

SAYING THANKS AT COVENTRY HIGH

Legacy of kindness alive at CHS

Coventry student passes on kindness coin to teacher

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COVENTRY— Mrs. Donna Tobin has touched the lives of many of her students, and at least one has tried to show just how much.

Nina Casacalenda surprised her beloved teacher on Thursday with a Kindness Coin that she earned in 2008. Now a junior at Coventry High, Casacalenda received the coin after collecting goods to help a local fundraiser as a young student at Tiogue Elementary.

By fundraising over \$800 to purchase items on a list for a past Coventry High School student's project to benefit the McAuley House — a charity center that supports the homeless — then-fourth-grader Casacalenda completed a fundraising campaign on her own to support the cause.

The Kindness Coin was given to Casacalenda by former Tiogue Elementary School Principal, Denise Richtarik, and was donated from the Triple Your Heart organization. Tiogue School first earned the coin through a nomination by a family at the school and passed it to Casacalenda, who Thursday presented it to Tobin.

"You have been such a big influence in my life," Casacalenda said to Tobin



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Nina Casacalenda (left), one of her students at Coventry High, presented English teacher Donna Tobin with a Kindness Coin she received in 2008 as a Tiogue Elementary fourth-grader.

while surprising her with the coin. "You go above and beyond and I wanted to give you this because it is given from the heart."

Tobin has been at Coventry High School for 16 years, teaching English and working as the graduation coordinator. As she will be retiring this year, Tobin said she will miss the school and her students and it will be difficult to leave at the end of the school year.

"I can't wait to be here every day and it is going to be difficult when I walk out of this building," Tobin said. "When you work in the school for so long, it becomes your life."

Each of Tobin's classes begins with a mandatory handshake or hug and the class is guided by her motto, "Work hard, be nice, go to college and change the world."

"Mrs. Tobin really is dedicated to her students," Casacalenda said. "She is well-deserving of this coin."

It was the second surprise of the week for Tobin— who has been teaching for over 30 years— as she was presented the Crystal Apple award during an assembly that is a token of recognition for her achievements and dedication to the school and her students.

"I am truly honored," Tobin said.