

Adopt-A-Basket Donations Needed by Nov. 20 to Help Needy Families

Contributed by Rebecca Lauck Cleary
11/06/2008

OXFORD, Miss. - In the spirit of giving, University of Mississippi faculty, staff and students are once again participating in the annual "Adopt-A-Basket" program to provide Thanksgiving dinners for needy families in the Oxford area.

Donations of specific nonperishable food items, as well as gift cards, are needed so that around 400 baskets can be delivered on the afternoon of Nov. 20.

"Adopt-A-Basket has become a very popular project and gives an opportunity for the students, faculty and staff to work together and do something good for the community," said Valeria Ross, assistant dean of students for multicultural affairs and volunteer services. "This has grown over the years, and with the economy in its current state, we expect to see an increase in requests for baskets."

Interfaith Compassion Ministries and university personnel provide names of families in need.

Volunteers are also needed the morning of Nov. 20 to help assemble the boxes in the Students Union Ballroom.

"Last year, employees from Emerson Electric helped us fill the baskets, and it really takes the effort of everyone together to make it work," Ross said. "I encourage everyone to participate, because without volunteers this could not take place."

Physical Plant is donating all the boxes needed for deliveries, and the Phi Delta Theta fraternity has agreed, for the second year, to deliver the baskets.

Items that individuals, student organizations or university departments should purchase in order to fill a basket include a \$30 gift card from Wal-Mart, Kroger or Big Star, so families receiving baskets can purchase perishables such as turkey, milk, eggs, butter and pie crusts.

Following is a list of nonperishable items needed for each basket:

- 2 large cans corn
- 2 large cans green beans
- 2 cans chicken broth
- 1 can cranberry sauce
- 1 bag of rolls
- 3 pounds sweet potatoes

3 pounds white potatoes

1 can sweetened condensed milk

5 pounds sugar

5 pounds corn meal

1 large onion

1 bunch celery

Coordinators ask that donors gather all the items on the list and refrain from buying items not on the list. The items, intended to provide a meal for from four to six people, should then be placed in a box or other container - not necessarily a basket - and dropped off at the Union Ballroom between 8 a.m. and noon Nov. 20.

The Adopt-A-Basket initiative began more than four years ago as part of the Mississippi Universities Service Into Caring project, involving the state's eight public institutions of higher learning.

For more information about the initiative or volunteering, contact Ross at 662-915-7248 or vross@olemiss.edu.