

Eli Whitney Care Blankets for Yale-New Haven Hospital

Students in the Freshman Math lab at Eli Whitney Tech (Hamden) worked together to complete Care Blankets for the children’s unit of Yale-New Haven Hospital. The project included an application of math skills (measuring, estimating, geometry, area and expenses) through a service project that would meet a community need. “The children’s unit at Yale-New Haven Hospital typically provide 20 to 30 blankets a month;” noted Ellen Good the Manager of the Child-Life Department at the hospital. Ms. Good pointed out, “It is great that 25 high school students at Eli Whitney choose to serve their hospitalized peers by creating and donating these blankets. It helps patients in a hospital setting feel a little more at home.” The hospital allows patients to take the blankets home with them at their dismissal.



Eli Whitney students working on care blanket for Yale-New Haven Hospital’s children’s unit (April 2006).

Eli Whitney students under the supervision of teachers Pat Ripley and Latrice James completed the project during the extended-day program and students also volunteered to add several Friday afternoons to complete the goal of finishing 15 blankets. Thus, the Care Blanket project allowed students to apply math skills, learn sewing skills, engage in productive afternoon activity and complete a meaningful service to their community. The completed blankets were presented to Mrs. Good during a school awards ceremony on May 31.



Two Eli Whitney service-learning members help display Care Blanket with project teacher Pat Ripley.

Students’ reflection upon completion of project included the following comments, “We had the opportunity to practice compassion with individuals who are less fortunate than us”; “We helped others and learned a new skill for ourselves”; “I would want someone to do this for me if I was sick”; and “This is really the Golden Rule in action”.

Mrs. Ripley noted, “Any opportunity to move marginalized individuals beyond their own circumstances helps contribute to a stronger, healthier social environment for everyone. It is the foundation of social justice, and therefore social change. It was gratifying to see the

students’ empowered and affective agents of change and action. The self-esteem upon successful completion of each blanket was a pleasure to see.”