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2nd/3rd hr

During this school year, the sophomore class has spent a great deal of time working on many fascinating, educational and life-changing projects. The first project was to learn about ancient civilizations through man's exploration and earliest discoveries. Students were to then design a webpage for the Midland Center for the Art's website. My group created technology-based presentation on prehistory and my job was to create an iMovie about the Stone Age. During the next project, students worked together to learn ways to prevent violence while partnering with the Helen M. Casey Center for Nonviolence and the Nonviolent Peace Force. At the end of the project, students hosted a nonviolent event at Meridian Early College High School so community members and students could come together to discuss ways to stop violence. The human trafficking project required students to learn about slavery in the past as well as in the present. Students were then asked to present their findings throughout the community to raise awareness. Currently, the sophomores are working on a genealogy project. The goal of this project is to learn about your family history and find out how and why one of your relatives immigrated to America. This year my favorite project was the human trafficking project. The human trafficking project provided me with information to become knowledgeable about the dangers of human trafficking, so our group could present their findings to the community in an effort to provide life-saving information to others.

The Human Trafficking project provided me with a lot of wisdom that I had not known before the project began. This project, however, was not easy. There were several benchmarks about the history of slavery that the students had to learn first. For instance, the class was split into groups. Each group had the task of creating a test with multiple choice questions, essay questions and true and false questions. These questions were based upon what our class had read about camel jockeying, slavery in Islam and treatment of the slaves from the 1800s in Meknes. Next, students created a newsletter using primary documents from the African slave trade. Statistics and short articles about slavery in Africa as well as a description of Ancient African society and traditions were all included in the newsletter. The next student-group had the task of creating a lesson plan that would be used to teach the rest of the class about slavery in China. For this benchmark students became facilitators. When the students were ready to learn about modern-day slavery a police officer and a Michigan state senator came to our school to present to the students about the dangers of human trafficking. For the final benchmark, students used their knowledge to create an iMovie about human trafficking that would then be presented to a business of their choice in Midland or Midland County. Although students had to first learn a lot of background knowledge and do several tasks before preparing for the final presentation, the information learned was used in their remarkable presentations for local organizations or businesses.

The ability to be able to pick where each group was to present at was another factor that set the human trafficking project apart from the rest. The rest of the projects that Meridian New Tech High School has worked on are usually only presented to the

facility or people who they have partnered with. To be able to present at a place of your choice, allowed the students to want to spread even more awareness. None of the groups were allowed to present to the same audience. Students also had the job of calling and talking to the manager of the business or organization where they wanted to present to, which helped to boost confidence. By planning all of the details for the presentation, students were treated like adults during the process. The purpose of the project was to raise awareness. Our school was able to present at thirty different locations throughout Sanford and Midland. The presentations allowed the students to teach others that human trafficking does exist locally and how to protect themselves. The amount of knowledge the students shared as they informed others was incredible. There are about 122 students in our sophomore class, and there were four students to a group. Also, four students presented their student lessons at Michigan State University. Presenting in the community provided life-saving information to others vulnerable to the dangers of human trafficking.

The human trafficking project was not only appealing to just me but also to several other students as well because the project itself offered us individuals with life-saving information. The human trafficking project taught the sophomores the risks of human trafficking, and what they learned could be taken home to inform families. The class learned about the dangers of human trafficking and that slavery still exists. Although I enjoyed being able to raise awareness for my community, I also enjoyed learning about my ancestors during the genealogy project. However, the genealogy project was more individualized, and although our sophomore class could inform others

about our family, none of that information could be used to save lives like the human trafficking project. The human trafficking project was different than any of the other projects because not only did the students learn about the history of slavery, but they also gained knowledge of how to protect themselves and others. The project itself informed the sophomores about topics they never even knew about prior. The information about how to be safe allowed us to be more aware of our surroundings. From the readings to the student-taught lessons, the students learned the history of slavery. To become more informed about modern-day slavery, the class listened to several stories about human trafficking victims. These videos and stories were heart-wrenching and truly changed the lives of some of the students.

Overall, the human trafficking project was my favorite project. The stories, pictures, videos and presentations the class witnessed were so vivid that the message behind the image really emphasized that human trafficking is real and can happen to anyone at anytime. Few students and community members knew that modern-day slavery still existed. All of the information that the class obtained and presented to the community raised awareness. People who listened to these presentations may one day know someone who is being trafficked. Awareness is freedom for countless potential victims. Our mission during this project was to inform others by raising awareness. Unlike other concepts students learn in school, this project was one that can be taken with anyone for the rest of their life. This project was outstanding, and I am glad that the sophomores had the opportunity to learn about this topic. All of the students can take the information they now know and inform others who may be in danger of being trafficked.

Saving lives is a really good feeling and raising awareness about the dangers of human trafficking did just that.