



Above: Students are pictured with PATH Center representatives (center) Susan Cheeseman, program manager, and Michael Lane, cook.

This year's Empty Bowls sponsored by the Defiance College Social Work Organization was a record breaker in raising funds to combat hunger in Northwest Ohio. The 18th annual student-led event held last month raised a total of \$5,801 for the local PATH Center.

Empty Bowls has grown in interest over the years with high attendance by area residents. Held at the Defiance Knights of Columbus Hall, restaurants and individuals make and donate a variety of soups and breads included in the dinner menu, with soup served in handmade bowls.

This year's bowls, made by Defiance College alumnus Brandon Knott of It's Knott Pottery, were a sell-out, with more than 650 purchased. Diners are encouraged to continue using these one-of-a-kind bowls as a reminder of those who their donations will serve.

Members of the DC Social Work Organization, comprised of junior social work majors and advised by Professor Tess Homier, hosted a reception recently to present the proceeds to representatives of the PATH Center.

Susan Cheeseman, PATH program manager, told the students that Ohio is one of the highest states in the nation for people experiencing food scarcity. Last year, the PATH Center served approximately 8,000 meals. She said the annual Empty Bowls donation is key to the center being able to offer a variety of healthy meals.

"You did an awesome thing," she told the students. "Be proud of what you did." She explained that much of the food served comes from donations of local restaurants and businesses, supporting the center's modest annual food budget of \$1,500.

Homier noted that this year's event brought in more than 80 gallons of soup in addition to bread and desserts from restaurants, businesses and individuals. Any leftover food was donated to the PATH Center.

Junior Raychel Ramos, Wauseon, said the project "was a humbling experience." Andrew Brown, social work major from Union, Ohio, added, "It made me step out of my comfort zone."

Homier and the students expressed their gratitude to everyone who helped to make the event a success in their goal of raising funds and awareness to fight hunger and homelessness in Northwest Ohio. ♦

