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Cookie Auction Feeds 10,000

FORT WORTH, Texas – Can a dozen cookies, combined with the desire of 102 students to avoid a law professor’s line of in-class questioning feed 10,000 people? For a group of Texas Wesleyan law students, the answer was a resounding yes.

The students of Professor Aric Short’s Property II class recently donated \$2,000 to the Tarrant County Food Bank, a sum that will provide meals for 10,000 hungry people. The money was raised entirely through donations made by students in the class.

“In the past, students have had a hard time keeping up with the assigned reading the week that first-year briefs were due,” Short said. “As a result, I’ve had a high absence percentage that week. This year I decided to encourage students to attend class the week their briefs were due by offering ‘immunity’ from being called on in exchange for a donation of \$5 to the food bank from each student.”

Short said his students were happy to part with \$5 each in return for the relief that would come from not being called on during that brutal week of brief preparation. He said their reaction to the plan made him think about other ways the group could raise money. Remembering that he owed someone a batch of cookies, he decided to auction a dozen cookies and milk to the class in an effort to increase the class’ donation.

As the auction got started, one student offered a \$500 matching donation if the cookie bid exceeded \$500. In the end, four students decided to combine their donations for a total cookie bid of \$705.

“I was worried the high bid would be about \$6,” Short said. “I was shocked and overwhelmed by the students’ responses. Law students have usually incurred a tremendous amount of undergraduate debt, and they’re just adding to that total in law school. For them to dig deep and raise this much money for charity is incredibly inspiring. I think this is a wonderful testament to their character.”

1L Wayne Cavalier said that his classmate’s offer of a matching bid encouraged him to help, and he saw a great opportunity when a high bid was made by another of his peers.

“I have been blessed and have not had to worry about a meal for a long time,” Cavalier said. “I felt donating directly to the Food Bank would ensure more of the money would be used for ‘a meal’ rather than administrative costs. When [the] offer was made to match a winning bid amount, I wanted to help. I decided that helping get the winning bid would make our efforts worthwhile.”

1L Megan Szinyei was one of the students who partnered with Cavalier in the cookie bid

“I decided to donate at the level I did because when my family and I have experienced financial hardships God has always provided for us,” Szinyei said. “Giving to the Food Bank was a great opportunity for me to return the favor and help someone else in need. I’m grateful to Professor Short for making us aware of the Food Bank, and to all of my classmates who participated, whether they donated \$5 or \$500, for setting an example of generosity.

“This was a really wonderful experience and Professor Short's cookies were some of the best I've ever had.”

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