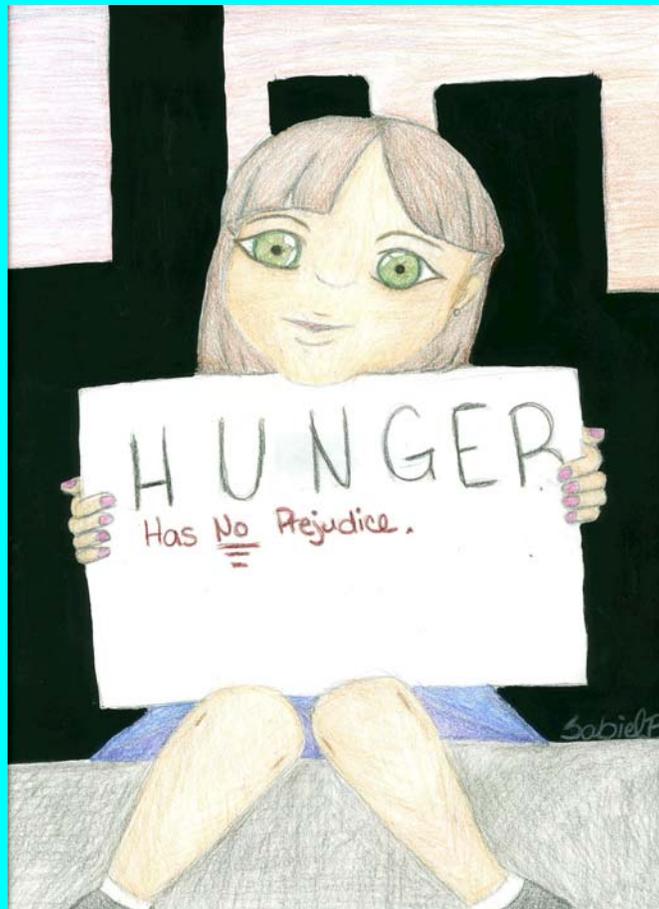


ISSUE #3
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VIRTUAL Voice

Tulsa Learning Academy



More great stuff inside!!



On Friday, March 9th, TLA Student Council members performed community service by volunteering to work the serving line at Iron Gate kitchen in Tulsa. Located in the Trinity Church at 5th and Cincinnati, Iron Gate serves food and hands out groceries to homeless Tulsans from 8:30 until 10:30 daily.

We met downtown early that Friday morning and what happened that morning was one of those moments that can be life changing. This issue is dedicated to the Iron Gate volunteers and workers, the people who go there for a hot meal, and the TLA student council members who selflessly gave up their morning to make the day a little brighter for a whole lot of people.

I would like to end this with a message to the TLA Student Council members: I am very proud of you, and very lucky to have worked with such great kids.

Dennis McDonald
Social Studies- TLA



How to Serve Someone Who Just Wants a Hot Plate of Food and Still Manage to Make Them Smile

by Aubrey Siess

This past Friday, January 9th, our Student Council went to feed the homeless. Now what you should know is that before we went on Friday, we had to decide where we would go to do community service. Mr. McDonald's suggestion to go feed the homeless sounded good, so we all agreed with happy hearts to do it. But I don't think anything could have prepared us for what we saw on Friday morning. You walk in and put on an apron, put gloves on, serve food, then leave. Right? Wrong. We got there early, around 8:15, and we could already see the droves of people waiting outside the "Iron Gates." As we stood in our serving positions, we waited for the people to come in. One-by-one they each came in with eager eyes and hungry stomachs. As I put the food on the plate and show them a smile and ask them how their



morning was, I start to think. "Will this be their last hot meal for the week?" "How did they fall on hard times?" "Do they have a family, any kids?" And as all these questions floated in my head throughout the morning, I spotted a small shadow running across the floor. "Just fruit for him please" said a woman. I look down and see the cutest little boy; no more than 4 years old. I pointed him out to my friend Sabiel, and as we smiled and "awwwed," we also felt sadness. We felt sad that this little boy might have a few

