

# Student Fundraiser Aids Howard County Food Bank

After studying hunger all around the world, eighth-graders at Burleigh Manor Middle School in Ellicott City held a fundraiser in their own backyard to combat it. Their weapon was an event called Empty Bowls held at the school on March 5, 2010. Each attendee paid \$12 to get one of three dinner entrees (chili, stir-fried rice, or macaroni and cheese) in addition to a roll, beverage, and dessert.

While the dinner fare may have been typical, the quantity served was not. “People were not supposed to go away full. It’s important for students to know there’s struggle going on,” said Betty Disney, a teacher at the school.

Another difference from the usual dinner-out routine was that instead of leaving their dishes on the table, attendees took their ceramic bowls, created by the eighth-graders, home with them.

The students’ fundraiser was modeled after a program John Hartom, an art teacher in Michigan, started in 1990. He came up with the idea of artists creating bowls to serve meals and donating the proceeds to charitable organizations that fought hunger.

Burleigh Manor’s event raised \$3,598, which was donated to the Howard County Food Bank administered by Community Action Council of Howard County. In the past eight months, the Food Bank has assisted more than 9,600 individuals and given away more than 189,000 pounds of food to Howard County residents.

Each year, all three grades at Burleigh Manor participate in a project to obtain a total of 75 hours of required service learning credits. To obtain the hours, eighth graders cooked and served the food.

Over the last two decades, independently developed Empty Bowls projects have supported food-related charities around the world and raised millions of dollars to aid in the fight against hunger. If interested in holding an Empty Bowls event, call the Community Action Council of Howard County at 410-313-6185.