

Fri at 5:48 PM

A big THANK YOU goes out to all the Pompton Lakes FBLA members! These wonderful volunteers spent an evening at Marco’s Emporium helping our clients choose birthday gifts for deserving children from The Children’s Home Society of New Jersey.

**Suburban trends article**

**PSP post on Facebook**
## Implementation

### Degree of involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Number of Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Planning Meeting</td>
<td>9/24/2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with Mrs. Williams</td>
<td>10/10/2014</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Williams Speaking in FBLA meeting</td>
<td>10/16/2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>1 hour x 87 members = 87 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with business owners for Donations</td>
<td>10/18/2014</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10/19/2014</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10/25/2014</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking at FBLA meetings</td>
<td>11/13/2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>30 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12/04/2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>30 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking to Parents at Pompton Speech Plus</td>
<td>10/20/2014</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>13 x 3 members= 39 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10/21/2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorting Donations</td>
<td>11/20/2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panera Night Fundraiser</td>
<td>11/20/2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baking for Bake Sale</td>
<td>11/25/2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>1 hour x 26 members=26 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bake Sale Set up</td>
<td>11/26/2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>1.5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bake Sale</td>
<td>11/26/2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>7 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping for Supplies</td>
<td>11/14/2014</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12/1/2014</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping Night at Marco’s</td>
<td>12/10/2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>2 hours x 12 members= 24 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorting Night at PSP</td>
<td>12/12/2014</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>2 hours x 13 members= 26 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wrapping Day at PSP</td>
<td>12/13/2014</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>4 hours x 9 members= 36 hours</td>
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<td>Delivery to CHS in Trenton</td>
<td>12/14/2015</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>6 hours x 3 members= 18 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone Calls and emails with businesses</td>
<td>9/26/2014- 4/9/2014</td>
<td>7.5 hours x 3 members= 22.5 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Committee Planning and Working</td>
<td>9/23/2014- 4/9/2015</td>
<td>22 hours x 3 members= 66 hours</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaking at Educational Seminar at CHS</td>
<td>4/7/2015</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>6 hours x 3 members= 18 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Hours: 393 Hours**

**Chapter Involvement: 89 members**
Appendix A

Birthday Buddies Sign-Up Sheet

- **December 10**: Shopping Night - Volunteers will come to Marcos Emporium and be “High School Helpers”, assisting the children from Pompton Speech Plus with shopping for birthday presents from 5-6:30pm.

- **December 12**: Decorating and Preparation Night - Volunteers will come to Pompton Speech Plus to assist the children in decorating the boxes, and with other preparations for wrapping night.

- **December 13**: Sorting and Wrapping Night - Volunteers will come to Pompton Speech Plus to help the kids assemble the boxes. We will sort presents and decorations into the boxes for the underprivileged kids in Trenton.

- Marco's Emporium: 574 Newark Pompton Turnpike, Pompton Plains
- Pompton Speech Plus: 580 State Route 23 Pequannock Township

Sign-up sheet for FBLA volunteers

Worksheet kids at PSP filled out based on friendship surveys

“What makes a birthday fun” activity done by kids at PSP in therapy