

SHS SAVE grant aids with effort

School news

By BRAD RICH

Tideland News Writer

Swansboro High School students who work year-round to try to prevent bullying and other violent and high-risk behavior have received a grant to help continue their efforts.

The school's chapter of SAVE, Students Against Violence Everywhere, was one of 20 in the state to receive a \$1,000 grant from the Allstate Foundation, which has long supported the nationwide organization.

Other chapters nearby that got the grants this year are at Hunters Creek Middle and Hunters Creek Elementary schools in the Piney Green area.

Nick Bailey, the teacher who advises the SAVE chapter at SHS, said he and the 25 or so students in the club are grateful for the shot in the arm, which the school also received last year.

"It definitely helps," he said of the money from the insurance company's foundation. "We have a great group of students participating, and this helps them get their message out. It also supports some of the things we try to do every year."

For example, Bailey said, each spring the club brings to the school an "impaired driving" simulator, which enables participants to see, in a safe setting, the disorientation and difficulties alcohol and other intoxicating substances cause for drivers.

"We also use the money for a number of small things, such as public service announcements and the float we have in the homecoming parade," Bailey said. "And we go to the elementary schools to talk to the students there about bullying."

Given the times, Bailey said, the club focuses more and more on cyber-bullying — the use of social media to threaten and intimidate others — in part because there's not a lot of physical violence at SHS.

"We don't have a lot of fights here, but like everywhere else, there is bullying and cyber-bullying," he said. "We want students to know what they should do when it happens to them, who they can turn to."

The club is student-run, and its members are enthusiastic

about its goals and mission.

"SAVE is a community where people can get together and help spread awareness about the topic of violence," said senior member DeJa Mobley. "No type of violence should be tolerable. I like SAVE because we get to reach out to the younger generation as well, and show them the effects of violence and how to stay away from them."

Senior Maliyah Watie agreed. "SAVE is a great organization," she said. "It teaches people that violence isn't always the number one answer. We try our best to spread our message and awareness on this issue throughout our school, and I'm really proud that I am a part of this."

SAVE joined forces with The Allstate Foundation in 2005. The foundation aims to help the nonprofit further its mission: to engage, to empower, to encourage and to educate students.

As part of the Allstate Foundation grant, each of the 20 chapters receive free SAVE affiliation and mini grant funds, educational materials, training for school and community activities, ongoing support and technical assistance for SAVE's youth safety efforts, and opportunities to partner with local Allstate agents to further the cause.

Through these efforts, hundreds of students will be educated and directly engaged in SAVE chapter activities, while thousands will hear youth safety messages and be involved in activities led by their peers.

The partnership's primary focus in North Carolina is youth empowerment. SAVE student members at participating chapters will take the lead planning and executing youth safety campaigns aimed to inspire their peers to stand up and take action in keeping schools and communities safe. In addition to the programs already mentioned, activities include teaching conflict management, stressing diversity and safe teen driving, social media safety and peer mentoring to younger students.

Chapter initiatives also promote various national observances and events throughout the year, including America's Safe Schools Week in October,



SHS NTHS community service

Members and advisors of the National Technical Honor Society at Swansboro High School are pictured on their community service project, a visit to Onslow Memorial Hospital Pediatric Unit. The SHS NTHS met with registered nurse Angel Pollock, OMH Nurse Manager Maternal Child Services, to set up the special

the National SAVE Youth Summit in March, National Youth Violence Prevention Week in April and National Teen Safe Driving Month in May, which comes right around prom time.

"It's important we do our part and offer positive and supportive education for teens on youth safety and crime prevention, as well as offer them the experiences through service projects that provide vital connections to their peers," said Thomas Walters, Allstate agent with Walters Insurance Agency, which is in the Raleigh area, where national SAVE is based.

"Partnering with SAVE to empower youth to take an active role in ensuring their schools and communities are safe will make a long-lasting difference in student's lives. We're thrilled to be able to partner with SAVE and their exceptional student chap-

ters."

"These mini-grants allow SAVE chapters to implement a variety of youth safety campaigns while empowering them with life skills, including project planning and management, communication, leadership and public speaking," added Carleen Wray, executive director of national SAVE.

"We can't thank The Allstate Foundation enough. We're glad to team up with a foundation that shares the same desires as our organization — to promote meaningful student involvement, education and service opportunities in hopes to decrease the potential for violence."

SAVE, Wray pointed out, started in North Carolina, at West Charlotte High School, in 1989, after the death of student who was trying to break up a fight at an off-campus party. She

"Reading Center" for the pediatric floor. The students donated a bookcase that was made by the SHS Construction Trades class. NTHS members donated over 170 books of all levels. The bookcase was placed in the pediatric unit for young patients and visitors. (Photo contributed)

said students met first to console each other about the student's tragic death, then formed an organization to promote youth safety and work to prevent similar future incidents.

"So, SAVE is an organization that is North Carolina born-and-raised," she earlier this month. "But since then, it's grown tremendously. There are more than 230,000 students involved, in 2,100 chapters in 48 states and seven different countries."

Speaking on Dec. 14, the third anniversary of the Newtown, Conn., shootings in which 20-year-old Adam Lanza fatally shot 20 children and six adult staff members at Sandy Hook Elementary School, Wray noted that students "want a way to be involved in anti-violence efforts, a way to feel that they can make a difference in creating safer schools and a less violent society. SAVE is a way for them to do that."

Hale is on Belmont list

Tideland News Report

Semaj Hale of Cape Carteret qualified for the fall 2015 dean's list at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn.

Eligibility is based on a minimum course load of 12 hours and

a quality grade point average of 3.5 with no grade below a C.

Approximately 30 percent of Belmont's 7,400 students qualified for the fall 2015 dean's list, according to Belmont Provost Dr. Thomas Burns.