Students make pottery thanks to towns, Foundation

Huntington – Students at Chester and Littleville Elementary School had the chance to try their hand at pottery, thanks to funding secured by Art Teacher Amy Thornton. Using a $1500 grant from the Gateway Education Foundation, along with funding from all 6 Gateway towns (through the Local Cultural Councils of Blandford, Chester, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery and Russell), Thornton was able to have a program called “POW!” (Pots on Wheels!) come to both schools.

POW! is made up of a group of potters who bring shows, projects, and workshops to communities using a mobile gallery/project space. In Massachusetts, POW! is supported by the Society of Arts and Crafts in Boston.

Students in grades 3 – 5 at each school had two visits from POW! On the first day, the potters set up different stations for students to learn more about pottery. At each table, students learned about everything from the history of pottery, how it works in everyday life, how clay is formed into pottery pieces, and how a formed clay piece can be decorated, then fired to become permanent. The first visit resulted in each student creating a piece of functional pottery.

At the second visit, students got to attend a “cupid swap”, where they were able to swap their cup with one on the “Pots on Wheels!” truck. Visits were held the first two weeks of June.

Students even got to USE pottery, by pouring water from a ceramic pitcher into a ceramic cup for a drink, while working outdoors.

“I’m working on a pirate ship with a kraken holding onto it,” explained Allyssa Grant. “It’s hard because I’m afraid things will fall off. But I love it!” This was not Allyssa’s first time doing pottery, as she’s worked with her grandfather before.

Classmate Mina Warner summed up the event. “It’s fun!”

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Photo: Fifth grader Alyssa Grant works on her pottery piece during a visit from “POW!” (Pots on Wheels) at Littleville Elementary School.