

## **Green Apple Day of Service Gives School Jump-Start on Outdoor Science Projects, Gardening Activities**

Despite the sweltering Florida weather, volunteers from Pratt & Whitney West Palm Beach came prepared to work hard at this year's Green Apple Day of Service – and, work hard they did.

The event was held the morning of Sept. 24 at Pine Jog Elementary School in West Palm Beach. Volunteers cleared brush from the school's butterfly garden, weeded and edged the raised garden beds, and washed pots to help students get a jump-start on their outdoor science projects and gardening activities.

Green Apple Day of Service is celebrated internationally on Sept. 24. It gives parents, teachers, students, companies and local organizations the opportunity to transform schools into healthy, safe and productive learning environments through local service events.

"The volunteers that came to our school did an amazing job, and they did it with a heart for our students," said Principal Tarachell Thomas. "Everyone at Pine Jog Elementary is extremely grateful and appreciative. Our gardens look incredible, and the teachers and students are already planting seeds and young plants."

Pratt & Whitney West Palm Beach sponsored the Green Apple Day of Service event at the school in cooperation with Florida Atlantic University Pine Jog Environmental Education Center. Joining volunteers from Pratt & Whitney and the Center were volunteers from Pine Jog Elementary School, Otis Elevator Company, and members of the Wellington Garden Club, Oleander Garden Club of the Palm Beaches and West Palm Beach Elks Lodge No. 1352.

"Giving back to our communities is one of our company's key guiding principles," said Mike O'Neill, manager of Systems Engineering–Validation Development Assembly at Pratt & Whitney West Palm Beach. "We are proud to participate in Green Apple Day of Service, and help create school environments that inspire students to learn about nature and care for our natural resources."

Javier Cue, one of the volunteers from Pratt & Whitney, looks forward to company-sponsored community events. "Volunteering as a company gives employees a chance to represent Pratt & Whitney in the community and bond outside of work," said Cue, a senior engineer in Controls & Diagnostics Systems.

"The Green Apple Day of Service event at Pine Jog Elementary School is a perfect example of what great things can be accomplished when people in the community come together to support education," said Jeff Pegg, central instructional superintendent, Elementary 1, School District of Palm Beach County.

"Giving students the opportunity to be outdoors and interact with nature helps reinforce what they learn in the classroom and increase their environmental awareness," added Ray Coleman, executive director of Florida Atlantic University Pine Jog Environmental Education Center. "It is a recipe for student success and a sustainable future."

The Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council, the organization behind Green Apple Day of Service, was founded to ensure green schools for every child in this generation. Pratt & Whitney's parent company, United Technologies Corporation, is a founding sponsor of the Center for Green Schools.

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