



TREP\$ program volunteers and Valley View School teachers Emma Saporito, left, and Juliana Anselmini during the TREP\$ Marketplace on Wednesday, Feb. 14.

## Valley View School creates young entrepreneurs

By **KENNA JACKSON**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

**WATCHUNG** - Young entrepreneurs at Valley View School showed off their creativity on Wednesday, Feb. 14 with the sale of their own home-made products during the TREP\$ marketplace.

TREP\$, short for entrepreneurs, is an award-winning entrepreneurship education program for kids in grades four through eight. According to their website, the TREP\$ program is designed to teach students how to start their businesses with six to eight weeks' worth of seminars and workshops. At the end of the program, the participating school community will help the young entrepreneurs launch their businesses.

The products at Valley View's after school marketplace event included home-made pillows, creatively designed strawberry and fondue desserts and gaily decorated containers filled with home-made slime.

However, despite the intrinsic variety of home-made products, the prod-

ucts sold all had a similar theme of Valentines' day.

According to Juliana Anselmini and Emma Saporito, this year's after-school TREP\$ program volunteer leaders, keeping their product designs close to this theme was a decision made by the student business owners to increase revenue and ensure bulk sales. It was a decision made a few weeks back during a workshop called "Shark Tank."

The workshop was very similar to the American reality television show "Shark Tank," where up and coming entrepreneurs get the chance to present their business proposals to a panel of successful entrepreneurs.

Anselmini and Saporito had students write up their ideas and talk about them in front of a board of adult volunteers. It was an idea that the two volunteer leaders had implemented for the first time.

"We had them complete business plans and come up with an expense spreadsheet that showed what they'd spend on creating the product, and how they decided what they were

gonna price their product based on what they suspected they'd make," said Anselmini. "Just hearing students of the fifth to seventh grade age group talking about 'break-even point,' 'profit projection,' and all of this language, it's exciting because they don't realize how unique that is."

Kimberly Brown, mother to one of the TREP\$ entrepreneurs, said she would recommend this program to others because of all they get out of it.

"They're learning about finances, profits, and margins," said Brown. "And it's something that they were excited about. So for that reason alone, if you can get a child excited, it's a good thing. I hope they continue it."

Although some parents are concerned the children may be too young to understand their achievements, short of making some extra money, Anselmini says the experience is a positive one.

"They may not, one hundred percent, grasp all of these ideas now but even to just be grappling with it now puts them ahead of the curve," said Anselmini.