

Bagel sale benefits business organization



Sophomore Sam Lingle sells bagels from Panera Bread in Magruder Hall Monday. The sale benefited Alpha Kappa Psi, a professional business organization. Adam Antor/Index

Book drive funds literacy

Truman in Africa and Amnesty International collect books for an international cause

BY CHELSIE YOKUM
Staff Reporter

Despite the inclement weather last week, Truman in Africa and Amnesty International managed to collect about 450 books to help Better Worlds Books benefit the program Books for Africa, T.I.A. President junior Emily Firsching said.

Firsching said T.I.A.'s goal is to bring awareness to Truman State's community regarding social injustice issues, such as malnutrition and war in Africa. Better Worlds Books is a group that often comes to Truman through T.I.A. and helps them reach that goal.

Amnesty International joined ranks with T.I.A. to conduct the book drive after receiving an email from Better Worlds Book Drive, Amnesty's co-president sophomore Natalia Albanese said. Albanese said Amnesty chose to collaborate with T.I.A. because education is a human right and books are an important part of any education.

Better Worlds Books is an online company that collects and sells books to donate to fund literacy initiatives around the world, according to BetterWorldsBooks.com. Books for Africa is an organization that collects, sorts, ships and distributes books to children in Africa, with the goal of

ending the "book famine" in Africa.

"We [Amnesty] try to support as many human rights issues as possible," Amnesty Vice President junior Rachel Doyle said. "We consider the lack of accessible education worldwide as an injustice. We also can relate to T.I.A. We are both small organizations taking on big projects, and wanted to give them a hand."

T.I.A. hosted a book drive three years ago, Firsching said. She said this year she was contacted by Truman's Physical Plant about holding another drive because there still were books leftover from the previous drive. Firsching said T.I.A. is going to try to make the drive an annual event.

Better Worlds Books accepts all kinds of books, including literature, children's books and textbooks in good condition, Firsching said.

The drive ran from Feb. 18 to Feb. 22. Firsching said T.I.A. had a table set up in the Student Union Building throughout the week as well as a drop-off box in the SUB, on Market Street near the newspaper and recycling center.

Firsching said though the snow day last week might have hindered the book drive a bit, she was overall happy with the results.

"We [Amnesty] think it is important to do anything you can no matter how big or small of a gesture to help those in need," Albanese said. "Children in Africa have just as much of a right to an education as we do. So we felt it was important to try to help out even in as small of a way as collecting books."

Intern embraces chance to help

Legally blind Truman State student helps others with disabilities

BY ANNA GRACE
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When senior Sierra Gregg found a lack of information in the Online Public Access Catalogue about Americans with disabilities, she did not let her own disability stop her from making a difference.

Gregg was born with a genetic disorder called aniridia that made her legally blind. Aniridia is the complete or partial absence of the iris and can cause visual blurriness, increased sensitivity to light and other eye problems and affects about 1 out of 50,000 to 100,000 infants, according to Genetics Home Refer-

ence, a service of the U.S. National Library of Medicine. While an intern in Washington, D.C., Gregg worked to expand the amount of online documents about disabilities.

Gregg said her desire to be a librarian led her to an internship during summer 2011 with the Presidential Library within the National Archives in Washington, D.C., as a social media intern. The purpose of her internship was to help the libraries manage social media and she said her duties included researching, writing posts and gathering information about people's interests. She said the people at the National Archive were helpful and provided resources allowing her to work as effectively as any other intern.

Gregg said she worked at the internship for two summers. During summer 2011, she said some of her work involved researching

online records. Gregg said digitizing documents basically consists of scanning photos and documents into a computer, uploading them to a database and included important information such as when and who created the record.

Gregg said she discovered there were only two digitized records about the Americans with Disabilities Act — a photo and a card from a speech.

"It wasn't enough," Gregg said. She said the ADA legislation was groundbreaking, and there should have been more about it in digitized form. She said she mentioned it to her supervisor toward the end of her first summer and then handed in a proposal to expand the digitized media beyond ADA to all disability history. When she returned during summer 2012, the request had been sent to libraries for docu-

ments relating to disabilities.

The second summer Gregg worked at the internship, she promoted the digitization with publicity, a webpage and social sites. She said it was her main project during her second summer.

Gregg said she would not have had such a strong reaction to the lack of records without her own visual impairment.

"I think it's a very important thing that people with disabilities know the history," Gregg said.

Part of making the digitized archives available to people with disabilities was to create transcripts so a screen reader could read the text.

Disability Services Coordinator Vicky Wehner said the Disability Services Office was instrumental in making the first trip possible for Gregg. Wehner said the internship was a perfect fit for Gregg, who is

pursuing a Master's Degree in library science.

"I just see her being able to do bigger and better things with this," Wehner said.

She said Gregg shares her love of reading with others who have visual impairment. Gregg is a humble person and an advocate for people with disabilities, especially those with visual impairment, and is capable of doing the work required by the internship, Wehner said. She said the internship was a confirmation for Gregg that she was capable and could make a difference.

"It was definitely a wonderful experience," Gregg said.

She said she hopes the webpage will continue to grow and other departments will contribute. Gregg's project can be found at <http://www.archives.gov/research/americans-with-disabilities/>.

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