# Tallwood High projects focus on global problems

By Danielle Coley

Correspondent

KEMPSVILLE

Tallwood High School students are taking initiative to change the world

Who knew that a simple school project would change a handful of seniors into young advocates?

Students in the school's Global Studies and World Languages Academy organized projects to change communities on a global scale.

For senior A.J Monette, this project means having the chance to champion a cause important to him - autism.

Monette organized an autism event, which takes place 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at Tallwood. The program, which will be a little over an hour long, includes a discussion about autism on the global level.

"I have a cousin with autism, so this was more a personal choice for me," Monette said.

Monette has called on his cousin's mother to come from Atlanta and speak at the event. She wrote a book about autism and started a charity.

Monette also asked someone from the charity Surfer's Healing to speak.

The senior doesn't plan to charge at the door, but he said any donations will support the cause. He's willing to help with follow- up events.

"I started this event as a senior project," he said, "but if someone were to call on me to help them do it again, I would be glad to help."

Senior Roan Razon also used a personal connection to pick her project.

Her family is from the Philippines, where many children without shoes get injured while walking barefoot to school. Razon organized a Flip Flop Collection Drive.

She hopes to collect 300 or more new or gently used flip-flops to send to Gawad Kalinga, an advocacy organization that combats poverty in the Philippines.

"I actually do have family who are living in those poor conditions," Razon said. "So I wanted to take action, and do something to reduce hardships."