

NEWS RELEASE

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NORTHWEST IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE CHARITABLE CHARIOTS RAFFLE WINNER “PAYING IT FORWARD”

In January and February of 2016 students in the Automotive and Diesel programs who run NCC’s Charitable Chariots program, a SkillsUSA Service Learning Project, sold raffle tickets for a refurbished 2001 Oldsmobile Intrigue for \$20.00/each. One hundred and eighty tickets were sold during the fundraiser raising \$3,600 for the program. All of the profits from the raffle went back into the program to help pay for future vehicle giveaways. The raffle drawing was held Friday, February 19, 2016 and the winner was Randy Kruse, Sheldon.

But there was something else that came out of the raffle...

After Kruse won the car Janet Boone, NCC Administrative Secretarial Instructor, mentioned to a mutual friend of theirs that she was happy Kruse won, but she had been hoping one of her students, Sonia Garza, who also had bought a raffle ticket for the car would have won because she really needed reliable transportation. Unbeknownst to Boone their mutual friend passed along the story to Kruse.

After some consideration Kruse decided to donate the car to Garza and on Wednesday, April 13, Kruse officially handed over the keys and Garza took possession of the car. Kruse said, “NCC’s Charitable Chariots is a great program for our community and I will continue to buy tickets for the car raffle to support it. At this point, I don’t need a car and I knew there was a NCC student who could really use a reliable car and I wanted to “pay it forward” and help her out. Thanks to all the students in the Automotive and Diesel programs for a great car. I congratulate Sonia and I hope it serves her well for many years to come.”

Garza, a resident of Hull, Iowa, who is in the Administrative Secretarial program, said, “I am so excited! I have no words to adequately express myself right now, but to say thank you. It’s amazing how NCC treats its students – it’s like a family here. I was having a lot of trouble with my car all winter. Right now it’s not even working at all and I am borrowing a car to get to class, so this couldn’t have come at a better time for me and my family.”

“Sonia has truly inspired me and her fellow classmates with her professionalism and her perseverance despite some obstacles she has faced.” said Boone. “She has what it takes and this is one thing that will definitely help her on her journey to what I know will be a successful career.”

This is something different for the Charitable Chariots program. Normally the students in the Program join together along with Iowa based businesses to repair and service automobiles for the purpose of donating back to area families in need. The families that receive the donated vehicles are selected by area social service agencies.

Chuck Ball, NCC Automotive Instructor said, “We decided to hold a raffle to raise a little money for the program. While most of our expenses are covered by our business partners there have been situations in which it is necessary to buy products at cost to use in the refurbished vehicle. That’s what the money raised in this fundraiser will go for - future expenses of the program, so we can serve more people.”

The program started with the first vehicle donated in 2009. To date, seventeen vehicles have been donated to families in need. The vehicles are serviced and repaired by NCC students. Mark Steinle, NCC Automotive Instructor, stated, “The instructors in the two programs wanted to stress to our students that they not only participate in community service, but community service in their given professions. When our students graduate we want them to be well-rounded professionals and that includes giving back to their communities. So, we added a service learning component to the curriculums of these two programs.” Steinle continued, “We are trying to teach that life is not all about a paycheck. Giving back to the community you live in is a good life lesson.”

Since the giveaway there has been an update to the story. Sonia Garza has told the instructors from the Charitable Chariots program that she is going to donate her old car to the program. Denny Wallace, Diesel Technology Instructor, smiled as he said, “This is what the Charitable Chariots program is all about. Teaching students to pay-it-forward. Either through community service, or as Sonia did – giving back to the community you live in.”

If you are interested in donating to the Charitable Chariots program, please contact Mark Steinle at Northwest Iowa Community College. You can call him at (712) 324-5061 or email him at msteinle@nwicc.edu.

For information on any of NCC’s 40 programs or to receive your free copy of the NCC Viewbook, contact the Admissions Office at studentservices@nwicc.edu or call (712) 324-5061 or 800-352-4907. Or visit our website at nwicc.edu.

Photo: L-R: Randy Kruse, Sonia Garza