

Activities promote reading Literacy kits aimed at young children

**By Ruth Vecchione CORRESPONDENT
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Early childhood education students at Uxbridge High School recently participated in a hands-on learning exercise that local families can benefit from for years to come.

Seventeen junior and senior high school students made 17 child literacy kits as part of a community service learning project.

“It’s not an original idea,” instructor Susan Priore said. “I did it on a small scale teaching early childhood education before.”

A lot of work went into the original kits, she said, but they were temporary and she thought it would be good if they could be left in libraries.

After getting an \$800 grant from the Uxbridge Education Foundation, she bought books, canvas tote bags and a laminating machine. She did some research and developed student assignments, along with a list of books the students could choose from.

“It was so exciting to see how they took off,” she said. “They took their book and came up with good ideas, such neat ideas to support and enrich the reading experience.”

The kits are for children in preschool through third grade. Along with a book, they include story-stretching activities that promote learning.

“The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs” is accompanied by a five-finger puppet activity; “Chocolatina” has math games with images of chocolate bars; a puzzle is in the “Blueberries for Sal” kit, and “The Very Hungry Caterpillar” has a felt board sequencing activity.

Earlier this month, four of the students and Ms. Priore presented the kits to librarians Margy O’Donnell of Taft Elementary School and Debra J. Young of the Uxbridge Free Public Library.

“This is fabulous,” Ms. O’Donnell said. “You can give a toddler a book. They need to get up and stretch. They can come back for another activity.”

The grant paid for most of the materials used in the kits. Some students used their own money to buy a stuffed animal, a figurine or something else to enhance the story, Ms. Priore said.

“I never had a project where kids were so excited, so motivated,” she said.

The juniors and seniors who participated in the project were Ariel Braga, Tiffany Brandel, Jill Coffey, Angie Corbett, Ashley DiLuca, Nikki Eldredge, Kelley Gallagher, Shannon Hennessy, Kaitlyn Legg, Felicia Lowing, Shannon Morton, Nicole Mussulli, Katelyn Oullette, Brie Robertson, Lachelle Rolandelli, Alexis Sottile and Melissa Whittaker.

Linda J. Kuros of the Uxbridge Education Foundation said she planned to present one of the kits at the foundation’s biggest annual fundraiser, the Superintendent’s Gala, held March 13.