12-10-2007

'Tis always the season for civic engagement

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'Tis always the season for civic engagement

Summary: Community Service and Volunteerism in the Office of Student Activities at UMM, along with the “service theme floor” in Independence Hall, an on-campus student residence, and other student organizations, are working together and partnering with off-campus groups in a variety of holiday giving projects.

(December 10, 2007)-'Tis the season for generosity and with the holiday season comes a renewed sense of commitment to help others and a heightened awareness of the civic engagement opportunities that surround us.

Community Service and Volunteerism in the Office of Student Activities at the University of Minnesota, Morris, along with the “service theme floor” in Independence Hall, an on-campus student residence, and other student organizations at UMM, are working together and partnering with off-campus groups in a variety of holiday giving projects:

- During the holiday season the Ranch House at the Best Northland Prairie Inn will provide a $1 lunch coupon to anyone who drops off a toy, which will then be donated to the Stevens County Toys for Tots drive. Toys can also be dropped off at the UMM Student Center as well as the Common Cup Coffeehouse and Bremer Bank in Morris.

“It’s easy to get UMM students on board, especially with a project that has the potential to make children happy,” said Carol McCannon, coordinator for UMM Community Service and Volunteerism. “Students are eager to pitch in to help with new projects as well as those that have been going on in the Morris community for years.”

Here are other ways in which UMM students are engaged in sharing opportunities and others can become involved too:

-Donate to the “mitten tree,” located in the Student Center lobby, by bringing new mittens, hats and scarves. These items will be shared with Sam’s House – A Home for Orphaned and Abandoned Children and the Stevens County Toys for Tots Drive. The Newman Center and the Office of Community Service and Volunteerism are co-sponsoring this effort.

-The Adopt A Grandparent program seeks to strengthen communication and interaction between UMM students and older adults in the Morris community through fostering intergenerational relationships. Students enjoy sharing time with an older adult in projects such as quilting to just enjoying each other’s company. The Adopt-A-Grandparent Program at UMM is in cooperation with the City of Morris/UMM COPC partnership and is funded in part by the HUD – Community Outreach Partnership Centers program

-Decorate shoeboxes with wrapping paper and fill with a toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, gentle soaps, dental floss, fruit snacks and another seasonal gift or two. Label the box “male” or “female” and include an age. Get friends or family involved in the project. Shoebox gifts can be can be dropped off in the Office of Student Activities, located in the lower level of the Student Center, where they will be delivered to the Stevens County Food Shelf.

-Keep in mind that food shelves stock runs low this time of year. Bring cash, non-perishable items and hygiene products
at the Office of Student Activities and the items will be delivered for you to the Stevens County Food Shelf.

- Volunteer at the Habitat for Humanity building site or provide meals to other volunteers.

Photo: UMM student volunteers gather around Santa.

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