mber 21, Iriday • November 21, 1997

A&M students take class project one step further to help raise toys for local charity

LIFESTYLES

By RHONDA REINHART Staff writer

roans and rolled eyes are often typical responses to the as-signment of a group project. But for eight students in Marilyn m-Foxworth's Public Relations e Studies course, the mournful ands and bad attitudes were reced with the desire to put out ality work and make a difference

J.W. Washington, Karen Litzler, myn Boultinghouse, Elke Sim-, Jason Langridge, Tatsuki

ashi, Kara Olin and April Bailey re to design a mock public relans campaign for Phoebe's Home, enter that provides counseling, pport and shelter for abused nen and children.

Following the steps of the public tions process, the group of stunts talked with representatives of oebe's Home and researched the nter's needs and services. They igned a logo for the home and eloped a strategy to increase

icawareness of Phoebe's Home domestic violence.

cramped living conditions of its inhabitants, the group realized it actually wanted to implement the plans it had for the campaign.

Washington, a senior agriculture development major with an emphasis on public relations and leadership, said the group realized it could make its project a reality and give something back to the community.

"We felt it was important to focus on the children," he said. "Nothing hurts me more to see tears in the eyes of a young person. It really grabbed hold of us - trying to help out here.'

Washington said eight different personalities united to make this project a success.

'We've come together and created a common vision greater than ourselves," he said. "We saw a need for something, and we met those needs. Everyone sincerely believed in it — that we could make at least one child's life better.

On Saturday, Nov. 22, the group will be holding a toy and book drive to benefit abused children seeking shelter at Phoebe's Home.

The group's project became real, ut after the students visited in part, because of the help it reebe's Home and saw the ceived from the community.

Various businesses and student groups donated time, capital and resources to make the toy and book drive possible.

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The group also has a television commercial advertising the drive and providing awareness about domestic violence that is going to air more than 300 times on various television stations.

Washington thinks the toy and book drive could be something Phoebe's Home could turn into an annual or biannual event.

Kern-Foxworth said she is really leased with the work the group has done because the students were not required to go out and do this.

The enthusiasm the students have is infectious," she said. "They got me enthused. They're just bubbling over. This is what a professor lives for — seeing students thrilled about working hard. That group is a shining example.

Litzler, a senior speech communications major, said knowing the project was going to be a reality made it more exciting.

'We weren't really pumped about doing a mock project," she said. "It's made us more motivated to know we were actually doing it. It's neat to know that we are going to help the children and make their lives a little better. Our teacher almost fell over when we told her."

Litzler said even though she is excited about the toy and book drive, she is worried about the turnout. "I knew it was going to be a big

job," she said. "But it's all coming together now, and it's making me nervous. I'm just so excited. I can't wait.

Kern-Foxworth said the Phoebe's Home project has given the students a chance to apply the knowledge they learn in class.

"Experience is always the best teacher," she said. "It gives them the opportunity to see the community in action and what it feels like to give back to the community.

When the group was formed, the students hardly knew each other. But since the beginning of the semester, they have met at least once a week and sometimes as many as three times a week to work on the project. They have brought together their different styles and ideas to produce a finished product that went above and beyond what was required in class.

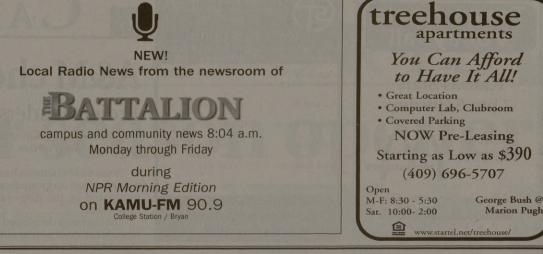
Washington said he has had bad experiences with group projects in the past, but he said he has enjoyed working with this group.

"This has been an awesome

group to work with," he said. "They

are going to make an employer one

day a tremendous employee.



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DEREK DEMERE/THE BATTALION

om top left) Tatsuki Ohashi, Jason Langridge, J.W. Washington, en Litzler, Kara Olin, Jessamyn Boultinghouse, Elke Simmons April Bailey designed the public relations campaign for Phoebe's e, a shelter for battered women and children.

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Intinued from ge 3

G: Oh yes. In fact, I ka big pole today and ed a sack of kitties out he river. They're still ghing up water! Brak joins the conver-

Q: Hi Brak. How are you? Brak: Oh, you know. 'm cutting muffins. Q: Brak, what exactly

are you? Brak: I'm a cat-monkey. That's what I am. If you took a cat, and a monkey, and fused them together, that's what you'd get. Q: It seems to me that ----

B: It seems to me that you've lived your life like a

candle in the wind! Sorry. Q: It seems you've ridden Space Ghost's coattails into the limelight. Are there any takeover plans or movie deals of your own in the works?

B: I am not at liberty to talk about that right now. My agent has told me to keep my mouth shut. Q: Do you have any

plans to join Ted Turner's World Championship Wrestling organization in the fight against the NWO? B: I think the NWO is a farce. I think that Hulk Hogan will rise up again and become the good man that he is. I saw those movies he was in. I saw Mr. Nanny. He is not the bad man he claims he is.

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