



## Whittier Tech students build greenhouse, desks and highway garage for area cities and towns

HAVERHILL --- Masonry and carpentry students at Whittier Tech thought it would be fun to get out of school for a few days to build a greenhouse at Triton Regional Middle School. That was until they



dug down four-feet to build the block foundation in December, and the hole promptly filled in with icy, muddy water.

But those trials were forgotten at the grand opening celebration of the greenhouse. It was a warm, sunny day on the field, and the middle school students who will use the greenhouse for an enrichment program squirmed in their chairs in anticipation.

“I’m glad we did it,” said Jacob Bradwell, a Whittier junior who studies masonry. “It was well worth coming out in the cold. They all look so happy with what

they’re doing. It’s a really good moment.”

Triton Middle School runs “The Green Thumb Nursery Program”, an after-school entrepreneurial program for special needs students which allows 15 students to grow and sell herbs, flowers and vegetables to staff members at Triton. When they needed a greenhouse to be able to grow plants year-round, they turned to Whittier Tech.

“We never could have done it without Whittier,” said Carla Collins, Triton’s Special Programs Coordinator. “It was a big project, and an unprecedented collaborative effort. Through the cold, rain and snow you were here, and we are forever grateful. ”

Bev DeSalvo, Whittier’s Vocational Technical Coordinator said, “It was mutually beneficial to both schools. Our students got a lot out of it, and it’s great to see the follow-through with the nursery program already in place.”

Rows of vegetables and herbs were planted outside the greenhouse where students cut the ribbon to officially open their business.

Whittier students have built many different kinds of structures for the cities and towns in their district. Carpentry students recently installed a 24-foot desk they built for municipal officials in Amesbury. They will also construct a 50 x 50 foot highway garage for the town of Rowley next school year, said Ms. DeSalvo. In addition, students are building a new wall on the handicap ramp in the school’s front courtyard and will construct new dugouts for the baseball team in the fall.

“We are always happy to be able to give back to our communities, especially during these difficult economic times,” said Whittier School Superintendent William DeRosa. “We are grateful for the support they give us, and it’s fitting that our students can assist them with some of the many skills we train them for here.”