

Educators let Students turn the Tables for hitting Hurricane Relief Fundraising Goals

By: Sara Gregory / The Roanoke Times

Twelve rolls of duct tape were holding Stephanie Hogan to the wall by the time first-grader Devin Singleton caught a glimpse of the Glen Cove principal.

For more than an hour, students had walked by Hogan as if she were on display in a museum. Most giggled or pointed and laughed. A few asked how long she'd be stuck to the wall and whether she wanted a snack.

Devin marveled at the brightly colored tape covering everything but her head and feet.

“She looks like a beautiful butterfly,” he said.

Hogan agreed to cocoon herself for a good cause: Her students hit and surpassed a fundraising goal to raise more than \$1,300 for the American Red Cross for victims of Hurricane Harvey. And across the Roanoke Valley on Friday, she was one of many educators who played good sports to reward students’ fundraising efforts.

At Roanoke Catholic, teachers donned school uniforms while students took a day off from plaid skirts and knee-high socks, khaki pants and green polo shirts. Students there raised more than \$9,000 for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul’s “House in a Box®” program, which gives families basic household items.

“It’s a little embarrassing for the teachers but it’s for a good cause,” said Carolyn Buck, an upper school social studies teacher at Roanoke Catholic.

At both schools, anticipation grew all week as students waited for Friday and educators braced themselves to leave their comfort zones.

Cathy Connelly, a third grade teacher at Roanoke Catholic who went to Catholic schools as a child, said it felt like “stepping back in the past” when she got dressed Friday morning.

Her 17-year-old daughter, Samantha, felt a different emotion.

“It was very weird seeing my mom in my school uniform,” the senior said. She was one of the students who helped organize the fundraiser; her classes are discussing Catholic social teaching and this was a good way to show through action what they’ve been learning, Samantha Connelly said.



Elementary students add duct tape to their principal attached to a wall at Glen Cove Elementary School.

It's not every day students can tape their principal to the wall — "if I did that normally it would be kind of rude," Glen Cove fifth-grader Mykell Harvey said — so the students who were handed a strip of duct tape approached Hogan cautiously and carefully to make sure they themselves didn't get caught up in tape.

First-grader Ellie Shawn held on to her piece of tape longer than most to survey the best place to put it. She reached up as high as her 7-year-old arms would stretch. After, she whispered her strategy.

"In my family, we call them pumpkins," she said, motioning to her chest. "I was trying to get up high enough to tape her pumpkins."

By the end of it, neither Hogan's pumpkins nor any other part of her body could move much. When staff pulled away the stool she'd been standing on, she hung suspended from the wall.

"I don't think she'll be getting out of there any time soon," third-grader Elijah Toller said.



History and social studies teacher Carolyn Buck (left) and math teacher Donna Nickels, dressed in school uniforms, laugh with seniors Delia Pilgreen (center), Megan McEvoy and Niki Patel (right). After meeting a fundraising goal by students for hurricane victims, teachers and staff wore school uniforms and students wore street clothes at Roanoke Catholic School.