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Park City youth create bike generator with Holy Cross Ministries

PARK CITY – Thanks to funding from the Sisters of the Holy Cross, students in Park City got a personalized look at the impacts of their carbon footprint. "We wanted to do something educational with the kids and since one of the things they really like to do is ride bikes, we thought that would be a good way to make a lesson on alternative energy relevant for them" explained Sister Mary Ann Pajakowski, Education Director at Holy Cross Ministries.

Holy Cross Ministries and the Park City School District administer a collaborative Summer Program for 200 youth in Park City. These students, ranging in ages from first grade to graduating fifth grade students, spend Monday through Thursday at McPolin Elementary School where they have a variety of academic and enrichment activities planned for them.

Kaitlyn Keffer, a sophomore at Notre Dame who volunteered for Holy Cross Ministries this summer, was a key player in the carbon footprint project. She facilitated age-appropriate lesson plans to teach the students about alternative energy options. Students participated in lessons which conveyed the law of conservation of energy and as a culmination of the project students used two bicycles and a variety of donated materials to help Holy Cross staff and volunteers in building two bike generators.

Finally, students were able to put their hard work to the test. They used the bike generators to create electricity to power small house hold appliances which included blenders, stereos, pencil sharpeners and cell phones. Keffer remarked that, overall, the experience was a very unique and positive one for the students. They "really enjoyed learning about how the various components of the generator functioned prior to riding the bike and once they started riding, they loved seeing how the electricity they generated was used to power a radio and blender."

HCM is guided by the tradition of service that has characterized the Sisters of the Holy Cross since the first intrepid sisters opened a hospital in Utah in 1875. Holy Cross Ministries, created in 1994, continues this tradition of compassionate service and is driven by its commitment to those in need. Through a coordinated, collaborative network, the organization shares resources, connects people to community services, and assists individuals and families toward independence and full participation in the community. HCM's services include advocacy, counseling, education, immigration legal services, and the parish and the promotora (bilingual, bicultural staff) outreach programs. To learn more about Holy Cross Ministries, visit www.holycrossministries.org.

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