



Perris Press Release

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Lowe's Volunteers Help Rennovate Perris High School

Twenty-five volunteers from Lowe's endured 105-degree temperatures last week to renovate a kitchen used by aspiring student chefs and to plant trees and landscaping on the Perris High School campus.

The two-day renovation blitz saw Lowe's employees put in about 200 hours of volunteer labor painting walls and storage areas at the student kitchen, installing a new countertop, doors and racks for mops and brooms and stenciling new lettering on the "Panther Den Cafe" door.

Outside work included planting palm trees and bark ground cover. Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers dropped by during the renovations to observe the work and congratulate the Lowe's volunteers. Rogers has worked with Lowe's for years on projects to upgrade schools and improve the quality of education for Perris students. In 2010, she partnered with Lowe's to improve the fine-arts program at Rancho Verde High School.

This year, the Lowe's corporation donated \$5,000 for the new countertop and also threw in the building materials and tools.

"Thank you for being so generous with your time, energy and effort," Rogers said. "Lowe's is an exceptional corporate citizen and I want to commend you all for your outstanding participation."

Rogers told the assembled volunteers that Perris High School carries great sentimental value for her. Both her children attended the campus, and her daughter was elected homecoming queen.

She said the new improvements would make a huge difference for the 150-Perris High School students enrolled in the campus' culinary program.

"It's always nice for students returning to school to see their work area has a nice facelift," Rogers said.

Lowe's employee Tracy

Smith helped coordinate the upgrades at the high school. Project volunteers work at Lowe's locations in Moreno Valley and come from all over the area, including Perris, San Jacinto and Riverside.

"We want to show that we are good neighbors," Smith said. "We want to improve the area in which we live and play. To show our community that we care is the best feeling."

Perris resident Fread Holmes went to work at Lowe's after a 24-year career as a corrections officer. He said his job entailed "working with negative people." He volunteered because it makes him feel good to help young people committed to themselves and their future.

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It's a joy to work with positive folks," Holmes said. "I live in Perris and want to do something for the City. "It's important to help the community."

Jolene Oakley and Jennifer Ball brushed and rolled green paint onto the walls of the culinary classroom, climbing a ladder to get the highest areas. Like other volunteers, Ball said it is important to give back to the community by projects like the classroom upgrades.

"It feels good to do something for the students," Ball said.

Oakley said her nephew attends culinary school in Montana so the project became personal for her.

"These kids are the next generation," Oakley said.

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Some of the Lowe's volunteers at Perris High School. Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers stands in the middle while Perris High School principal Lynne Sheffield is third from the right.

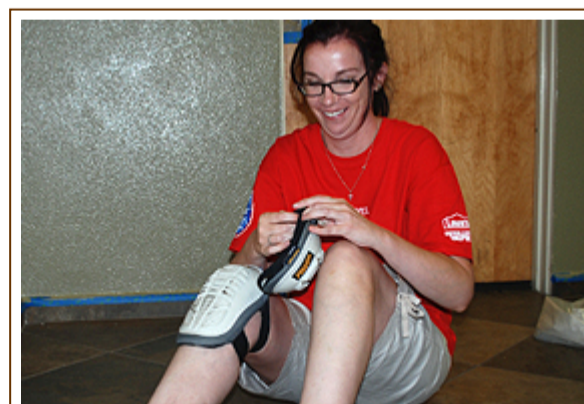
volunteers said their labor of love over two-days will significantly improve the looks and appeal of the student kitchen, which aspiring teen-age chefs use to prepare staff lunches and make pastries and other goodies for holiday meals. To show their support for the program after they left, the volunteers stenciled an inspirational three-word bit of advice on a kitchen wall. The message: Never Stop Improving.



Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers listens as Lowe's volunteer Tracy Smith explains the renovations at Perris High School. About 25 volunteers spent 200 hours improving the campus' culinary kitchen.



Jolene Oakley paints a wall in the Perris High School culinary kitchen.



Volunteer Jennifer Ball puts on kneepads as she prepares to continue painting.