



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Japhet School Takes All Students to Forgotten Harvest for Service Learning;  
Launches “Coins That Count” Drive for Community to Join**

Clawson, Michigan - Japhet School, the award-winning school in our community, took all of its students in Kindergarten through 8th grade to Forgotten Harvest in Oak Park yesterday (Feb. 5), where they learned how Forgotten Harvest achieves its mission, and they helped pack more than 1,400 pounds of food for families.

Forgotten Harvest is “dedicated to relieving hunger and preventing nutritious food waste,” said Hank Rodriguez, the volunteer coordinator at Forgotten Harvest. The nonprofit collects unsold food from restaurants and grocery stores, and it grows food at its farm in Fenton. Rodriguez explained the work of Forgotten Harvest in a visit to Japhet School students on Monday. Every Monday morning, Japhet School students, faculty and staff gather for an inspirational assembly based on character development and start their week positively as a community.

Japhet School has a teaching and learning philosophy that governs all that it does as a school and achieves its mission to “nurture and prepare each child for life by integrating character education with a strong academic program.” There are 10 philosophy points supporting this mission, and the sixth says, “With the gift of knowledge and the understanding of moral and spiritual values comes an obligation to help mankind.” Service is an integral part of learning at Japhet School.

Liz Grunow and Susan Eggleston teach Japhet School’s middle school students and partner as curriculum co-coordinators. Together they planned a yearlong program for their students with a special focus on service outreach, and they planned this all-school trip to Forgotten Harvest.

“Service learning is action-based,” says Eggleston. “Involving all of our students in a genuine activity that can improve the lives of those around them brings to life the very essence of the qualities of good character. Student engagement in meaningful service fosters a real-life understanding of empathy.”

“Our time out in the community helps our students to be able to see the real-world impact of character in action,” adds Grunow. “It’s one thing to organize a drive, it’s doubly impactful for them to be eyewitnesses to the enormous undertaking of community service organizations.”

"The trip to Forgotten Harvest provided a remarkable and meaningful community service opportunity for our students and staff! This experience helped students to understand more clearly the problem of food insecurities and the value of helping others in need," said Head of School Kerri Vizena, who also participated in the special field trip. "As we worked together, it was a joy to witness everyone's genuine commitment and acts of kindness to be of service to others."

The whole school community has been invited to add to students’ efforts to help Forgotten Harvest by donating to the Coins that Count drive. “Forgotten Harvest can turn \$1 in loose change into \$7 worth of food for families in need,” Mr. Rodriguez told students on during his visit.

Japhet School welcomes people to drop by the school to donate loose change. It does not need to be rolled. Forgotten Harvest takes on the responsibility to prepare it for deposit.



Caption for two photos: Japhet School students aged 5-13 prepared more than 1,400 pounds of beef sticks at Forgotten Harvest that will be given to families who are food-insecure.

(High-res pics sent separately as high-res files.)

#### About Japhet School:

Founded in 1973, Japhet School is an independent school, serving children the metropolitan Detroit area in preschool through eighth grade. Its mission is to nurture and prepare each child for life by integrating character education with a strong academic program. The school provides small classes of fewer than 20 students in each, which enables teachers to challenge students with academic material that is appropriate for their intellectual readiness, regardless of age or grade. Integrated with strong academics is Japhet School’s national award-winning character education curriculum, which builds a peaceful community within the school. The school’s public speaking curriculum gives graduates confidence in leadership roles. Japhet is a National School of Character: it was the first school in Michigan -- and the first independent school in the country -- to receive this award. To learn more about Japhet, visit [japhetschool.org](http://japhetschool.org).

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