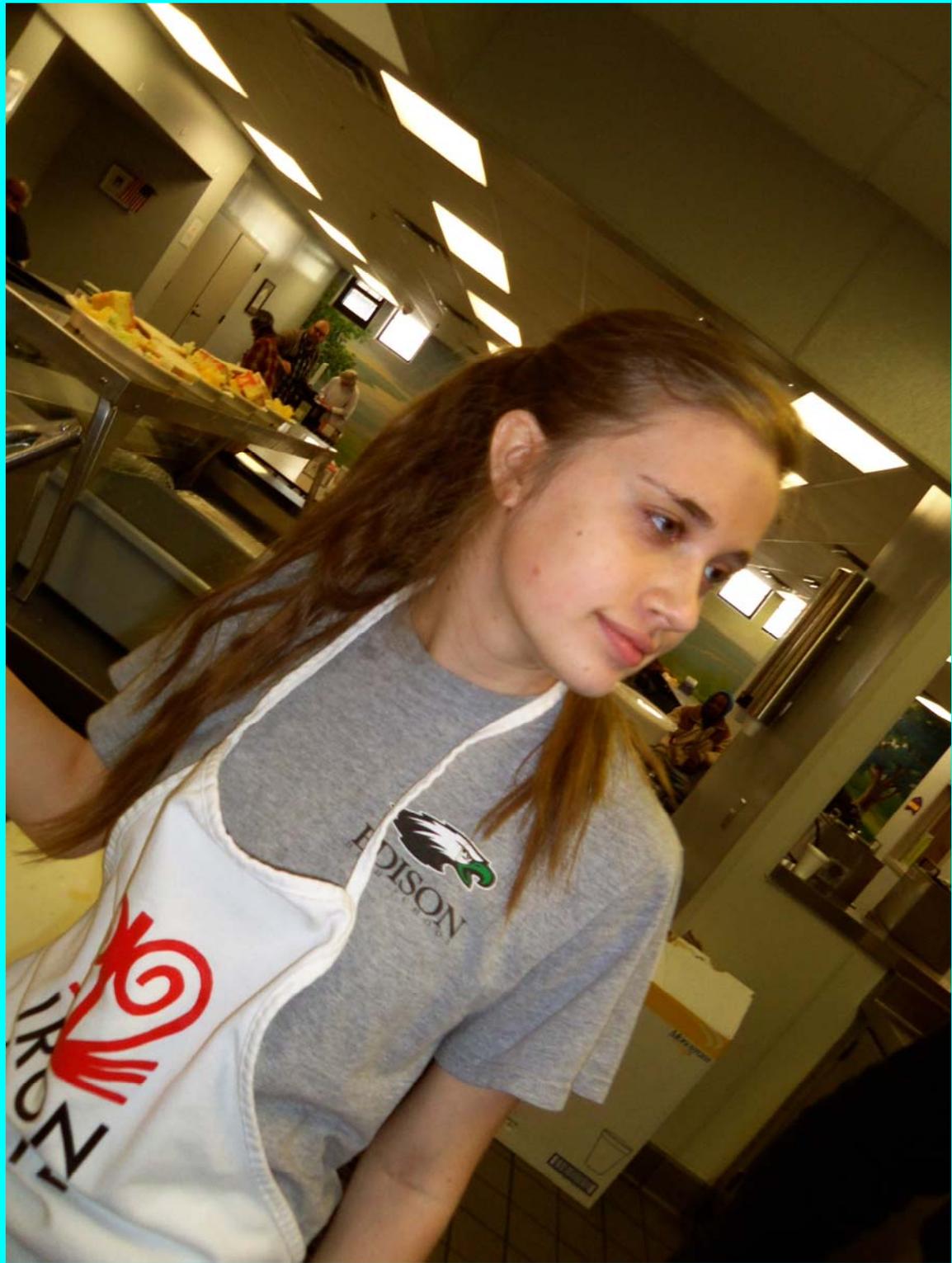
pairs of clothes and only a little to eat on daily basis. I look around the room and then I start to notice, these aren't just older people. There are children, and teenagers like me, and even young men and women who looked like they could have just gotten out of high school. But there is a somewhat constant feature in the room: smiles. At least 2 people at every table were smiling, eating, and conversing. Sure their lives may not be the best right now, but they were only concerned at what was going on at that moment. They saw that they had a hot plate and a friend to talk to. And I think that is what impacted me the most. Just being able to hand those people a plate was basically saying, you are safe here, go sit down, relax, and have a hot meal. Whenever we saw someone walk in with a frown, we would just smile say "hello, how are you?" And that was all it took. We learned that these people hadn't just come to eat; they came to see at least one happy face, a friendly face. That is why I am so thankful that my Student Council group got the experience of getting to go and serve food and help be a friendly face to those in need.



