

Pomeroy helps students improve reading skills

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(Photo: Thanks to Nancy Costello)

HEBRON -- Samantha Shirley, executive assistant to the president and CEO of Pomeroy, works for a company that provides her with the opportunity to go out into the community during the course of the work day to help students improve their reading skills.

Pomeroy, a leading IT solutions company based in Hebron, provided nearly 20 volunteers during the 2013-2014 school year to participate in the Northern Kentucky Education Council's One to One: Practicing Reading with Students program.

One to One links community volunteers with first through third grade students who meet weekly to work on basic reading skills at 38 schools throughout Northern Kentucky.

Pomeroy's volunteers each worked with an individual student at North Pointe Elementary School in Boone County, helping them with their fundamental reading skills. By working with young students to improve these skills, these volunteers have helped build a stronger foundation for a successful workforce.

Pomeroy HRIS specialist and One to One volunteer David McGhee has grown to love reading more since he became a volunteer. "(I) never saw myself reading to kids," McGhee said. "As a kid, I never really enjoyed reading." Now, McGhee explained, he finds more enjoyment in reading for pleasure and has grown past his own childhood reading issues.

A volunteer since October 2013, benefits specialist Barbara Freeman saw impressive growth from the student she tutored. "She was putting more inflection in her reading," Freeman said. "She was better able to understand emotion in the books she read."

The volunteers from Pomeroy who participated in the "One to One: Practicing Reading with Students" program are valuable assets to the Northern Kentucky community who are dedicated to improving reading proficiency across the region.

North Pointe Principal Mike Shires reiterates the profound impact that Pomeroy and the One to One reading program have had with their elementary students.

"Many times in education we focus on accountability, skills, strategies, content and assessments. We often forget about the relationships that make a huge difference to kids. Through the One to One program, Pomeroy employees have given back directly to the community and created relationships that could change the direction of a child's life," Shires said.

Data indicate that almost half (49 percent) of third-graders in Northern Kentucky are not reading on grade level. More community and business volunteers are needed to be trained to become reading coaches at the 38 participating schools across five Northern Kentucky counties.

"Our community has the power to change young lives and invest in the future of our region," says Polly Lusk Page, executive director, Northern Kentucky Education Council. "Third-grade reading proficiency is a key indicator for subsequent academic performance and career readiness. One to One provides a tangible means for volunteers to contribute to that process and make a difference."

One to One provides training in the late summer each year and will train in numerous sessions in late August/early September. Interested individuals or businesses can contact Nancy Costello at the Northern Kentucky Education Council at 859-282-9214 or ncostello@nkyec.org or register online at www.nkyec.org.

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