

Embry-Riddle Treats Kids to Evening of Basketball

December 24, 2014 Filed under SPORTS Posted by admin

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

About 426 students from Food Brings Hope's KidsZone and TeenZone after-school programs received the star treatment on Dec. 12. They were treated to pizza, desserts and music before watching Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) men's basketball team defeat Alice Lloyd College 97 to 70.

"What an exciting way to spend an evening," said Dan Lucas, Campbell Middle School teacher. "I got to start my weekend watching a great basketball game with some of the best children."

Food Brings Hope is a local organization that focuses on breaking the poverty cycle for homeless and disadvantaged children enrolled in Volusia County schools.

The night kicked off with a motivational speech by ERAU men's head basketball coach and special assistant to the president, Steve Ridder, about being a good teammate. Ridder along with Daniel Kiesling, team captain, and Hudson Cadet, senior forward, added that it takes setting a good example, giving 100 percent, and cheering on your teammates as qualities of a good teammate.

Fired up

"The kids were so excited about being there and fired up throughout the game, Ridder said. "Prior to the game we were able to help send the message of the importance of being a special teammate in life and how grateful we need to continue to be to those who continue to reach out and help all of us.

"It is always a privilege to be part of this special program and enjoy working to help make a difference in young people's lives."

Afterward, a dinner of pizza and sweets were served to the children by the ERAU men and women's track team followed by the exciting game.



Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Coach Steve Ridder and others talk to students about the qualities of a good teammate.

Students get a kick out of seeing the university's mascot.

"Thank you Food Brings Hope for giving our students an opportunity to have this experience at an ERAU basketball game," said Turie T. Small Elementary Principal Dr. Earl Johnson. "We are blessed to have Food Brings Hope as a partner providing opportunities for our students and giving them the college experience."

Participating schools

Of the 12 Volusia County schools that Food Brings Hope operates in, all were in attendance. Those schools include Osceola, Pierson, Starke, Turie T. Small, and Westside elementary schools; Campbell, Holly Hill, New Smyrna Beach, and Southwestern middle schools; and Mainland, Spruce Creek, and Taylor Middle high schools. Also in attendance were honor students from Hinson Elementary.

"We are very thankful for this partnership with ERAU's Athletic Association," said Forough B. Hosseini, Food Brings Hope founder and chair. "This annual event is one that our students look forward to attending. Each year, Coach Ridder and his athletes aid our mission of nurturing the body, mind and spirit of underprivileged children in our community."