

Dyno Nobel reaching out to local community

Triblive

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Pictured, from left, at a Mon Valley Youth and Teen camp in Palmer Park, Donora, on Tuesday, June 11, 2013, are Dan Spencer, process manager at Dyno Nobel; Mariah Roberts, 6; Mary Anne Bandalo, executive director of the Mon Valley Youth and Teen; Lily Jericho, 7; and Bob MacPherson, business excellence facilitator at Dyno Nobel

Shortly before the holidays, Bob MacPherson sought a food bank where Donora-based Dyno Nobel and its employees could donate.

The business excellence facilitator for Dyno Nobel discovered the food bank at the Mon Valley Youth and Teen program in Donora.

Employees filled the beds of two pickup trucks with food. Food collection drives were repeated in the spring and again last week.

“And it’s going to be an ongoing effort from the plant,” said MacPherson. “A lot of people in the community are hurting and it’s another way to help out the community.”

Through those food drives, Dyno Nobel was introduced to Mary Anne Bandalo, executive director of Mon Valley Youth and Teen.

“We got to meet her and learn more about the center,” MacPherson said.

Children using the youth and teen center after school had access to computers, but most were outdated, MacPherson said.

“Their greatest need was computers,” MacPherson said. “In the after-school program, she (Bandalo) tries to expose the kids to computers and a good, healthy atmosphere. But the computers were very old, and she was spending half the time rebooting the computers when the kids come into the center.”

Dyno Nobel's parent company, Incitec Pivot Limited, an Australian-based global company, sponsors a competitive, community grant program. Dyno Nobel plant competed against more than 30 other sites worldwide when it applied for a grant to benefit the youth and teen center.

Dyno Nobel was awarded the largest grant possible – \$10,000 – to be used to purchase new computers, software and printers for the center.

“It was the first time we ever applied for one and first time obviously we got one,” MacPherson said.

Dyno Nobel has also sponsored summer camp expenses for several children from the youth and teen center.

But the community outreach did not end with the youth and teen center.

During the holidays, employees donated toys for the Mon Valley Leathernecks' Toys for Tots program.

The company also offers a dollar-for-dollar grant program that encourages employee charitable efforts.

A handful of employees raised \$2,000 and earned a matching grant. The money was used to purchase camping equipment for Boy Scout Troop 1391 in Millsboro.

“The employees spearheaded it and supported the Boy Scout troop,” MacPherson said.

He said Dan Johnson, A-operator at the plant, led the effort and applied for the grant.

Dyno Nobel is located in the Donora Industrial Park.

The site is a part of the former U.S. Steel Donora Plant steel and wire division. When the U.S. Steel plant was closed in the early 1960s, the 256 acres of property was acquired by the Middle Monongahela Industrial Development Association, which still owns it. It was subsequently converted into an industrial park.

One of the first companies to locate in the park was Hercules. It began production in 1968. In 1993, the plant became Dyno Nobel.

The Donora plant produces acid and ammonium nitrate. The acid is used for various industrial applications. The ammonium nitrate is used in the mining industry.

But reaching out to the community is also being harvested at the Donora facility.

“It's not just giving money away to be nice, it's a part of our company core values,” MacPherson said.

“Safety is number one – zero harm. But care for the community and the environment is important too. It means what can we do to help the community around us? What can we do to make a difference in the communities around us?”

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