

FAMILY, CAREER AND COMMUNITY LEADERS OF AMERICA

Volunteers deliver a semi-size care package to families

By **DARCY WYTKO**
YAKIMA HERALD-REPUBLIC

As a swarm of smiling teenagers piled free boxes of food and personal care items into the backseat of a beat-up Datsun, all the women inside the car could do was offer a simple heartfelt "thank you."

The aid was provided through the Washington state and local chapter of the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, a national nonprofit organization composed of students, grade seven through 12.

"I love doing community service," said Taylor Bance, president of the state chapter and a sophomore at Selah High School. "You see how grateful the families are, their joy."

Statewide, the group raised more than \$8,200 to sponsor a semi-truck full of nonperishable food and personal care items from the Christian aid organization, Feed The Children.

The truck arrived at the First Presbyterian Church on Yakima Avenue at 1 p.m. Monday, dropping off 400 boxes containing more than \$35,000 worth of supplies to help Yakima-area families in need.

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Two hundred boxes were delivered to the Selah Food Bank, where 25 local volunteers helped load and stack boxes for those in need to take home.

Another 200 boxes were divided equally between the Triumph

Treatment Center and the Yakima YWCA.

At each location, families with pre-approved vouchers were to be given a 15-pound box of personal care items, many donated by Avon, and a 26-pound box of nonperishable food, enough to help feed a family of four for a week.

Erin Black, the Yakima YWCA's executive director, said deliveries like this have a positive impact in the lives of women in need of assistance, especially those who have survived domestic violence.

"Women come in with nothing but the clothes on their back," she said. "Not even shoes sometimes."

Black said the food and personal items will primarily benefit survivors of domestic violence, single working parents, women in transitional housing and their on-site emergency shelter.

For 15-year-old Bance, the event was a family affair. Her father, Dan Bance, operated the forklift, while her brother, Michael, delivered boxes, even if it meant taking them to a recipient's doorstep. Her mother, FCCLA adviser Michelle McCartney, helped organize Monday's truck delivery.

"Changing your community for the better with your family — that's what's powerful," McCartney said.

Next year, the group is set to raise funds for the Children's Miracle Network.

● For more information, visit washingtonfccla.tripod.com or www.feedthechildren.org.

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Washington Family, Career and Community Leaders of America volunteers help distribute food and personal care items to Yakima Valley people in need Monday.



Nicole Abdnor helps distribute food and personal care items to Yakima Valley residents in need on Monday. Over \$35,000 of food and personal items were distributed by Washington State Family, Career and Community Leaders of America members from around the state at the First Presbyterian Church parking lot in Yakima.

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