



Jessica Selby • Daily Times

Students Against Vandalism Everywhere members Chris Richards (from left), Alexis Desorcy and Nekita Centolella, all sixth graders at Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School of Coventry, do some landscaping in an effort to improve the overall appearance and attitude at their school.

Cov. school stands out at conference

ASFMS program, advisor earn awards for fundraising

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COVENTRY — They garden, they campaign, they fundraise and they motivate and they are being recognized for it.

Members of S.A.V.E., Students Against Vandalism Everywhere, an after school group at the Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School of Coventry, and their school advisor, Charles Blanchette, have been recognized for all of their hard work.

Last month at the New England Regional Third Eye Youth Leadership Conference the school and Blanchette were both presented awards.

Blanchette received the Middle School Advisor of the Year award and the school received the Middle School Project of the Year award for

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Moses Saygbe
 Crime prevention specialist

raising over \$10,000 to benefit the people of Haiti.

Moses Saygbe, crime prevention specialist in the Attorney General’s Office, is a program coordinator. He said out of all of the school districts in the state, the middle school and Blanchette “really stand out above the rest.”

“We have done quite an extensive amount of work launching our program in the state, but that school, the Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle

School of Coventry has continually stood out for the work that they have done,” Saygbe said. “They have received national awards for their work, they have earned national recognition for completed projects and they continually go the extra mile.”

Saygbe said when the Crime Prevention coordinators learned about S.A.V.E.’s fundraiser for Haiti, they knew right away that it should be recognized.

“The students and faculty decided to raise money for the people of Haiti and they raised over \$11,000 in one night through a spaghetti dinner,” he said. “They have received more support from their community in Coventry than any other school district in the state.”

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Middle school group recognized

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Blanchette said the S.A.V.E. students collaborated with the members of the school's student council and the National Junior Honor Society to organize the fundraiser at the school. He said they held three seatings at the spaghetti dinner at the school, one hour each, and filled each seating.

He said they also orchestrated a silent auction using more than 100 items the students had solicited as donations from the community.

In the end, he said, they raised close to \$11,000.

Sayge said Blanchette, as an advisor, is always taking a leadership role in facilitating all of the projects.

"As an advisor, he has changed the entire culture of that school," Sayge said. "You can see, as you walk through that building, all of the positive things that the kids in the school are doing and he — as a facilitator and the advisor — he is empowering them to take this leadership role in the school, which has been continuously outstanding and we felt that that should be recognized."

In addition to the awards that were presented, those in attendance at the first annual New England Regional Third Eye Youth Leadership Conference also participated in more than 60 work-

shops over the course of the two-day conference. Topics including teen dating violence, conflict resolution, activities for schools to address bias and hate crimes, protecting yourself from bullies, goal-setting, school safety planning, leadership and substance abuse prevention. Blanchette said his students delivered several of the workshops.

Attendees also listened to several speakers including Dr. John McCray, vice provost of the URI Feinstein Providence Campus; Brian Estrada and Maria Bravo, Mt. Pleasant High School; Thomas Brady, superintendent, Providence Schools; and Mayor David Cicilline and Chief Dean Esserman, Providence Police.

Emily Gamage and Taylor Therrien of Coventry High School spoke on the last day of the conference.

The Third Eye Project is an initiative of Youth Crime Watch of America (YCWA) and is funded by the US Department of Justice. It is devised to equip students and teachers with the knowledge necessary to promote a safe, secure and drug-free school environment and to diminish and eliminate negative behaviors such as bullying, harassment, truancy, crime and violence. Attorney General Lynch partnered with YCWA to introduce the Third Eye Project to Rhode Island schools in October 2006.