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Paper Trail Runs to School

March 06, 2004

By **Jenny Hurwitz**
Contributing writer

A surplus of paper at a college paper-making program has turned into a windfall for pupils in an art class at Edward Smith Elementary School in Syracuse.

The State University College of Environmental Science and Forestry donated more than 150 pounds of leftover paper made by students to Mary Lynn Mahan's class at Ed Smith.

"It's beautiful paper, gorgeous," Mahan said.

Frank Maraviglia, a professor emeritus at SUNY ESF, got the idea for the donation in December when he read an article in The Post-Standard about an auction Mahan's class organized to raise \$5,000 to pay for art supplies the cash-strapped Syracuse school district can't afford. Mahan had said her budget was about a dollar per pupil per year.

Maraviglia knew the college owned and operated a working paper mill on campus, where students take part in a paper production class. They make between 3,000 and 4,000 pounds of paper each semester.

"I thought it would be a good idea to donate some," he said.

His idea was passed along to Ray Appleby, pilot plant manager in the paper science and engineering faculty at SUNY ESF. Appleby agreed to donate paper left from a previous class.

"We tend to have more than we can use," he said.

Mahan's husband collected the paper in January. The donation included

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about five boxes filled with standard-sized paper plus larger pieces of about 3 by 3 1/2 feet.

The paper plant dates to 1938. It can produce a variety of paper grades, from card stock to bond weight to tracing paper. Professors sometimes request special paper for their classes. Also, the school uses its own paper for phone directory covers and admissions mailings.

The specialized paper processes class allows students to work in the plant under simulated commercial conditions. Students work as a team to produce four grades of paper, according to the professor's specifications.

Students work independently, much as they would if they were running an actual paper plant.

"We aren't given much structure," said Kristin Muffler, 21, a senior in the paper processes class. "It's pretty much up to us."

Students do everything, from calculating and testing paper formulas in the laboratory to devising a management structure for their factory.

Many students in the paper science track become process engineers, who analyze paper plants to increase efficiency and save energy.

If the finished product doesn't meet the required specifications for the class, the paper science and engineering program donates it to local organizations, such as schools and child-care centers.

Last week, Appleby got another call from Mahan, this time requesting paper for Syracuse's Huntington Elementary School, which lost art supplies and paper during flooding. He's coordinating that donation.

"The public schools can just keep eating it up," Mahan said. "It seems like such a wonderful, symbiotic thing."

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