

# Tools for Empowerment receives \$10,000 grant

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Kat Doyle, left, hands Elizabeth Arsenault a check for the \$10,000 grant for ASAP's Tools for Empowerment project.

A Self-Help Assistance Program (ASAP), a local nonprofit, received a \$10,000 grant from the Catholic Commission for Human Development for their Tools for Empowerment project.

The purpose of Tools for Empowerment is to refurbish and repair tools to be donated to vocational schools within the United States and around the world. Elizabeth Arsenault, executive director at ASAP, said, "We always dreamed of doing this in Georgia." "I haven't come across anyone else doing anything like this. It's unique," said Kat Doyle, director of justice and peace ministries at the Catholic Commission.

ASAP accepts any type of tool for donation, though their primary categories are agricultural, auto, electrical, carpentry and masonry tools. Once the organization has the tools, volunteers plug them in to make sure they work, clean them and remove rust. If the tools are shipped overseas, they're treated with canola oil to prevent rust from salt water.

"We try to make them look as new as possible," Arsenault said. ASAP sends the tools out through Salesian Missions, which has connections in more than 130 countries to provide vocational and technical education. The students who complete vocational training at the Salesian Missions schools are able to keep the tools they were given to help start their careers and find work, according to Arsenault.

Doyle said the charity that receives the grant “must empower people who are living below the poverty level. The project needs to give people specific actions that they can take. We want to make sure people know they have worth and work is one of those ways.”

The second factor for the grant is based on whether the project, or at least portions of it, can be replicated, said Doyle.

Arsenault said she hopes to use the grant money to start a project to develop leadership and volunteering skills with the University of West Georgia.

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