Ashley and Lexi showcase their new Iron Gate aprons.



Nick offers an extra piece of cake to a patron with a “sweet-tooth”.



Aubrey takes it all in.



Lexi goes
straight for the
dessert!



But, Mr. McD
reminds her that
salad is a part of a
well-balanced diet.

Iron Gate

by Ashley Warshum

Giving back feels good.

Like smiling and making a stranger's day,
or feeding the ones in need.

It was an interesting morning.

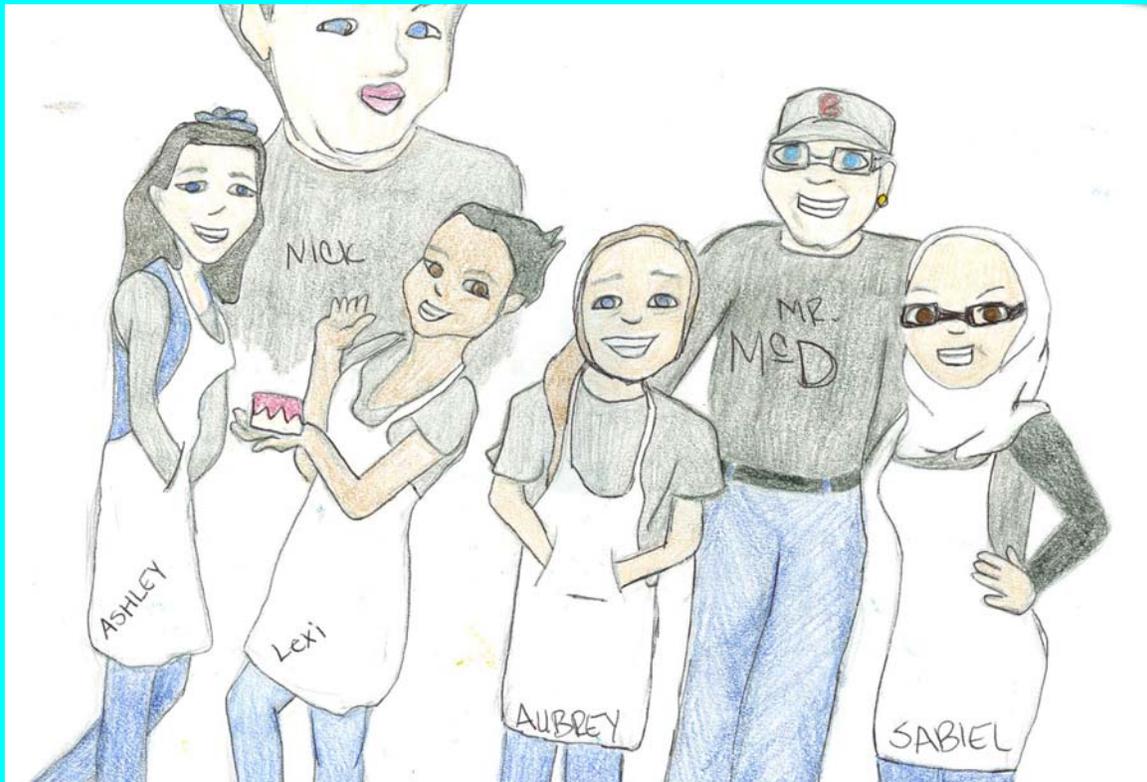
From the vacant stares, to the joy on
their faces,

Definitely a morning I will cherish.





The Student Council members would like to share this incredible experience with their fellow TLA students. Following Spring Break, we would like students to bring canned and other non-perishable food items to Tulsa Learning Academy to be donated to Iron Gate Kitchen. When visiting TLA, your items can be given to Mr. McDonald. Donations will be accepted March 26th to April 27th.



This is a great opportunity to experience how good it feels to help someone truly in need.