

# PRSD Character Counts Caring Lesson for 2009-2010

**Big Question: How can acts or gestures of Caring change the school, community, or the world. How can these same acts or gestures change the life of the giver?**

Lesson began by reminding students that within the last month, students and staff from Pinelands have already shown caring to others in the community through the annual Thanksgiving food drive and Holiday toy collection. 15 families received all supplies necessary for full Thanksgiving dinner, and 70 local families will receive gifts for their children for the holidays and discuss how acts of caring may have impacted the lives of these families from the Pinelands community.

Brainstorm ways students can continue to show Caring during the holiday season and throughout the year. Show students the postcard and discuss to them that they will be sent to our troops currently serving overseas or who have returned home and are currently stationed in Norfolk, Va. Cards are being sent to troops that are currently serving with a Pinelands Graduate.

Students were asked to write a message of appreciation on the back to troops who are away from their families during the holiday season. Students may be as creative as they want and it must be appropriate.

## Letter from Pinelands Graduate upon receiving the postcards

*To the students of Pinelands Regional Junior High School,*

*I would personally like to thank each and every one of you for the letters you sent during this past holiday period. It is truly an honor to be appreciated and respected by you all. My unit and I took the time to ensure we read every letter you sent. I would have to say I was very impressed. It is extremely hard to be away for the holidays and receiving your cards made things more enjoyable. The job we do is difficult and takes up a lot of our time. We spend months and even years away from our families and after a while we become tired and lonely. Receiving letters, like the ones you sent, bring a new burst of energy and pride.*

*For the junior guys that work for me it gives a new understanding for how we are noticed. Several of you referred to us as heroes and idolize us. Being told that you are a hero is one of the greatest things you could be. It is people, like all of you, that make us proud of doing the job we do, when I explained to my troops who you all were they were extremely gracious and thankful; your letters were very touching and uplifting.*

*Speaking on behalf of my peers and senior staff, your letters hit close to home. Many members of my senior staff have children your age or just a little younger so receiving your letters gave a feeling of family and love. They allowed us to remember that what we do is important and has a large meaning. Doing this job for a long time causes us to take for granted what we do. The love and time that was taken to write these letters is amazing.*

*As for myself, I have never been more proud of what I do. Every day we put our lives on the line and see a lot of evil to protect our freedom and keep people safe and receiving your letters reminds us of the good and innocence in this country. As a graduate of the Pinelands School District and a brother of a faculty member I can honestly say I am proud of where I came from and where I grew up.*

*From all of us at Strike Fighter Squadron 15 (VFA-15) to all of you we say thanks and never forget that you and your families are the reason we do what we do and we truly thank you for all your support.  
Fair Winds and Following Seas*

*Very Respectfully,  
Aviation Ordnanceman First Class Petty Officer  
Marc L. Saks  
United States Navy*