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FOCUS ON PHOTOGRAPHY



Telegram photos / Jason Ivester

Above, Brittney Pulley, left, watches teacher Paisley Cloyd, center, help Rayshawn Trevathon load bulk film during their photography class Friday at Rocky Mount High School. Below, Cloyd explains how to operate the cameras.

Group helps teachers buy school supplies

By JUSTIN BOULMAY
Staff Writer

A nonprofit organization has helped a high school art teacher raise thousands of dollars for supplies for her class.

Rocky Mount High School teacher Paisley Cloyd has raised around \$20,000 to purchase classroom supplies with the help of DonorsChoose, which enlists the support of donors through the Internet.

Cloyd has bought not only basic materials for her students but also more advanced equipment that her



SUPPLIES

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school's budget is too small to include.

The organization benefits teachers when their schools' budgets are not large enough for teachers to purchase everything they need.

"It's so important because teachers just don't have the supplies that they need to teach in the classrooms," said Katie Bisbee, executive director of DonorsChoose for the Carolinas.

With money raised from DonorsChoose, Cloyd has bought paint and canvas, oil pastels and acrylic paints for her classes. She also has received six cameras for her classes and collected enough money to fund a special digital photography project for one of her students.

Cloyd also received money to take some of her students on field trips, such as to the Monet exhibit in Raleigh.

The program has grown more popular with other teachers, Cloyd said.

"It's becoming that way because I am on a mission to get everybody to use it," she said. "I've presented it to the art teacher's meeting, I've been to the school board and presented it to the school board last spring."

Teachers post a project on



Telegram photo / Jason Ivester

Ashley Riley snaps a frame in the hallway Friday before returning to her second period photography class at Rocky Mount High School.

the DonorsChoose Web site. Anyone can browse through the site, using criteria such as grade or project type, and select a grant they want to contribute to financially.

The teachers personally never receive the money. Instead, DonorsChoose takes the money that is raised, buys the materials that were requested and ships the materials the teacher requested.

"Unlike writing a grant,

we mail the supplies to the teacher, so they don't have to worry about receipts or money orders," Bisbee said.

DonorsChoose also provides protection to its contributors, whom Bisbee refers to as "citizen philanthropists." It provides information on how their money will be used.

If they contribute \$100 or more, they'll receive a thank-you note from the teacher and her students, as

well as pictures – which are taken with a disposable camera provided by DonorsChoose – that show how the money was put to use.

The teachers never know who sent them money, unless they are contacted by that person.

North Carolina is one of the few states in which DonorsChoose is offered, Bisbee said. The organization plans to expand nationally by the fall of 2008.