

# Pembroke Pines Elementary Students Take a Trip to Publix

BY DEBBY TEICH



**WHEN STUDENTS IN TWO THIRD-GRADE** classes at the Pembroke Pines Elementary walk down the aisles at Publix, they will now have a better understanding of what it takes to get the food on the shelves. They recently took a field trip to Publix, as part of Kids and the Power of Work (KAPOW), a program designed to connect a student's classroom learning to their future in the work place. KAPOW's lessons help students discover different jobs, what it takes to do them, and how to be successful in work and life.

The KAPOW program has been educating the children of Pembroke Pines with real life, hands-on experiences since 2001. The program introduces students to career awareness through seven one-hour professionally developed lessons taught by business volunteers in the classroom and culminates with a visit to the workplace. Each of the five 3rd grade classes at Pembroke Pines Elementary had different KAPOW volunteers.

"Students need to see that school is relevant to their lives, as well as the vision they have for their futures," said John Casbarro, who coordinates the KAPOW program in South Florida. "KAPOW answers the questions that they are always asking, such as 'Why do I have to learn this?' and 'What good will this do for me?'" The volunteers motivate the students by sharing their life work and life experiences. They show them that everything they learn in school is important and valuable in order to succeed in work and life."

Throughout the school year, volunteer and Publix employee Christina Curry met with students in Barbara Sibble's 3rd grade classes to teach them about the importance of community involvement, leadership, communication and teamwork. She used hands-on fun activities to involve the children and keep them interested.

Sibble says that the kids always looked forward to her visits. "Christina has been a great role model," said Sibble. "The children go to school every day to

learn reading, writing, math, and other subjects. She helps them understand how they will use these skills in the workplace."

For the last KAPOW lesson, students from Sibble's class, along with Yvonne Spector's class, took a field trip to Publix to learn more about Curry's workplace. In the produce section, they learned all about the different fruits and vegetables. In the bakery, they learned how to weigh flour, as well as how to bake and decorate a cake. They also got to decorate their own cookies. In the meat department, they learned how to cut meat. At the end of the visit, they had a chance to scan items at the register, give change and hand customers their receipts.

"The kids had a great time on the field trip and learned a lot," said Sibble. "They saw how the employees work independently and as a team. They have a better understanding of what is expected in a job. They also identified some of their own talents and interests."

KAPOW is always looking for business or individual volunteers, as well as schools interested in participating in the program. For information, visit [www.kapowfls.org](http://www.kapowfls.org); send an email to [john.casbarro@gmail.com](mailto:john.casbarro@gmail.com) or call 954-680-3916.

