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Students serve up 'Bowl of Peace' to combat hunger

By Matt Bokor / Content Editor
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For the fifth year in a row, students at Ponce de Leon Middle School in Coral Gables are cooking up a way to help feed Miami's homeless. And they're asking residents of Coral Gables to join their fifth annual "Bowl of Peace" program.

Each month, Ponce students prepare frozen casseroles for Camillus House, non-profit organization that provides humanitarian services to men, women and children who are poor and homeless.

The 2010-11 effort began recently with a presentation to Ponce Middle students.

"Camillus House representatives Maria Peralta and Bob Lozada were very impressed with the students' knowledge about hunger and homelessness -- and most of all the intuitive questions they asked at the presentation," said Zudannie Núñez-Hernandez, U.S. history teacher and community and service area of interaction leader at Ponce Middle.

"They had never had the opportunity to present to such a young crowd, but because of our annual commitment to the casserole program, they were eager to meet the young philanthropists from Ponce de Leon Middle and to further encourage them to participate in the program," Mrs. Núñez-Hernandez said.

The school also encourages its friends and neighbors throughout Coral Gables to participate, too, so that casseroles are coming in each month of the school year.

Camillus House representatives visit the school each month to pick up the casseroles, each of which provides 10 meals. Last year, Camillus received 14,000 frozen prepared meals from individuals, schools, religious groups and other organizations that participated in the casserole program.

"I look forward to working with Camillus House on 'A Bowl of Peace,' and to collect more casseroles each and every month this school year!" Mrs. Núñez-Hernandez said.

For details, contact Mrs. Núñez-Hernandez at 305-661-1611 ext. 2330 or znunez_hernandez@dadeschools.net. Also visit www.camillus.org.